Aunt Molly's Ground Cherry

Physalis pruinosa 'Aunt Molly's'



Aunt Molly's Ground Cherry fruit
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 24 inches

Spread: 18 inches

Spacing: 24 inches

Sunlight:

Hardiness Zone: 4

Description:

A stunning heirloom variety, perfect for containers, hanging baskets and gardens; produces gold, sweet and citrusy fruit, enclosed in a paper husk; berries drop to the ground when ripe; wonderful eaten fresh, in jams or preserves and pie

Edible Qualities

Aunt Molly's Ground Cherry is a perennial vegetable plant that is typically grown for its edible qualities. It produces small gold round fruit (technically 'capsules') with a orange blush which are typically harvested when mature. The fruits have a tangy taste.

The fruit are most often used in the following ways:

- Fresh Eating
- Eating When Cooked/Prepared
- Baking
- Preserves

Planting & Growing

Aunt Molly's Ground Cherry will grow to be about 24 inches tall at maturity, with a spread of 18 inches. When planted in rows, individual plants should be spaced approximately 24 inches apart. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 5 years. As an herbaceous perennial, this plant will usually die back to the crown each winter, and will regrow from the base each spring. Be careful not to disturb the crown in late winter when it may not be readily seen!

This plant is typically grown in a designated vegetable garden. It should only be grown in full sunlight. It does best in average to evenly moist conditions, but will not tolerate standing water. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. This is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America, and it is considered by many to be an heirloom variety.

Aunt Molly's Ground Cherry is a good choice for the vegetable garden, but it is also well-suited for use in outdoor containers and hanging baskets. With its upright habit of growth, it is best suited for use 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.