



HOW TO GROW HOT PEPPER

Hot Pepper evolved in our part of the world, so they are perfectly adapted to our environmental conditions.

Peppers contain capsaicin, which is used in a variety of medicines to treat arthritis, cancer, inflammation, pain and a variety of other ailments. Peppers are also high in vitamin A, B and C.

One plant will provide all the peppers the average family needs.

Hot Pepper may be grown in a variety of containers or on beds. This factsheet deals with growing hot peppers on beds. For a guide to growing hot peppers in containers see Factsheet on Container Planting.

(A) PLANTING

1. Transplant seedlings
 - When seedlings are 3-4 weeks old.
 - Late in the afternoon.
2. Ensure the hole is large enough to hold the seedling's root plug. Mix two handfuls of well-rotted manure with the soil in each planting hole.
3. Into each planting hole place one seedling and ensure it is firmly positioned.

(B) SPACING

If several hot pepper are grown together space seedlings 90 to 120 cm apart within rows and 150 cm to 180 cm between rows. (Figure.1) However, hot pepper can be intercropped with most other vegetables.



Figure 1

(C) FERTILIZING

At Transplanting, apply

- 1 Tablespoon High Phosphorus Fertilizer e.g. 12:24:12 dissolved in 1 litre of water.
- This volume will fertilize 10 plants.
- Apply once either to roots or leaves (foliar).

In the Growing Stage, apply

- High Nitrogen fertilizer e.g. 20:10:10
- 30 g (2 tbsp) per plant.

At Flowering, apply

- High Potassium fertilizer e.g. 12:12:17+2 plus Trace Elements.
- 60 g (4 tbsp) per plant.
- Every 2 weeks for the lifetime of the crop.

(D) WATERING

Water seedlings immediately after transplanting. In the absence of rain, water daily; ensure that excess water drains off the planting area.

(E) PEST AND DISEASE CONTROL

Pests and Diseases left unchecked can hinder a plant's ability to produce food for us. These problems can be managed with good cultural practices, biological agents, and chemicals. A combination of these methods is best and is known as Integrated Pest Management. See Factsheet on Integrated Pest Management titled "IPM for Home Gardeners".

(F) CULTURAL PRACTICES

As far as possible plant varieties that are resistant to diseases.

- Don't plant hot pepper in the same place year after year.
- Assess problems before applying any treatment.
- Use environmentally friendly chemicals.
- Alternate suitable chemicals to avoid pests becoming accustomed to them.



Figure 2

(G) HARVESTING

- Hot peppers may be harvested whenever needed but it is only when they are mature that you will get their full flavour.
- Peppers are mature when their walls have thickened, they have reached their correct size and their colour begins to change.
- They may be harvested mature green and allowed to ripen in storage.
- Mature peppers easily snap off the plant.
- The two-fingered method is recommended to pick hot peppers.
- Remove the entire fruit along with its stem so as to encourage the plant to continue flowering.

(H) RECOMMENDED VARIETIES

Some of the varieties available on the market are:

- CARDI Green
- West Indies Red
- Hood
- Faria

Hot Pepper is an easy crop to grow; these guidelines will help you towards a bountiful harvest.

Technical content edited by - Roshni Ramsingh

"All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, transmitted in any form, or by any means reproduced without permission in writing, of the Ministry of Food Production, Land and Marine Affairs."

*Published and Printed by
the Extension, Training and Information Services Division
Ministry of Food Production, Land and Marine Affairs
Trinidad and Tobago
July 2005
Revised July 2009*