

ANOTHER
HERB HERBERT
FACT SHEET

SPECIAL INTEREST HERBS

GOURMET VEGETABLES

RAINBOW CHARD

Beta vulgaris cicla



DESCRIPTION

Biennial vegetable with decorative stems in the colors of a rainbow the source of the naming of this wonderful vegetable that can be perpetually picked. It is dazzlingly attractive in all stages of growth. The stems vary greatly in color, being yellow, gold, pink, and crimson, with secondary colors including pink/white striped, orange, scarlet, purple, white and green with intermediate pastels. Chard is among the earliest and most productive of vegetables provided they have sufficient water and nitrogen. Colored chard was developed by John Eaton of Lower Hutt in the UK who began in 1977 with parent plants, one red and one yellow. After crossing these to the standard green and white varieties, he selected stocks over a 15 year period for color variation and flavor. **BrightLights Chard**, dark green, savoyed leaves offer a contrast to the brightly colored stems and leaf veins. Taste is mild, with each color a bit different. **Northern Lights**, produces good yields vibrant colors of white, gold, red, and magenta stems. Excellent for salads and steamed greens. The 21-26" plants produce appealing stalk colors, medium green colored leaves. **Chard Fordhook** celery-like stalks support large, dark green, savoyed, leaves. Pale green stalks are tender and juicy. A cold-hardy variety. 60 days.



USES

Used in many dishes. Eaten as Spinach. It is recommended to cook briefly or microwave in order to maintain stem color. Harvest for bunching or salad mix. 60 Days.



GROWTH

Leaves should be picked as often as possible to promote new growth. Maturity 3-5 weeks for young salad greens and 7-10 weeks for mature plants. Chard can be harvested as required by pulling or cutting off single leaves at ground level. The leaves on the outside are best used first as these are the oldest.



CULTIVATION

Plant in spring and a second planting in summer is advised to stagger the harvest timing. Grow in rich, moist soil with ample manure. In dry areas and well drained soil it is useful to plant a shallow trench to make watering easier and more efficient. Water with soluble fertilizers to increase the crop harvest. In climates where the summer is very hot and wet, chard grows better in the cooler, drier winter months. All beets respond well to salt, which is not surprising as they were originally a seaside plant. The rate of salt recommended is 30gm/1oz per sq meter/yard worked into the soil a week before planting, preferably with potash in some form. Companion plant to Lavender.

Grow with
Lavender



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