DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE
RESEARCH & EXTENSION
University of Arkansas System

Agriculture and Natural Resources

FSA6088

Home Gardening Series

Jerusalem Artichoke

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Vegetables

Environment

Light – sunny
Soil – deep loam
Fertility – medium to high
pH – 5.8 to 7.0
Temperature – warm
Moisture – well drained

Culture

Planting – tubers 2 to 3 inches deep in spring
Spacing – 2 x 3 feet
Hardiness – tender
Fertilizer – medium

Jerusalem Artichoke – *Helianthus tuberosus* – perennial

Jerusalem artichoke (known as sunchoke) is a true native of North America. It was one of the few vegetables grown by the Native Americans. It is a perennial plant cultivated as an annual that may persist in the garden as a weed. An entirely different plant than the globe artichoke grown in California, Jerusalem artichoke is related to the sunflower. The fleshy, oblong tubers may be baked, boiled or fried like white potatoes.

Jerusalem artichokes have gained attention in recent years because the tubers contain inulin that breaks down into the sugar fructose when eaten.

Cultural Practices

Planting Time

Jerusalem artichokes grow well in all parts of Arkansas. They thrive best on a well-drained garden soil with high fertility, especially potassium. Plant entire tubers in early spring.

Spacing and Depth of Planting

Plant individual tubers 2 to 3 inches deep spaced 24 to 30 inches apart. Since plants grow 6 feet high or higher, you should allow 3 to 4 feet between rows.

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Cultivar

Cultivar	Days to Maturity	Tubers Per 100 Feet of Row	Remarks
Jerusalem artichoke	120	50-100	Delicious tubers, dug from late fall to early spring. Great for naturalizing but may become invasive.

Care

Early cultivation and hoeing are necessary. As the plants become established, however, little to no further care is required. The large, woody tops that resemble sunflowers should be cut off above the ground before harvesting.

Harvesting

Dig tubers any time from September until spring but before new growth starts in the spring. The tubers are usually dug as needed. A supply can be harvested and stored as potatoes before the soil freezes. Any tubers not harvested will grow, become troublesome weeds and spread in the garden.

Frequently Asked Question

Q. What are the best storage conditions for Jerusalem artichoke?

A. If possible, store at a temperature of 32 degrees F with high humidity (95 percent). Jerusalem artichokes do not form a thick skin like the potato and tend to lose moisture rapidly. The tubers can also be placed in polyethylene bags in the refrigerator.

Photo Credit: Clarence A. Rechenthin @ USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database

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