

**New Gippsland
Seeds & Bulbs**



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RHUBARB *cultural notes*

Rhubarb (*Rheum rhaponticum*) should be grown in every household garden for year round desserts. It can be effectively grown in both the open garden and in large containers.

FEEDING

Dig generous quantities of animal manures through the soil before planting, as well as a generous dressing of a complete artificial fertiliser. Annual dressing with both an animal manure and an artificial food will be beneficial, as will regular feedings during each growing season, using either manures or high nitrogen fertilisers.

PLANTING

Plant the “crowns” into the prepared beds in winter and early spring so the eye or bud is just at soil level. Ensure that the soil is firmed well around the roots and that the plant is well watered for the first few months. Choose a site in the full sun in cooler climates, but in hot districts some shade will not be detrimental.

SPACING

Space plants 75 – 90 cm. apart with a similar distance between rows.

HARVEST

Pick only a few stems in the first year, allowing the plant to become fully established. Stems should be picked by pulling them sideways rather than by cutting. Remove the leaf from the stalk as soon as possible to avoid softening of the stem.

CARE

Plants that are well fed and watered should be productive for up to 5 years, after which the plants should be lifted, divided and replanted into a fresh site that has been prepared. Divide only healthy plants, discarding any that may be mottled or obviously diseased.

DISEASES

Downy Mildew is the most troublesome occurring as brown scalded areas on the leaves. The mildew can be controlled with Bordeaux or Kocide sprays. Insect pests are rarely troublesome.

REMINDER

It is hard to overfeed or overwater Rhubarb especially during warm weather when growth is rapid.