



Rutabaga Roots

Growing and Harvest Information

Plant rutabaga roots in well-drained soil and full sunlight. Sow seeds early to mid-summer or as soon as you can work the soil. Plant seeds 2 inches apart and 1/2 inch deep, with rows 14-18 inches apart. Seeds will germinate in about 4-7 days.

After germination, thin rutabagas 6 inches apart. Water 1 to 1 1/2 inches per week and control weeds with frequent, shallow irrigation.

Harvest rutabagas when roots are 2-3 inches in diameter. For the best taste, wait to harvest until the roots are 4-5 inches in diameter and after a few light frosts. Harvest foliage from rutabaga plants before the roots are ready by snipping or pulling off leaves, never removing more than a few leaves per root. Harvest roots by pulling from the soil after loosening the dirt. Twist off the tops, leaving about 1 inch of stem.

Introduction

Rutabagas are root vegetables that people often confuse with turnips, but rutabagas have a sweeter flavor. They are fairly easy to grow, and grow to the size of a softball. Rutabagas are a cold-weather crop that tolerates drought and frost. Rutabagas originated as a mix between a turnip and a cabbage.

Preservation

Storage:

- Cut outer leaves, then refrigerate, unwashed, and eat greens as soon as possible. Leave some greens on top of the roots within 1 inch above the crown to keep root alive.
- Rutabaga roots store well in root cellars held at temperatures just above freezing with high moisture and humidity. They will keep this way up to 4 months. If you do not have a root cellar, store roots in moist peat moss, sand, or sawdust in a cool shed or garage. They are also commonly stored dipped in paraffin wax and kept in a cool place.
- Store roots in the refrigerator in vegetable storage bags in the crisper drawer.

Freezing:

- Peel rutabaga roots. Either chop them into cubes, then blanch in boiling water before freezing, or boil and mash them. Store them in airtight plastic boxes or freezer bags. Rutabaga roots will keep for up to a year.

Nutritional Benefits

Source	Rating
Vitamins	GOOD
Minerals	GOOD
Fiber	GOOD

Use By Guide

Vegetable State	Use by
Cool, damp conditions	4-5 months
Refrigerated	4 months
Frozen	6-12 months



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Fun Fact:

Some health benefits from this vegetable include improved bone health, improved eyesight, healthier immune system function, lower blood- pressure and better digestion.

Prepare Rutabaga Roots Like This:

As a garnish
Mixed with greens in salads
Sautéed
Pureed

Try Rutabaga In:

Salad
Rutabaga greens have a crisp texture, and a mild, mustard spinach-like flavor, making them a good addition to other greens in salad.

Preparation

Recipe 1: Mashed Rutabagas

Ingredients

- 2-3 pounds rutabagas
- 2 tsp salt
- 1/3 cup butter
- 1/2 tsp black pepper
- 1 tsp garlic (optional)

Directions

- Peel rutabagas and cut into cubes.
- In a large saucepan, cover the rutabaga cubes with water, and add 1 tsp of salt. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat, cover, and simmer for 25-30 minutes, or until tender.
- Drain and let dry in colander or in an uncovered pan.
- While still hot, mash rutabagas with butter, salt, pepper and garlic.

Recipe 2: Roasted Rutabaga with Brown Butter

Ingredients

- 1 large rutabaga
- 4 tbsp unsalted butter
- 1/2 lemon, juiced
- 2 tbsp parsley, finely chopped
- salt and pepper, to taste

Directions

- Heat oven to 450 degrees F. Peel rutabaga and cut into 1/2-3/4-inch cubes.
- In a saucepan, melt the butter over medium heat and cook until butter foams and then browns, about 5 minutes.
- Drizzle the browned butter over the rutabaga and toss to coat. Season with salt and pepper.
- In a large baking sheet, spread rutabaga cubes in a single layer. Roast for 25-40 minutes, or until browned and tender.
- Remove from baking sheet and toss with lemon juice and parsley.