

Turmeric

DID YOU KNOW
TURMERIC IS A
SUPERFOOD FILLED
WITH ANTIOXIDANTS
THAT TREAT HEART
DISEASE AND CANCER?

WHAT IS TURMERIC?

Turmeric is a perennial, self-fruitful and herbaceous plant that grows well in zones 9-11. The Turmeric rhizome can be used in many different ways. It is most popular as a spice used in the kitchen, but it also has many health benefits. It can even be used as a dye for clothing. The rhizome is a bright orange root and has a pepper-like smell. Turmeric is a member of the ginger family, Zingiberaceae, and is native to areas in India and Indonesia.

PLANTING TURMERIC

Turmeric can be grown in a container or in the ground. Choose well-draining soil and a warm location. If you are planting in a container, choose one with a 3 to 4 feet spread, as the plant needs plenty of room to grow. Plant each tuber into the ground roughly 4 inches deep. Space each tuber about 3-4 feet apart and then cover with soil. Water regularly, and if planting in a container, water more often because the roots will dry out faster.



CARE AND HARVESTING

Turmeric can be harvested after the first frost in the fall at the end of the growing season. Once the green foliage begins to wilt and die, you can begin harvesting. Carefully dig up the plant, remove the foliage and remove some the rhizomes. You can leave a few in the pot for next year's harvest.

COMMON PESTS AND DISEASES AMONG TURMERIC

Pests

The most common pests that attack turmeric are grubs, leaf rollers, nematodes, snails and rhizome flies. You can collect and destroy any egg masses and larvae. Promote natural enemies such as ladybugs, spiders, dragonfly and praying mantis.

Diseases

Common diseases among turmeric are bacterial soft rot, leaf blotch, fusarium rot, and rhizome rot. Helpful preventatives and treatments include maintaining good drainage, removing dead debris from soil and applying copper fungicide.

WAYS TO STORE TURMERIC

Drying Turmeric

Turmeric rhizomes can be preserved in many different ways. One of the most popular ways to keep turmeric is to dry it in the oven. Begin by cleaning and peeling your turmeric. Once the rhizomes are clean, dry in a low oven or dehydrator for several hours and then grind into a fine powder. This powder can be kept fresh for up to a year and is a lovely spice in many different dishes.

Fridge or Freezer?

Another excellent way to keep turmeric is to store it in either your fridge or freezer. The only difference between the two methods is that the turmeric will stay fresh longer in the freezer. The process is very easy! Begin by cleaning the rhizomes by rinsing off all of the dirt and drying well with a paper towel or cloth. You can choose to either keep them whole or cut them into slices. Place in a plastic bag. If storing in your freezer, seal tightly to prevent freezer burn. These can store up to 12 months.

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