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virginia home food production



CHARD

DEPARTMENT OF HORTICULTURE

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BLACKSBURG, VIRGINIA 24061

ENVIRONMENTAL PREFERENCES

LIGHT: tolerates light shade

Soil; well-drained loam

FERTILITY: medium
PH: 6.0-7.0

TEMPERATURE: cool (60-65°F)

MOISTURE: moist, but not
water logged



CULTURE

PLANTING: sow or transplant
after danger of frost is
past. For seed germina-
tion, soil temperature
should be 40°F. Plant
seeds 1/2-3/4" deep.

SPACING: 8" x 12-18"

HARDINESS: hardy annual

FERTILIZER NEEDS: med-light
feeder, side dress one
month after planting and
repeat applications every
4-6 weeks (16 oz. complete
fertilizer per 50 foot
row or 8 oz. sodium nit-
rate per 50 foot row)

CULTURAL PRACTICES: Chard pre-
fers cool temperatures, but
is more tolerant to heat than
spinach. Chard will produce
greens steadily throughout
the summer.

Because the chard "seed" is
actually an aggregate of seeds,
thinning is necessary. Thin
to 4-6 inches apart when plants
become 6-8 inches tall. When
the plants get to be 8-10"
tall, thin to 8 inches apart.
Plants removed during thin-
ning can be used in the kit-
chen.

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Chard should be continuously harvested throughout the summer as the removal of the outer leaves encourages the development of new leaves.

Chard does not compete well with weeds, therefore shallow cultivation to control weeds is necessary.

Crop rotation is recommended to control leaf spot.

APPROXIMATE YIELDS: (per 10 feet of row) 8-12 lbs.

AMOUNT TO RAISE PER PERSON: 5 lbs.

STORAGE: cold (32°F) moist (95% RH) conditions. 10-14 days

PRESERVATION: freeze

Prepared by: D. Relf, B. Adler, and A. McDaniel.

COMMON PROBLEMS

DISEASES: Leaf spot

INSECTS: cabbage worm, aphids, beet leaf miner, flea beetle

NUTRITIONAL VALUE

1 cup cooked, drained chard

<u>Grams</u>	<u>Calories</u>		
175	30		
% U.S. RDA			
<u>Vitamin A</u>	<u>Vitamin C</u>		
190	45		
<u>Riboflavin</u>	<u>Iron</u>	<u>Calcium</u>	
10	15	15	

HARVESTING AND STORAGE

DAYS TO MATURITY: 50-60 days from seed

HARVEST: outer leaves are harvested when they are 8-10 inches tall and still tender and succulent. Leaves should be cut with a sharp knife one inch above the ground. Continue to harvest in this way until fall. For the final harvest in the fall, the plants should be dug up before the first heavy freeze.