



Because Life Should Be Beautiful™

Fava Beans

One of the delights of having a garden is discovering how truly delicious some vegetables are when they are garden fresh. That seems particularly true of fava beans which have a superb sweet flavor that sadly can never be reproduced in the frozen product. If you are lucky enough to be given fresh fava beans, don't worry about recipes, just cook them until tender and serve with butter. It will be a revelation. If you are not one of the lucky ones, don't dismiss fava beans, as they are still a wonderfully versatile vegetable. They are very popular in Mediterranean and Middle Eastern dishes, and can be cooked in a variety of ways and often in soups or casseroles. Since they have a mealy texture, they also puree well.

Fava beans can also be a great cover crop for the cool season replenishing nitrogen back into the soil. They also make nice amounts of biomass making them quite attractive as a green manure crop that can be worked back into the ground. Plant in fall for harvest in late winter or early spring. Usually matures in 120 - 150 days. Sow seeds 1" deep, 4 - 5 inches apart, thin to 8 - 10 inches apart. Plants produce growth 2 - 4 ft. high.

For harvesting, the pods should be small and tender, use as soon as possible. Fava beans have a very tough skin, which should be removed by blanching before cooking. Choose pods that aren't bulging too much with beans, which indicates age.

Fava beans are a good source of vitamin A, B1, and B2. They also provide potassium and iron as well as several other minerals.