



# Know What You Grow!



## Growing Information

### Annual

Borage is one of the taller herbs, growing up to three feet tall and two feet wide.

### Ideal Planting Window

Plant in spring in a sunny location with rich well-drained soil.

### Growing Guidance

It is best to direct sow borage where it will live in the garden since borage has a long taproot that can be damaged during transplanting. It can be sown indoors approximately 3-4 weeks before the last frost.

### Harvesting

Harvest leaves and flowers as needed. The best time to harvest the leaves is when the plant is young before the buds have started to flower. Older leaves will get prickly, making harvesting anything on the plant a bit unpleasant.

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# Borage

**Scientific Name:** *Borago officinalis*

### Recommended Varieties:

- **Common borage** *Borago officinalis*  
Bright blue upright flower
- **Variegata** *Borago officinalis* 'Variegata'  
Blue upright flowers, green and white leaves
- **Alba** –*Borago officinalis* 'Alba' Intense white flowers

### Companion Plant For:

Tomatoes, cabbage and strawberries. It attracts pollinators so plant around squashes, melons and cucumbers.

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## Interesting Facts

Borage has hollow, hairy stem that can reach 3 feet in height and 2 feet in width.

Borage produces broad, oval, dark green leaves. They are fuzzy (due to numerous hairs on the surface) and alternately arranged on the stem

Borage is also known as "starflower" because of its star-shaped flowers arranged in the form of elongated, terminal clusters. Flowers contain both types of reproductive organs (perfect flowers) and they are blue-colored. Certain varieties of borage produce pink and white flowers.

Flowers are rich source of nectar which attracts bees and bumblebees the main pollinators of this plant. Borage is one of the most frequently visited plants (by bees) in the gardens, hence the nickname "bee bush".

Fruit of borage are four brownish nutlets. Borage easily self-seeds (that means that plant propagates itself via seeds.

Borage is rich source of vitamins A and C and minerals such as iron, calcium, potassium and magnesium.

Leaves of borage are edible. They have cucumber-like aroma. Leaves can be consumed fresh (in the form of salads) or cooked as green vegetables.

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## Drying and Storing

Borage leaves can be frozen or dried, but the flavor is best when used fresh.

**Refrigeration:** Leaves and stems can be refrigerated for 3 to 4 days in a sealed plastic bag wrapped in a damp paper towel.

**Drying:** Dry leaves and flowers in the microwave (a single layer on paper towels, microwave for 1 to 3 minutes) or in the refrigerator on a baking sheet covered with paper towels. You can air-dry leaves and flowers: place them in a mesh bag and hang them in a cool dry place or put them in an uncovered bowl and stir the leaves daily until dry.

**Freezing:** Place leaves in a plastic bag to freeze. Leaves and flowers can also be frozen in ice cubes. Drop an ice cube with a frozen flower inside lemonade or other clear drinks.

[Harvesttable](#)

## Borage Lemonade



### Ingredients:

- 3 or 4 young Borage leaves
- 1/4 cup lemon juice\_of 1 lemon
- 2 cups pure water\_cold
- raw honey to taste
- 4 Borage flowers to garnish

### Instructions:

Put the leaves, juice, water and honey in a blender and blend until smooth.

Strain into glasses and garnish with Borage flowers. Enjoy!

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## Contact Information



**RIVERSIDE COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**

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