



Growing Dhania (Coriander) in a kitchen garden

Coriander is a good source of dietary fibre, vitamin C and minerals such as Manganese, Iron and Magnesium. The tender leaves are used to season and flavour curries while its seeds are processed into mixed spices and curry powder.



It can be grown on a wide range of soils but it does best in a deep, well-drained, fertile and organic matter-rich soils.

Land preparation

- Land should be prepared to a fine tilth
- Dig and break big clods followed by harrowing.



Seed Selection

- It is recommended to buy certified seed from reputable companies such as the Kenya Seed Company.
- You can also grow your own or buy from neighbouring farmers.
- If you will plant your own seed or from other farmers it is recommended to treat them with a fungicide before planting to eliminate fungal pathogens

Planting

- Make shallow lines or furrows in the soil 30cm apart.
- Sow seeds 2-3 cm deep. Cover lightly with soil. You need 2kg of seeds for 1 acre.
- Water your seeds 2-3 times per week when the soil is dry.
- It takes 7-10 days for coriander seeds to germinate.



- When plants are 5-7 cm high, take out weak plants. Have 10-15cm between each plant in the row.
- It will be 4-6 weeks until the leaves are ready to harvest.





Management

Weeds take water and nutrients from your crop. They also hide pests and diseases. Take out weeds when you see them.



Due to coriander's slow emergence, weed competition may be a serious problem. Weeding or mulching is important early in the season.

You can use herbicides, but only before planting. Spraying your coriander with herbicides may kill your coriander plants.

Watering

- The crop should not be allowed to moisture stressed, as this will encourage them to immediately flower - and once flowers appear, the leaves become more serrated and lose much of their flavour.
- Water plants regularly but the soil should not be water-logged. Plants will not do well if water-logged. Therefore, only water when the soil is dry.
- Checking the level of water in the soil can be done without using any special equipment. Dig up the soil and take note of the level of wetness using the finger.
- Once the plants get established, the frequency of watering can be reduced. The plants are adequately watered if the soil is kept moist without feeling drenched.



Harvesting

- Coriander green leaves take 1 to 1 and a half months to mature. When growing for green leaves, make several cuts during the growing season.
- The first harvest should be done when the plants are about half foot high (10-15 cm).
- Harvest the largest herbs first which should be cut to encourage growth of the smaller herbs for later harvesting
- This will encourage growth of more tillers/ lateral buds. You need to do 4-5 cuts during the growing season for green herb.
- You can chop the green leaves and cook with meals.

