DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE
RESEARCH & EXTENSION
University of Arkansas System

Agriculture and Natural Resources

FSA6090

Home Gardening Series

# Mung Beans

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## Environment

**Light** – sunny
**Soil** – well-drained loam
**Fertility** – light to medium
**pH** – 5.8 to 7.0
**Temperature** – warm
**Moisture** – average

## Culture

**Planting** – direct seed in warm weather
**Spacing** – 2-4 x 24-36 inches
**Hardiness** – tender annual
**Fertilizer** – light to medium

## Mung Beans – *Vigna radiata*

Mung beans originated as one of the very ancient legumes of India. They are presently very common there and in Manchuria and China, where more than a hundred different kinds are grown. These beans are popular as bean sprouts in the United States. One of the primary uses for mung beans is sprouts. It is the bean that has been used for sprouts in China for thousands of years. Sources of mung bean seed can be found at sites that specialize in Asian vegetable seeds. Another source of seed is that sold for sprouts.

## Cultural Practices

Mung beans are closely related to southern peas, and their culture is quite similar. Plant seed 1 inch deep and 2 inches apart when the soil is warmed to 65 degrees F. Allow 30 to 36 inches between rows. Fertilize with low nitrogen fertilizer, 5-10-10, at the rate of 2 pounds per 100 square feet. Keep the beans free of weeds by shallow hoeing and cultivation. The beans start forming when the plants are 15 to 18 inches high.

Mung beans will be ready to harvest in about 100 days. Harvest the beans by pulling up the entire plant. Tie the plants in bunches and hang overhead or dry on clean papers on the floor, shed or garage. The beans can be easily shelled or flailed when completely dry. All the pods do not mature at the same time. Harvest the plants once 60 percent of the pods are mature and moisture content of the seed is less than 15 percent. Dry seed on newspaper until moisture levels are about 12 percent.

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## Cultivars

| Crop | Cultivar | Days to Maturity | Seed Per 100 Feet of Row | Remarks |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mung Beans | Berken | 80 | 2 ounces | Produces sprouts in 3 to 5 days, dry shell beans in 90 days. Small, olive-green beans; pods 3 inches long, up to 12 seeds per pod. Standard, widely adapted cultivar. |
| | Mappe Green | 90 | | Sprouts in 5 days, dry shell beans in 90 days. |

Once the seed has been harvested and dried, it can be stored in glass containers and kept for several years. Freezing the seed will eliminate insect infestations and preserve the viability of the seed. They can be stored for sprouting or planting the following year. (See gourmet and specialty books for information about sprouting and how to use the beans or sprouts.)

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