



Asparagus

Growing your own asparagus is EASY!

**What you'll need: Asparagus roots
Fertilome Root Stimulator
Super Phosphate**

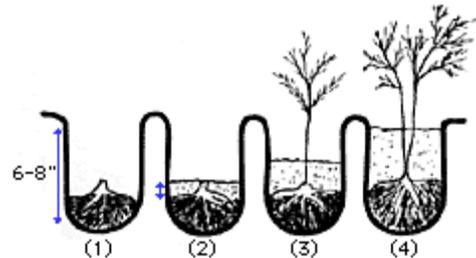
*Optional: Soil Sulfur
T&C Soil Enhancer
T&C Fruit & Flower Food*



Step 1: Soak roots in water and Root Stimulator (according to label) for 1 to 6 hours.

Step 2: Dig hole deep enough to place crown 6" deep with roots extending downward.

Step 3: Backfill with soil mixed with 2 tbsp. super phosphate (optional: also mix in 2 tbsp. soil sulfur). Fill hole until crown is covered with one inch of soil. (See illustration.)



Step 4: Water in with Fertilome Root Stimulator solution (according to directions on bottle).

Step 5: Watch them grow. Water only when soil appears dry on surface. Fill hole with soil over the course of the summer as plant grows. (See illustration.)

Step 6: Enjoy the harvest, but be patient. Wait 2 to 3 years before harvesting spears so the plant has time to establish. Plants should produce for years... even decades!

(If you would like more in-depth information see reverse side)

Revised 4/21/16

Town & Country Gardens, Inc.

5800 S. Yellowstone Hwy. ▪ Idaho Falls, ID 83402 ▪ 522-5247

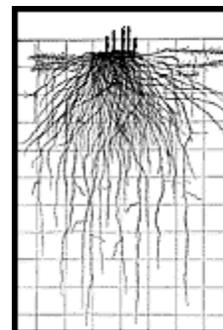
1300 East Oak ▪ Pocatello, ID 83201 ▪ 232-7985

www.tcgardens.com

More About Planting and Caring for Asparagus

Asparagus are perennial vegetables that can thrive for 15 years or more. Several varieties are available but the **Jersey Male Hybrids** are our favorites. They tend to out produce Mary Washington. Proper care as outlined below will ensure a good stand and a high yield.

Soil and Fertilization - Asparagus has an extensive root system (each square in the diagram of a six-year-old plant is 1 foot square). It is most productive on deep, well-drained soils. Asparagus plants lose vigor, and may die in poorly drained areas.



It grows best when the pH is between 6.7 and 7.0 but still performs well in our native alkaline soils with a pH of about 8. Ideal soil preparation includes applying 1 to 2 inches of **T&C Soil Enhancer** or compost, 1/2 cup **superphosphate** (0-20-0), and 1/4 cup **soil sulfur** per 10 sq. ft. Then work the soil 8 to 12 inches deep.

Planting Crowns - It is important that you soak the roots in a bucket of water and **Fertilome Root Stimulator** for 1 to 6 hours, just before planting. Even roots that appear dry and shriveled will usually perform well if they are soaked before planting. Asparagus roots have been found to perform best when planted 6-8 inches deep. Apply superphosphate (0-20-0) in the bottom of the trench at a rate of 1/4 cup per 10 sq. ft. (This is in addition to the phosphate that was applied earlier.) Research has shown that the crowns will grow more vigorously when 0-20-0 is used. It will not burn the crowns.

See illustration on reverse side:

- (1) Place the crowns in the trench or hole. The buds should face up, although it's not critical. They can even be lying on their sides, just be sure that none of the roots are crossing or tangled. Place crowns 8 to 12" apart in the row. We recommend 4½ feet between rows.
- (2) Once the crowns are placed in the trench or hole, cover them with 1 to 2 inches of soil. Cover as soon as possible to prevent any sun damage to the crowns.
- (3) As the asparagus grows, gradually fill in the trench with soil, being careful to avoid covering any asparagus foliage.
- (4) The trench should be filled to ground level by the end of the first growing season.

Care After Planting - Water deeply, but only when soil appears dry when scratched with the fingers. After the first growing season, asparagus plants do not require frequent irrigation because of their deep and extensive root system. Thorough watering (2-3 inches of water) slowly applied every 2-3 weeks during dry weather is sufficient.

In late July or early August fertilize on the surface with **T&C Fruit & Flower Food** (10-20-10) at the recommended rate on the bag.

Late in the fall, after the fern has turned completely brown, remove the brush (old stalks) and any weeds. Broadcast soil sulfur in the fall or early the following spring as needed to maintain the proper soil pH. Feed at half rate with **T&C Fruit & Flower Food** in early spring and again when harvesting is completed. This will help speed the development of the fern so the photosynthesis process can begin.

Harvesting - Begin harvesting two to three years after planting. For cutting, use a knife and cut the spear off about one inch below the soil line. Use caution not to cut too deep, as you may damage the asparagus crown. Harvest the spears when they are between 7-10 inches long. Harvest all spears that come up during the harvest season.