

## GROWING HORSERADISH ORGANICALLY IN THE HOUSTON AREA



**DO NOT FEED ANIMALS  
HORSERADISH. MAY  
CAUSE ACUTE  
INFLAMMATION OF THE  
STOMACH AND CAN BE  
FATAL**

- Planting Dates:** September - January
- Amount to Plant:** One plant
- Yield:** Produces from 3 to 7 pounds per square yard of planted area.  
One plant will make about a half-pint of horseradish sauce

### **Choosing and Preparing for Planting:**

Buy a root at least five to six inches long.

### **Growing Conditions:**

Horseradish will grow in all soil types, provided they are well drained, high in organic matter, and fertile. Deep, healthy soil is best for the production of large thick roots. The recommended pH is 6.0 to 7.5.

### **Planting Method:**

Beds should first be cleared of weeds. Before planting incorporate 4-6 inches of well-composted organic matter and all-purpose organic fertilizer, such as *MicroLife*, into planting area. When worked into the soil, these amendments will add organic matter and nutrients to your horseradish beds.

Horseradish should be planted from root cuttings. Put the root pieces in the soil with the small end down and the large end 2-4 inches below the soil level and 1 foot apart in rows 3-4 feet apart.

### **Care:**

Keep the soil uniformly moist. Weed regularly. Horseradish is quite drought tolerant, but the roots become woody and have a weak flavor if stressed too much. The roots become very soft and have a strong flavor if over watered. Water horseradish once a week (1-2 inches of water) so it penetrates to a depth of 18-24 inches. Fertilize lightly once a year with a 100 percent organic fertilizer. Too much fertilizer reduces the flavor of the roots. Remove the spikes of tiny white flowers to concentrate the energy in leaves and roots.

To produce smooth, strong roots, some gardeners dig around the plant after growth starts to remove all additional leaf shoots except the one at the top. After the leaves reach 1 foot in height, remove the top four inches of soil temporarily and cut off the larger lateral (branch) roots. These procedures help ensure that the main root grows vigorously.

### **Harvesting and Storage:**

In long growing seasons (150 days), horseradish can be harvested at the end of the first year. Use a spading fork to carefully dig all but next year's roots in the fall. Remake and fertilize the bed and replant a root or two. With the rest, either refrigerate, or pot in sand in a cool place outside. Use these over the winter. Pick and use leaves for salad anytime, but the young spring growth is the most tender and tasty.

### **Pests and Diseases:**

Snails, slugs, various leaf-eating pests.

Control pests with *Garlic-Pepper Tea*, *Slug and Snail bait*, or *Spinosad* or release of beneficial insects.

**\*\*All products mentioned are available for sale at WABASH\*\***