

Turnip & Mustard Greens

Turnips and mustards, members of the cabbage family, are cool-season crops. They must be grown in the cool temperatures of early spring and fall. Mustard is grown only for the leaves. Turnip is a dual purpose crop—the leaves are used for greens, and the root is cooked similarly to potatoes and beets. A variety developed for root production can be harvested for greens. However, a variety developed for greens may not produce a good root.

✂ Grow it

Varieties

Turnips:

- Greens: 'Alamo,' 'All Top,' 'Seven Top,' 'Shogoin,' 'Topper,' 'All Top'
- Roots: 'Just Right Hybrid,' 'Purple Top White Globe,' 'Royal Crown,' 'Royal Globe,' 'Tokyo Cross,' 'White Lady'

Mustard:

- Broadleaved: 'Florida Broadleaf,' 'Tendergreen,' 'Large Smooth Leaf,' 'Savanna'
- Curled Leaf: 'Southern Giant Curled,' 'Green Wave'

Soil Preparation

- If the soil is heavy clay, add compost or other organic matter to loosen the soil.
- Dig the soil 10 to 12 inches deep. Spade in all compost.
- Scatter 1 cup of 15-5-10 fertilizer for every 10 feet of row.
- Bed the soil into ridges 6 to 8 inches high and 18 to 24 inches apart.

Planting

- For a fall crop, start planting 8 to 10 weeks before the first expected frost.
- Just before planting, drag the top from the ridges to widen the planting bed to 8 to 10 inches.
- In moist soil, scatter seeds down the row and cover with ½ inch of soil.
- Sprinkle the row regularly with water until the small plants break through.
- To have a continuous supply, make two or three plantings 10 days apart.

Fertilizing

- When the plants are 4 to 5 inches tall, apply ½ cup of fertilizer for every 10 feet of row.

Watering

- If it does not rain, soak the rows with water each week.

Care During the Season

- Keep the plants free of weeds.
- When the plants become crowded in the row, thin the row by pulling some plants. Thin the mustard plants until they are about 6 inches apart. Leave the turnips 3 to 4 inches apart.

Insects & Diseases

- If something does not look right with your plant, contact your county Extension agent for more information.

Harvesting

- Harvest mustard and turnip greens before the weather gets hot.
- Harvest mustard greens when they are young and tender. Cut the large outer leaves and let the inner leaves continue growing.
- Turnip greens generally take 40 days to produce. Harvest by pulling the entire plant when the leaves are 4 to 6 inches long.
- Turnip roots generally take 50 to 60 days to produce. Harvest when they are 2 to 2½ inches in diameter.

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full sun



well-drained soil

continued >>>

Buy it

Turnips:

- Small- or medium-sized turnips are the sweetest. They should be heavy and pearly, without soft spots. If leaves are still attached, they should look fresh.

Mustard Greens:

- Mustard leaves should be green, without blemishes, yellowing or withering. Mustard stems should look freshly cut. They should not be split.

Store it

Turnips:

- Turnips will keep in the refrigerator in a plastic bag, but only for a few days.

Mustard Greens:

- Before storing mustard greens, remove any discolored or damaged leaves along with rubberbands or ties. Wrap the unwashed greens in paper towels and place them in a plastic bag. Store them in the humidity bin for up to 5 days.

Learn about it

Turnips:

- Turnips are free of fat and cholesterol.
- They are low in sodium and are an excellent source of Vitamin C.

Mustard Greens:

- Mustard greens are free of fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol.
- They are low in sodium and are a good source of fiber.
- Mustard greens are an excellent source of folate, manganese, and Vitamins A, C, and K.

Information gathered by Aggie Horticulture

