

ANOTHER  
HERB HERBERT  
FACT SHEET

SPECIAL INTEREST HERBS

# GOURMET VEGETABLES

## BEETS

*Beta vulgaris*



**D**ESCRPTION: Alto: Beetroot with the sweetest of flavors. Uniform, straight roots have a smooth, rich red skin and flesh color free from rings, making them easy to prepare. Roots stand proud above the soil, but can be earthed up, and remain in good condition over a long period.

**Bulls Blood:** This heirloom beet is primarily grown for its tender, sweet, deep red-burgundy foliage that provides incredible contrast in salad mixes and as an ornamental. The glossy leaves reach 18 inches high. The beets are tasty and tender when harvested at the 2- to 3-inch size and have lovely pink rings inside. Tolerant to heat and cold. Color intensifies as plants mature.

**Golden Orange Beet:** You may be most familiar with the red beet, but beets come in a variety of colors. One variety is orange, and is known as the golden orange beet. A descendant of a sea vegetable, golden orange beets are a nutrient-rich food low in calories and high in fiber and potassium.

Beets are dark red/orange and vigorous and have been a popular vegetable amongst gardeners for many years.

**U**SES: Use the young, tender beet tops for fresh greens. Beets can be grated in salads, pickled, or baked and then skinned and served with fresh dill. Beets can be preserved by canning or freezing and they retain their taste and texture very well. To retain the color and nutrients in beets, don't cut the tip of the root and leave at least an inch of the top stem intact - this will also keep beets from "bleeding."

**G**ROWTH: Sow beet seeds thinly 1/2-1" deep in rows spaced 8-12" apart. Choose a full sun location. Beets require a light, well-drained, cool soil with a pH between 6.2 and 6.8 and soil temperature should be 18-24 degrees C (65-75 degrees F) for optimal germination. Compost or well-rotted manure along with pure wood ashes, as a supply of additional potassium, should be mixed well into the soil prior to planting. Applying Boron after 4-6 weeks of growth will prevent internal browning, particularly in dry seasons. Keep beets well-watered as drought will result in tough or woody beets.

**C**ULTIVATION: Young and tender Beet leaves can be used as greens. Dig or pull beet roots when 2-3" in diameter or desired size.

Companion planting for beets are bush bean, cabbage family, corn, leek, lettuce, onion and radishes.

For more cultural notes see our organic garden fact sheets under the 'Special Interest' section of the pull down menu on the home page of our website.



Any enquiries can be directed to:

HERB HERBERT P/L PO Box 24 Monbulk Victoria 3793 Australia

E-mail: herb@herbherbert.com

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