



GROWING *edibles* IN PERTH

Growing Rhubarb

Rhubarb likes a moist soil enriched with plenty of organic matter – dig in plenty of compost, well-rotted manure and make sure it is well mulched over summer (nutritious mulches like Lupin Mulch are ideal).

Grow in part shade – morning sun or dappled shade is ideal, as Rhubarb will not cope with the full summer sun in Perth! Plants will wilt and let you know when they need a drink during those hot months. If you struggle to find a position that will suit year round, perhaps try growing it in a large pot.

Seedlings can be planted year round but the crowns are only planted during winter. Crowns can be harvested much sooner than seedlings which can take several years to produce. Resist the temptation to harvest during the first year, as you want the plants to establish well. It is worth the wait as it means more stems in future years. You can plant the crowns as close to each other as 80cm. Plant them so that the top of the crown is just at soil level. Be careful not to plant too deep.

The stems are harvested from spring through into summer. Always make sure when picking the stems to break them away from the crown downwards. Never cut the stems as this can cause rot and you may lose the whole plant.

When given the right conditions, Rhubarb is fairly pest and disease free. Keep an eye out for slugs and snails, which can damage the new stems. If there is poor airflow and excessively damp conditions, Rhubarb can also be affected by fungal diseases, such as mildews.

A note on stem colour: Not all rhubarb produces a deep red stem, this can be dependent on the variety or partially due to climatic conditions. There is nothing wrong with a greener stemmed rhubarb, it is not 'unripe'. In fact, the greener varieties are often much sweeter than their more popular red friends!

Ever Red – produces high yields of sweet red stalks for most of the year, with the heaviest crop being produced in spring and summer.

Giant Victoria – One of the sweeter varieties that has greener stems than the Ever Red. Vigorous. Produces mostly during spring and summer.

General advice only. Please ask one of our Horticulturists if you require specific advice for your situation.