



Know What You Grow!



Sunflower

Scientific Name: Helianthus

Recommended Varieties:

- Common Sunflower
- Lemon Queen
- Maximillian
- Multiflorus

Pests/Diseases:

Sunflowers may be susceptible to such pests as aphids, caterpillars, leaf beetles, and spider mites. Diseases that can affect sunflowers include Downey mildew, rust and Powdery mildew. To avoid this problem, water from below, keeping leaves dry. Birds and squirrels are attracted to the sunflower seeds.

[UC IPM](#)

Growing Information

Annual/Biennial/Perennial

Some varieties of sunflowers are annuals, and must be replanted every year. Other varieties are perennials and will come back every year, without being replanted.

Ideal Planting Window

April-July

Sow seeds directly into ground after danger of frost has passed.

Growing Guidance

Choose a sunny location that receives 6 to 8 hours of direct sunlight daily. Soil should be well-draining and not too compact. Soil needs to be nutrient rich with organic matter or composted manure. If possible, plant in an area sheltered from strong winds, along a fence or next to a building. Plant seeds 1 to 1-1/2 inches deep and 6 inches apart.

[The Old Farmer's Almanac](#)



Fun Flower Facts

- The tallest sunflower on record measured 30 feet, 1 inch tall.
- Sunflowers can remove toxins, such as lead, arsenic, and uranium from contaminated soil.
- Sunflowers are native to the Americas.
- The sunflower is the state flower of Kansas and the national flower of Ukraine.
- Historically, sunflowers have been used for medicine, dye, food and oil.
- Sunflower oil is packed with calcium and iron and contains vitamins A and D.
- At the bud stage, sunflowers exhibit a unique trait called heliotropism. The buds of the flowers face the sun at all times throughout the day, moving from east to west.
- The sunflower is the only flower with the word flower in its name.
- You can use the head of a sunflower as a natural scrubbing tool.

[She Said Sunflower](#)

More Information: [UCANR PDF](#)

Photos: Creative Commons, The Old Farmer's Almanac, UC Davis

Pollinators/Beneficial Insects

Sunflowers attract both honeybees as well as many species of native, wild bees. Hummingbirds and butterflies are also attracted to sunflowers.



Suggested Uses

Companion Plant For:

Sunflowers can be planted near plants subject to attack by aphids, such as roses. The bright blossoms will attract ladybugs and ants, which feed on the aphids.

Sunflowers can provide shade for less heat-tolerant plants, such as lettuce.

Mature sunflower plants can provide support for plants with vines, such as beans and cucumbers.

Other Uses



Make Sunflower Butter

Toast the seeds first. This deepens the flavor, and the natural oils are released as the seeds are toasting, which allows you to make this spread with little additional oil.

Then process in a food processor. The mixture will go through several stages. First, seeds will be become a fine powder, and then turn into a clumpy powder. As you continue to process, the mixture will transform into a ball and become a thick spread. Finally, it will turn into a smooth, loose seed butter.

[Recipe: simplyrecipes.com](https://www.simplyrecipes.com)

Contact Information



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