



# Know What You Grow!



Photo Source: AOL Images

## Rhubarb

**Scientific Name:** *Rheum rhabarbarum*

**Recommended Varieties:**

**Cherry Red (red stalks)** One of the sweetest and least tart varieties.

**Victoria (green stalks with red shading)** Fat red-and-green stems and a sweet, lightly tart flavor. Ideal for cooking.

**Riverside Giant (green stalks)** Grows up to five feet tall and four feet wide. Often used as an ornamental plant.

**Common Pests**

Rhubarb is relatively pest-free. You may occasionally see aphids, leafhoppers, and flea beetles. Either wash or pick off from leaves.

Source: [UC Integrated Pest Management](#)

### Growing Information

**Cool Season Plant**

Rhubarb is normally a perennial plant, but it grows best as an annual in the Inland Valley due to the hot summers. It is not a good choice for the desert climate.

**Ideal Planting Window**

**Inland Valley:** December – February

**Sow seeds** in pots in August or early fall when temperatures start to cool.

**Transplant** to a sunny spot in the garden when plants are 3 to 4 inches tall. Harvest leaf stalks in the following spring.

**Growing Guidance**

Rhubarb needs fertile well-drained soil. Keep the plants well-watered. Apply compost or high nitrogen fertilizer 3-4 times during the production period, beginning 2-3 weeks after transplanting.

Source: [UC Master Gardeners](#)



Photo Source: AOL Images

## Interesting Facts

Rhubarb is cultivated for its thick stalks or petioles.

**Caution!!! Never eat Rhubarb leaves, only the stalks.** The leaves attached to a Rhubarb stalk are poisonous, full of more oxalic acid than humans and animals can safely eat!

**National Rhubarb Pie Day** is January 23. Rhubarb is often referred to as “the pie plant.”

**Rhubarb is one of the sourest vegetables you can find.** That’s why its stalks are usually cooked with sugar or used as an ingredient in jams, pies, tarts, and other delicious desserts.

**Rhubarb likes company!** In recipes, it pairs well with fruits, such as strawberries.

**Rhubarb stalks are similar in appearance to celery**, but the taste is quite different.

**Dried roots of rhubarb** were used in Chinese medicine thousands of years ago.

**Source:** [Rhubarb Central](#)

## Nutritional Information

### Nutritional Value

Rhubarb is a good source of calcium, vitamin C, and potassium. One cup of raw rhubarb has only 29 calories. Remember, when cooked with sugar, the calorie count will increase greatly.

**Source:** [University of California, Davis](#)

### Recipe: Rhubarb Strawberry Crisp



#### Ingredients

3/4 cup sugar  
3 tablespoons cornstarch  
3 cups sliced fresh rhubarb  
2 cups sliced strawberries  
1 cup quick-cooking or old-fashioned oats  
1/2 cup packed brown sugar  
1/2 cup butter, melted  
1/3 cup all-purpose flour  
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
Vanilla ice cream, optional

#### Directions

In a large bowl, combine sugar and cornstarch. Add rhubarb and strawberries; toss to coat. Spoon into an 8-inch cast-iron skillet. In a small bowl, combine the oats, brown sugar, butter, flour, and cinnamon until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Sprinkle over fruit. Bake at 350 degrees until crisp is bubbly and fruit is tender, about 45 minutes. Serve warm with ice cream, if desired.

**Source:** [Recipe](#) and Photo: Taste of Home

## Contact Information



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