Swiss Chard

Beta vulgaris var. cicla



Swiss Chard
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 18 inches

Spread: 14 inches

Spacing: 12 inches

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: (annual)

Description:

Closely related to beets, this variety is excellent for both ornamental and culinary purposes; arching, crinkled green leaves are held by long stalks ranging in color from white to yellow, red to green; a great choice for soups, stews, salads and more

Edible Qualities

Swiss Chard is an annual vegetable plant that is commonly grown for its edible qualities, although it does have ornamental merits as well. The entire above-ground parts of the plant are edible, and are usually harvested from early summer to mid fall. The edible parts have a mild taste and a soft texture.

The plant is most often used in the following ways:

- Fresh Eating
- Eating When Cooked/Prepared
- Cooking

Planting & Growing

Swiss Chard will grow to be about 18 inches tall at maturity, with a spread of 14 inches. When planted in rows, individual plants should be spaced approximately 12 inches apart. This fast-growing vegetable plant is an annual, which means that it will grow for one season in your garden and then die after producing a crop. Because of its relatively short time to maturity, it lends itself to a series of successive plantings each staggered by a week or two; this will prolong the effective harvest period.

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 vegetable garden. It does best in full sun to partial shade. 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 pH, but grows best in rich soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This species is not originally from North America.

Swiss Chard is a good choice for the vegetable 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 the canvas 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.