

# CELERY



Native to Europe and Asia, this vegetable is grown for its thick, fresh tasting, crunchy, crisp stalks. Celery is a great and healthy snack that provides many vitamins as well as a vegetable that can be incorporated into many dishes such as stir-fries and salads. Celery goes to seed when exposed to low nighttime temperature, but it does grow best in mild, long, cool season weather.

## SOIL PREPARATION

Celery struggles in heavy clay soils, and definitely prefers a sandy soil that is rich in organic matter, well drained, and not too heavy. They also need full sun exposure. Before planting, incorporate 2-3 inches of well composted organic matter and 1-2 lbs of all-purpose fertilizer (we recommend "That's All it Takes" complete fertilizer) per 100 square feet and work them into the soil to a depth of 4-6 inches. Heavy, clay-based soils must be amended with compost and organic matter to encourage and allow good root development. If you have heavy soil, we recommend 4-6 inches of organic matter and 50 lbs of Utelite or Zeolite per 200 square feet added to the soil each fall for multiple years to increase drainage and nutrient availability. Over time, you can create a better growing environment for your garden plants to thrive in and produce. Please see our information sheet "Preparing your Soil" for more detailed info on soil preparation before planting a garden.

## PLANTING

Plant transplants outdoors in late April- early May, spacing the rows 2 feet apart and the plants 6 inches apart for tight growth that will help support the plants. To grow from seed, plant seeds in trays 10 weeks before the date of last spring frost and set out the seedlings in early May. Celery seed requires 10-20 days at a temperature of 65 degrees Fahrenheit to germinate. Extra frost protection, like row covers and/or hot caps would be advisable for late April through early May transplanting.

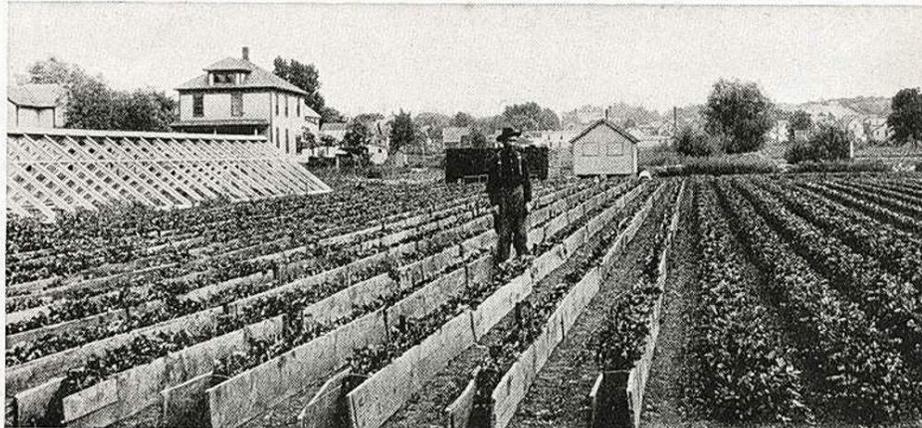
## VARIETIES:

Anderson's recommends and carries the Tall Utah 52-70 Improved variety. Vigorous sturdy plants produce smooth, thick, long stalks that are often 9-11" to the first joint. The stems should be blanched during the growing season by pushing dirt up around the stems of the plant to the depth of 4-6 inches. White or very light green celery is much sweeter and usually more tender than darker green stalks that are exposed to full sunlight. Shade cloth or row covers will help control temperature fluctuations also. 120 days to harvest.

## WATER

Celery needs regular water and consistent soil moisture to produce well. Use of a soaker hose and light mulches can assist in maintaining correct soil moisture and guaranteeing a healthy harvest. We recommend about 1-2 inches of water applied per week in 2-3 applications.

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IN MICHIGAN'S FAMOUS CELERY DISTRICT



Celery is here being prepared for market on one of the farms near Kalamazoo. In its natural state celery is bitter, tough, and unsuitable for food. This condition was remedied in earlier days by banking the rows with earth. The stalks then turned white and acquired the flavor we all know. Now the celery growers save themselves much of this trouble, for they have found that closely packed plants will blanch themselves without earth, if properly confined between planks as is being done at the left of the picture. The process of blanching not only turns the stalks white, but makes them tend

## FERTILIZER

About 6 weeks after germination or 4 weeks after transplant, apply a balanced vegetable food ("That's All it Takes" or Happy Frog Organic Tomato & Vegetable Food) down the side of the row of plants and water thoroughly. 1-2 cups per 10 feet of row works well. We recommend the Tomato & Vegetable Food because it contains many micro-nutrients (like Boron & Iron) that prevent common problems in developing leafy greens like celery.

We also recommend treating your celery seed or plants with beneficial microbes and mycorrhizae (Kangaroots or Myke). These added helpers bring nutrients and water directly to the plants that host them, making them stronger, more resistant to insects and diseases, and more drought tolerant.

## COMMON PROBLEMS

Celery doesn't compete well with weeds and therefore weed control is vital to their success. Hand weed when necessary, and use pre-emergent weed controls (Treflan or Corn Gluten) after germination to prevent new weed emergence. Practice crop rotations regularly to discourage pest problems. Celery is subject to aphids, powdery mildew, and black heart. Row covers and regular fungicide treatments (we recommend Natural Guard Copper Soap) will help protect plants from all of these pests. Aphids can be controlled with a general purpose insecticide like Ferti-lome Broad Spectrum insecticide or a Neem oil/pyrethrum combination like Ferti-lome Triple Action spray.

<b><u>CELERY</u></b>	
<b>PLANTING TIME</b>	Group C
<b>PLANTING METHOD</b>	Rows
<b>PLANT SPACING</b>	6-12"
<b>ROW SPACING</b>	2-3'
<b>SEED DEPTH</b>	1/8"
<b>TIME TO HARVEST</b>	54-56 Days from transplant
<b>WATER NEEDS</b>	1/2", 3x weekly
<b>TRANSPLANT/DIRECT SOW</b>	Transplant
<b>SPECIAL ISSUES</b>	Weeds Flea Beetles, Aphids Cold temperatures Sunlight on stalks ruins flavor and color

## HARVESTING

Celery takes almost all season to develop, and usually is best to harvest as the temperatures cool down in September. For earlier harvest, start thinning the stalks one at a time once the plants have reached a foot or more in length. When harvesting the whole stalk, use a very sharp knife to cut the stem just below the surface of the soil, where the root system stops and the leaves start. Harvest in cool weather and store in refrigerator for up to two weeks.



## NOTES

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