**DANDELION**

Scientific Name: *Taraxacum officinale*

**HOW TO GROW DANDELION FROM SEEDS**

Seeds can be planted at any time of year. When it comes to spacing, it's best to keep plants 6-9 inches (15-23 cm) apart in rows 12 inches (30 cm) apart optimal dandelion seed production. If you only want to cultivate young leaves for salads on a regular basis, spreading seeds more densely in short rows every few weeks can be a good option.

You may want to consider cold stratifying your seeds (Seed stratification is the process of breaking seed dormancy in order to increase germination) in the refrigerator for a week or so before planting dandelion seeds to assist boost germination rates.

Because dandelion seeds need light to germinate, you won't want to fully submerge them in soil; instead, lightly tamp or press them into the soil surface. Keep the planting area constantly moist throughout the season for better germination and a tastier crop. Within two weeks of sowing the seeds, seedlings should emerge.

**HOW TO GROW CONTAINER GROWN DANDELION SEEDS**

Growing dandelions in pots isn't all that different from growing them in the garden. Fill a pot at least 6 inches (15 cm) deep with potting soil and place it in a light indoor space with drainage holes. The breadth of your pot, the number of plants you put in it, and how thickly you plant them all depend on why you're growing them in the first place. Plants that you intend to bring to maturity, for example, will require more room than those grown solely for salad greens. For full developed greens, put seeds 2-3 inches (5-7.6 cm) apart in the container; for baby greens, space seeds more densely. Sprinkle a small amount of potting soil on top of the seeds, just enough to cover them, and keep the soil moist. Dandelions will benefit from fertilizing using a general-purpose fertilizer on a regular basis during the growing season.

**WHEN TO PICK DANDELIONS**

Throughout the growing season, dandelion plants can be harvested for tea, salad greens, wine, and much more. Vitamins C, A, and K, as well as potassium and strong antioxidants, are abundant in these "weeds." Ensure that your dandelion harvest is free of herbicides and pesticides, and that all portions of the plant are well washed.

As a result, Dandelion should be picked when:

* The flowers have just opened and all of the petals are still attached. Place stems in a bowl of cool water to keep them fresh.
* Cover the plant with dark fabric to blanch the leaves before harvesting. Any bitterness will be reduced as a result of this. The tastiest leaves are the young ones, however matured leaves can still be sautéed.
* Harvest the roots at any time.

**HOW TO PICK DANDELION**

Snip off leaves and flowers using clean scissors. Keep a portion of the stem on the flowers so they can be kept in water. When harvesting dandelion plants, stay away from high-traffic areas, especially those inhabited by animals. After picking, always wash the plant material thoroughly.

**WAYS YOU CAN USE DANDELIONS AFTER PICKING**

After you've picked your dandelion, there are a variety of delicious ways to use it.

* Fresh leaves are delicious in salads or cooked. Cook the greens for five minutes before draining and transferring to a pan. Fry them in oil with your favorite seasonings.
* With a fast dip in cooking oil and a quick fry, you can make fritters out of the flower heads. Remove the petals and place them in the freezer to use in muffins, pancakes, cookies, or any other baked delicacy.
* The roots must be washed and finely chopped before being dried in a food dehydrator or in a low-heat oven. Raise the heat to medium-high and roast them until they are lightly browned. To make a nutritious tea, store in a cold, dry area and boil as needed.

**HOW TO MAKE DANDELION TEA**

As long as humans have been gathering plants, health has been an element of the human life. The health advantages of dandelion tea differ depending on the research, but all users agree that it contains a lot of Vitamins A, C, and D, as well as zinc, magnesium, and iron. Tea intake has long been known to be a good diuretic, earning it the nickname "piddle bed." The various benefits of dandelion tea, in addition to its potential to improve urine flow, can have therapeutic effects.

Harvesting dandelion tea is the first step towards reaping its health benefits.

Choose plants that haven't been sprayed with pesticides or herbicides. The richest tea is made from the roots, whether roasted or fresh. Harvest in the fall or spring, when the plant is dormant and the root has accumulated a lot of energy.

**Method of preparation**

To make the tea, simply use the root spoon to stir in the boiling water and set aside for 10 minutes. Then strain it, set it aside to cool, and drink it up to three times a day. Tea should be consumed before meals if you have stomach issues.

**HOW TO MAKE DANDELION JUICE**

**Ingredients**

* Young dandelion leaves.
* Coconut Water.

**Method of preparation**

Drink three times a day after blending the leaves with coconut water in a food processor. Because dandelion leaves have a bitter flavor, you should use younger ones with a milder flavor. Other ingredients, such as apple juice, mint, and ginger, can also be added to improve the flavor and add properties to this juice.

**BENEFITS OF DANDELION**

According to https://www.growforagecookferment.com/foraging-for-dandelions/ (2020).

**Dandelion has a wide variety of benefits;**

* The entire plant has traditionally been used to help with digestion, treat UTIs, enhance kidney and liver function, and boost appetite.
* Make a soothing dandelion salve (great for tight muscles and cracked, dry skin) or a dandelion tincture (given directly or in very small amounts added to water).

You can read more health benefits of Dandelion from

https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/324083

I hope this has inspired you to consider foraging for dandelions rather than dismissing them as a nuisance weed. You've got yourself a wonder plant right in your own garden, thanks to its culinary, medicinal, and fermentable characteristics.

If you want to order dandelion seeds, flowers, or roots, please contact us. Call or text Stephen's Natural Foods right away to place your order.

