Red Ball Basil

Ocimum basilicum 'Red Ball'



Red Ball Basil foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 12 inches

Spread: 12 inches

Spacing: 10 inches

Sunlight:

Hardiness Zone: (annual)

Description:

A compact, dense, rounded ball of small, dark burgundy red aromatic leaves that mature to green; grown primarily for foliage color, but can also be used for culinary flavoring; great for mixed containers as filler, herb gardens, and annual beds

Edible Qualities

Red Ball Basil is an annual herb that is commonly grown for its edible qualities, although it does have ornamental merits as well. The fragrant pointy lime green leaves with distinctive deep purple veins and tinges of red which emerge burgundy in spring are usually harvested from early summer to early fall. The leaves have a pleasant taste and a distinctive fragrance.

The leaves are most often used in the following ways:

- Fresh Eating
- Cooking
- Seasoning

Planting & Growing

Red Ball Basil will grow to be about 12 inches tall at maturity, with a spread of 12 inches. When grown in masses or used as a bedding plant, individual plants should be spaced approximately 10 inches apart. This fast-growing annual will normally live for one full growing season, needing replacement the following year.

This plant is quite ornamental as well as edible, and is as much at home in a landscape or flower garden as it is in a designated herb garden. It should only be grown in full sunlight. 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. It can be propagated by cuttings; however, as a cultivated variety, be aware that it may be subject to certain restrictions or prohibitions on propagation.

Red Ball Basil is a good choice for the edible garden, but it is also well-suited for use in outdoor pots and containers. It is often used as a 'filler' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination, providing a mass of flowers and foliage against which the thriller plants stand out. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.