

Growing Ginger



Ordering Seed

- Purchase disease free seed ginger (preferably organic).
- Rhizomes from the store are sprayed with a growth inhibitor, so are not the best for growing at home.
- We have purchased from Hawaiian Biker Dude & Fruition Seeds; lots of places online offer seeds for sale in very early spring.
- Consider going in on an order with friends—the more you buy, the better price per pound.
- According to Windcrest Farm, you can expect 8- to 12-ounce yield per 1-ounce seed, depending on growing conditions and fertility.

Cutting Seed

- Seed usually arrives in March. Ginger seed will be in large pieces and needs to be cut to size.
- We aim to have at least 3 growth points (or eyes) on each piece, at least 2 inches long.
- Use a clean, sharp knife to make as few small cuts as possible.
- Put seeds in front of a fan to help the cuts scab over before planting. Drying on a wire rack is ideal.



Pre-Sprouting

- After the cuts scab over (about 5 days), we start to pre-sprout our ginger. Pre-sprouting gives us a jumpstart since we have a short season (ginger is a tropical plant).
- We sprout the ginger in open flats in lightly moistened coconut coir and potting soil. We leave space for roots to develop between each seed. Cover lightly with potting soil. **Do not overwater at this stage.**
- We store these flats in our greenhouse underneath our benches because we don't want them to get too wet, but want them to be consistently warm & moist. A heat mat would be a great option at home (at least 70 degrees).
- They will only need light and more water when the green sprouts appear. Bottom watering is ideal. Once they grow leaves about 2" high, they will be ready to harden off before transplanting outside.

Planting

- Do not plant outdoors until soil temperatures are at least 55 degrees F and the air temperature is in the 70's. Usually late May, early June.
- Dig a trench about 4-6" deep and spread fertilizer in bottom. We used Revita 5-4-5 (use a balanced fertilizer at planting).
- We dig a wide trench and plant double rows, seeds 5" apart alternating in rows and cover with 2" soil.
- We water in with fish emulsion for extra fertilizer and to reduce transplant shock.
- Ginger can also be grown in large containers.



Ginger planted at The Frick on 3/24/23

Fertilizing & Hilling

- Fertilizers should be balanced. They should be slightly higher in nitrogen through late July, then should be higher in potassium starting in August through end of September (then hilling & fertilizing can stop).
- Mounding up more soil over the base of the plant helps the plant grow wide & tall.
- The first hilling & fertilizing should happen 4-6 weeks after planting. When a bright pink color is observed at the stem base, hill the plant with 4" of soil and apply fertilizer.
- Every 2 to 4 weeks, repeat hilling and fertilizing (minimum 2 to 3 times throughout the season). Ginger is a heavy feeder.
- High quality compost can also be used to hill up ginger.



Ginger growing in 3 gallon pots at Garden Dreams on 8/2/23



Ginger harvested at Garden Dreams on 10/9/23

Harvesting

- Harvesting starts in early October and goes through the frost.
- Staying about 6" away from the plant, insert a shovel or fork and lift lightly.
- The entire plant is edible, so you can use the leaves, stalks & root. Stalks & leaves can be used to flavor stocks and teas.

Preserving the Harvest

- Stores in fridge for only 2 weeks
- Freezing fresh ginger works really well
- Blend into a paste and freeze in ice cube trays
- Dehydrate & grind for ginger powder
- Pickled ginger for Asian dishes
- Ginger syrup (freezes beautifully)
- Candied ginger for desserts and drinks
- Fresh leaves & stalks are great for infusing in water & stocks
- Dry leaves for tea (much less potent)



Ginger harvested at The Frick on 10/7/22



Ginger planted at GD on May 19



Ginger at GD on 10/9

Resources:

- *Fruition Seeds*
- *Windcrest Farm*
- *Hawaiian Biker Dude*