



Healthy Garden Tips

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GROWING GREEN (SNAP) BEANS IN NAPA COUNTY

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Kinds to Plant: Pole and bush types are available. Colored types, 'yard long' and broad Romano-types are distinctive and also fun to grow. Blue Lake, Kentucky Wonder, Scarlet Runner and Dutch White runner are successful pole types. Tendergreen, Topcrop, Tendercrop, Landreth bush, Royal Burgundy and Blue Lake Bush are bush types.

Requirements: Green beans are injured by frost and require moderately warm weather and soil conditions. Bean pods may set poorly during hot weather. Beans grow best in full sun all day. Flowers are pollinated by bees.

Soil Preparation and Planting: Plant May through August. Double digging the soil helps beans grow roots 24 to 30 inches deep. Beans are low Nitrogen and moderate Phosphorous users. Additional fertilizer usually is not needed at planting. Planting seed is most successful because young bean seedlings are extremely sensitive to injury and do not transplant easily. Plant seed 6 inches apart, in rows 20 to 30 inches apart. Plant 8 feet of row per person of bush beans, half that for pole beans. Allow space for harvesting.

Care & Harvest: Beans need 1 inch of water every 7 to 10 days to encourage deep rooting. Beans have a low to moderate need for Nitrogen fertilizer, be careful not to over fertilize. Keep weeds down with frequent shallow cultivation. Stake pole beans when they start to vine. Pods form 2 to 3 weeks after flowers. Harvest about 50 to 75 days after planting. Pick every 3 to 5 days and remove all pods to prolong production. Remove plants after harvest or when leaves yellow and begin to drop. When plants get dry they quit growing for the season.

Common Problems: Birds can pull up seedlings. Seedlings get root rot in cold soil. Cutworms and diabrotica beetles injure young plants. Aphids, spider mites and white flies attack older vines. See pest management publications for methods of control.

Tricks: Plant monthly in May, June and July to extend harvest. Use screens to keep birds from pulling up seedlings. Water regularly.

Additional Readings:

Best Vegetables to Grow in Napa, UCCE Napa County Mimeo, 1996.

Planting Guide for Napa County, UCCE Napa County Mimeo, 1982.

Fava Beans, Family Farm Series, 1989.

Adzuki Beans, Small Farm News, 1997.

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