Variegated Tapioca

Manihot esculenta 'Variegata'

Height: 10 feet

Spread: 10 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: (annual)

Other Names: Bitter Casava, Manioc

Description:

This ornamental plant is grown primarily for its attractive variegated foliage; better color in full sun, yellow tends to mature to cream; will seasonally grow 3 to 4 feet in colder zones; intolerant of frost; a beautiful container or garden accent

Ornamental Features

Variegated Tapioca's attractive lobed palmate leaves remain dark green in color with showy yellow variegation and tinges of chartreuse throughout the year on a plant with a mounded habit of growth.

Landscape Attributes

Variegated Tapioca is a multi-stemmed annual with a mounded form. Its medium texture blends into the garden, but can always be balanced by a couple of finer or coarser plants for an effective composition.

This is a relatively low maintenance plant, and is best cleaned up in early spring before it resumes active growth for the season. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Variegated Tapioca is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Mass Planting
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting
- Hanging Baskets



Variegated Tapioca foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



Variegated Tapioca
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Planting & Growing

Variegated Tapioca will grow to be about 10 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 10 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 1 foot from the ground. Although it's not a true annual, this fast-growing plant can be expected to behave as an annual in our climate if left outdoors over the winter, usually needing replacement the following year. As such, gardeners should take into consideration that it will perform differently than it would in its native habitat.

This plant does best in full sun to partial shade. It prefers to grow in average to moist conditions, and shouldn't be allowed to dry out. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America.

Variegated Tapioca is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor containers and hanging baskets. Because of its height, it is often used as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the center of the pot, surrounded by smaller plants and those that spill over the edges. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.