

## CARROT

Carrots are a hardy cool-season crop that grows in the spring or fall in Kansas. Carrots harvested in cooler weather will be tender and sweet. Carrots are an excellent source of vitamin A. The roots grow best in loose or sandy soils. Long slender varieties are not well adapted to growing in our heavier, tighter soils.

### Varieties

Carrot varieties differ in the length and diameter of the root. Short fat varieties include Red Cored Chantenay and Royal Chantenay. Miniature varieties include Sweet-n-Short, Gold Nugget, Little Finger, and Tiny Sweet. Moderate length varieties include Scarlet Nantes.



### When to plant

Plant carrots in mid- to late April before the last freeze, because carrots can tolerate a light freeze. Make sure the soil is well tilled or loosened to an 8- to 9-inch depth before planting. Fall carrots are excellent for growing in Kansas. Plant seeds in late July to early August.

### Spacing

Plant seeds  $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$  inch deep--deeper for fall plant-ings--in moist soil. Rows may be as close as 12 inches apart with plants every 1-2 inches in the row. Carefully sprinkle seeds so that excessive plants do not emerge. Thin carrots to the desired spacing when the plants are small.

## Care

Until carrots germinate, avoid heavy watering that could form a crust on the soil surface. Germination may be slow and uneven in early spring. Young carrot plants are weak and spindly. Weeds compete with young plants, so, careful weeding is necessary. Water is required as roots are enlarging. Carrots that develop in hard, compacted soils will be misshapen or forked.

## Harvesting

Dig or pull the roots when they are the desired diameter. Most carrot varieties require 55-60 days from seeding to mature. Fall-planted carrots can be mulched with straw and harvested as needed until the ground freezes solid in mid-December. After harvesting, cut the tops to within ½ inch of the root top and store in plastic bags in a refrigerator until ready to use. Carrots can be stored for long periods.

## Common concerns

Carrot weevil

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