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virginia home food production



PEPPERS

DEPARTMENT OF HORTICULTURE

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MH 413

BLACKSBURG, VIRGINIA

ENVIRONMENTAL PREFERENCES

LIGHT: sunny

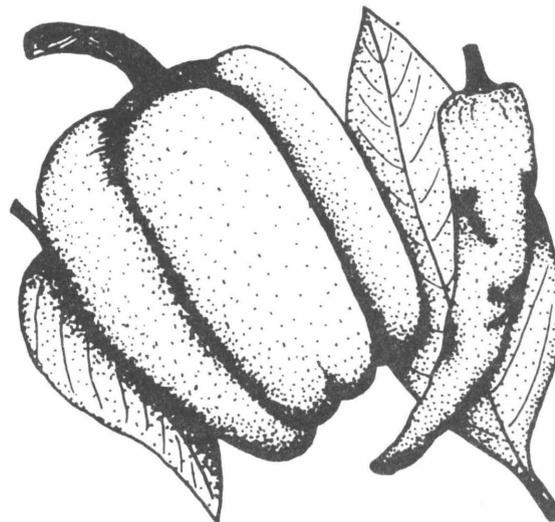
SOIL: well-drained, loose, moderate organic matter

FERTILITY: medium-rich

pH: 5.5-6.5

TEMPERATURES: warm (70-75°F)
days 75°F, nights 62°F

MOISTURE: average



CULTURE

PLANTING: set out transplants after the soil has thoroughly warmed in the spring, start seed indoors 6-8 weeks previous to this date.

SPACING: 18-24" x 30-36"

HARDINESS: very tender annual

FERTILIZER NEEDS:

light-medium feeder, use starter solution for transplants, side-dress cautiously after first fruit sets (1 1/2 oz. (33-0-0) per 10 feet of row), too much may cause excessive vegetative growth.

CULTURAL PRACTICES:

The two main types of peppers are sweet peppers and hot peppers. Sweet peppers include bell types, pimentos, and sweet bananas and are eaten raw in salads, stuffed, and in soups, stews, relishes, and pickles. They have a mild taste.

Hot peppers, such as chilis, cayenne, tabasco, paprika, and hot banana, are spicy and used as condiments or spices.

Peppers generally have a long growing season and suffer slow growth during cool periods. Therefore, after the soil has thoroughly warmed in the spring, plant in rows which are 30-36" apart with 18-24" between plants.

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Practice good cultivation and provide adequate moisture. Mulching can help to conserve water.

To get maximum yields from sweet peppers, harvest while still green. This stimulates the plant to continue flowering and producing new fruits.

Hot peppers are usually allowed to fully ripen and change colors (except for jalapenos) and have smaller, longer, thinner and more tapering fruits. Yields are smaller for hot peppers.

Blossoms may drop when night temperatures go above 75°F or when a full crop of fruit is set.

COMMON PROBLEMS

DISEASES: tobacco mosaic virus
bacterial spot, anthracnose
INSECTS: aphids, flea beetles, cutworms, European corn borer
CULTURAL: blossom end rot (moisture irregularities or calcium deficiency)

NUTRITIONAL VALUE

	<u>Grams</u>	<u>Calories</u>
Sweet peppers, 1 pod		
Green, raw	90	16
Mature red, raw	90	25

	<u>% U.S. RDA</u>	
	<u>Vitamin A</u>	<u>Vitamin C</u>
Green	6	160
Red	70	250

HARVESTING AND STORAGE

DAYS TO MATURITY: 100-120 from seed
70-85 from transplants

HARVEST:

Sweet peppers when they reach full size, while still in the green or yellow stage. When allowed to mature on the plant most varieties turn red and mellow (sweeter). Cut instead of pulling to avoid breaking branches. Hot peppers are to ripen on the plant. Entire plants may be pulled and hung to dry just before full frosts.

APPROXIMATE YIELDS: (per 10 feet of row)
2-8 lbs.

AMOUNT TO RAISE PER PERSON: 3-10 lbs.

STORAGE: medium cool conditions
(45-50°F), moist (95% RH);
2-3 weeks

PRESERVATION: freeze, pickles and
relishes, dried spices