

family
**Vegetable
Garden**
series

EXTENSION BULLETIN E-824 (16)

Peas

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EARLY BIRD

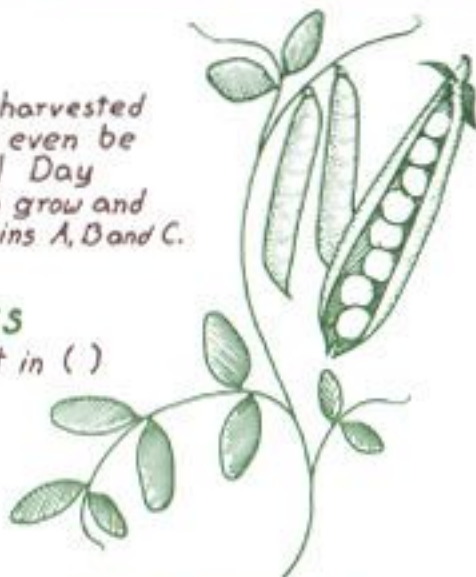
Few spring vegetables can be harvested earlier than peas. They may even be ready to pick by Memorial Day weekend! Peas are easy to grow and are a good source of vitamins A, B and C.

RECOMMENDED VARIETIES

Days from planting to harvest in ()

PEAS

- Perfected Freezer (60)
- Freezonian (62)
- Little Marvel (62)
- Greater Progress (62)
- Frosty (64)
- Green Arrow (68)
- Wando (68) heat resistant



EDIBLE PODDED PEAS
Dwarf Gray Sugar (65)

SOME BASICS

1. Soil Plant in a well-drained soil. Organic material such as grass clippings or leaves added to a clay soil improves drainage.

2. Water Make sure peas get plenty of water, especially when pods are forming.

3. Fertilizer Peas should not get too much nitrogen. Apply 2 pounds (4 cups) of 5-20-20 fertilizer for every 100 square feet of soil. Mix in 1 pound before planting and sprinkle the rest along rows (not on seeds) after planting.



WHEN TO PLANT

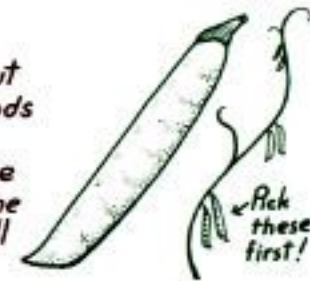
Peas grow best in cool weather (60-75°F).
Light frosts don't kill them.

- Plant as early as the ground can be worked - Mar 20 to May 15.
- The variety Wando can be planted later since it can stand more warm weather than other varieties.
- To lengthen the harvest period, plant early, midseason and late varieties all at the same time.
- A fall crop can be planted July 15 for harvest in September, although it's usually not as successful as a spring crop.



GARDEN PEAS

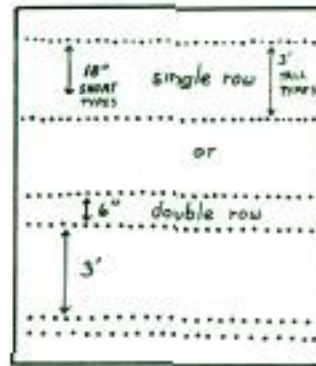
Harvest pods when firm and well-filled, but before they reach full size - just as pods start to change color. Old peas lose their sweetness and become starchy. The first peas to mature on a vine are at the bottom, so harvest these first. Keep all pods picked so vines produce longer.



Shell peas soon after picking, rinse with cool water and refrigerate. Eat or preserve as soon as possible. Serve raw or as a cooked vegetable. Add to soups, stews; serve with pearl onions or mushrooms.

HOW TO PLANT

- Plant seeds 1 to 2 inches deep and 1 inch apart.
- Space rows 12 to 18 inches apart. Thin to 2 or 3 inches between plants in rows.
- Or plant peas in double rows 6 inches apart with 3 feet between double rows.
- Leave 3 feet between single or double rows of tall varieties and stake.



EDIBLE-PODDED PEAS

These are also called sugar peas or snow peas. The entire pod is eaten like snap beans. Pick pods when seeds are just starting to form (no larger than BB's). Otherwise pods will be tough and stringy. If you let seeds enlarge, eat like regular peas. Cook like snap beans or eat raw in salads. Use in Chinese dishes.



STAKING

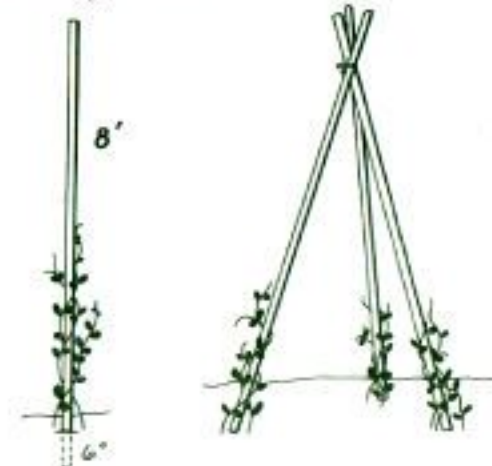
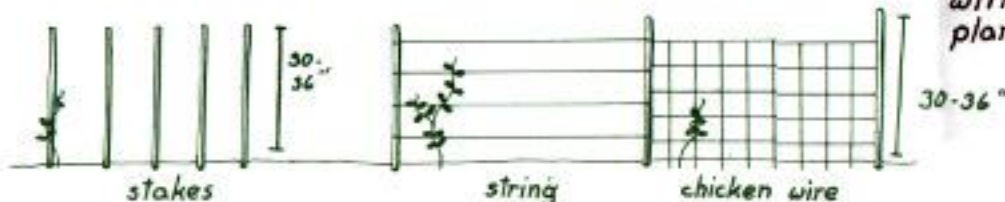
There are both bush and vining types of peas.

Dwarf (bush) varieties (usually 18 to 24 inches tall) don't need staking and don't take up much space. They are less work.
Tall (vining) varieties need support, but produce for a longer time.

1 Use stakes or branches 30 to 36 inches high. Or use chicken wire in ground alongside row (or between double rows). String or wire may also be used.



2 Another staking method is to place an 8-foot pole 6 inches in the ground and train 2 or 3 plants to grow up it. Or place 3 poles together tepee-fashion and tie at top with string. Allow 2 or 3 plants to grow up each pole.



BLACKEYE PEAS (Southern peas)

GEE, I THOUGHT
YOU SAID
"BLACK EYE, PLEASE!"

Blackeye peas are grown mostly in the South because they need a long, warm growing season. However, early-maturing varieties can be grown in Michigan.



Unlike regular peas, blackeye peas like warm weather and are hurt by the lightest frost. Plant after last frost (May 20 to June 1). They are very easy to grow and produce a lot.

Sow seeds just like regular peas. Space rows 2 to 3 feet apart. Pick peas when seeds are fully developed, but not hard. For dried peas, allow to ripen on plant. Seeds are available through some seed catalogs. Serve blackeye peas with rice and bacon or add to stews.



INSECTS AND DISEASE

See Extension Bulletin E-760 (b) or contact your County Extension Agent.



KEYS
TO
SUCCESS

- Plant early (except for blackeye peas) or for fall crop.
- Plant in well-drained soil.
- Pick at the right time.

Other bulletins in this series provide additional information on vegetable gardening.

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