

## How to Grow Rutabagas

### General

The humble rutabaga is often called a turnip, but rutabagas are much more useful in the kitchen, are more nutritious, and store well. Amazing yields of flavourful roots are possible in a small space. Introduce rutabagas on dip trays (like carrot sticks), soups and stews, and raw in lunch boxes.

### Latin

*Brassica napobrassica*

### Difficulty

Easy

### Season & Zone

**Season:** Cool season

**Exposure:** Full sun

**Zone:** 2-10

### Timing

Direct sow mid-June to July 15th. Optimal soil temperature: 18-21°C (65-70°F). Seeds should sprout in 7-15 days.

### Starting

Sow seeds 5mm-1cm (¼-½") deep in rows 60-75cm (24-30") apart. Thin seedlings to 15-20cm (6-8") apart in each row.

### Growing

Ideal pH: 6.0-6.8. Rutabagas are moderate to heavy feeders that do best in rich, loamy soil amended with composted manure. Add 1 cup complete organic fertilizer beneath each 3m (10') of row. Lime beds several weeks before planting. Rutabagas appreciate lots of organic matter in the soil. Water copiously in hot, dry weather.

### Harvest

Pull up rutabagas when they are larger than tennis balls. Store in paper bags in a cool, dry place. Storing in dry sand or peat moss may conserve moisture and freshness. Otherwise, leave in the ground for fall harvesting. The leaves are also tasty and nutritious.

### Diseases & Pests

Use a floating row cover to protect seedlings from root maggots and flea beetles. Full sized plants are not badly damaged by these insects.

