

Garden Green Tip

Try some POLE BEANS this year! They are a snap and the flavor beats store bought by a country mile . . . whatever that is. Now is the time to plant them!

All you need is:

1. A big pot (a 1/2 barrel would do the job or something 24" or so across) and of course, a sunny spot in your garden is perfect too!
2. Soil (2/3 garden soil and 1/3 compost such as steer manure sold by the bag at the garden center)
3. One to three garden stakes about 7 or 8 feet tall so you can bury it 18 inches or so.
4. A small package of pole beans, Blue Lake or something more exotic like "Painted Lady" Runner Beans.

To insure success, here's the TIP . . . soak your beans in a glass of water overnight. In the morning, take a cookie sheet and line it with a paper towel. Next spread the beans over the paper towel, cover completely with another paper towel and then pour water over the paper towel until it's just wet. Leave the beans to sprout on your kitchen counter or some cozy place that's room temperature. This will take 3 to 5 days. Make sure you don't let the paper dry out.

When you see the little sprouts start to form you can plant them outside. Put your stake in the soil. Then put the sprouted beans around the base of the stake about 1" under the soil. You can plant several around the pole. They may not all come up and it's better to have too many than too few. Be very careful not to break the new little sprout when planting. Firm the soil gently over the bean. You could plant some pansies or petunias around the rim of the barrel for an extra touch of color.

In about 60 days, you'll have fresh beans for dinner. Incidentally, they will keep producing until the first frost of fall!

Here's our family's favorite green bean recipe: Brown some chopped Walla Walla sweet onion (about 1/2 a big one) and a few slices of bacon together in a fry pan. Add fresh snapped green beans (3-4 cups, because you are gonna love 'em). Add about 1/2 cup of water, lower heat, cover and simmer about 10 minutes until beans are tender. Salt to taste.

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