



BEANSPROUTS AND OTHER VEGETABLE SEED SPROUTS

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Sprouting vegetable seeds can be done practically any place and any time. Sprouts provide a natural source of protein, vitamins, and minerals. The low calorie content of sprouts makes them a welcomed addition to many dishes from salads and soups to meatloaf.

Sprouts from mung bean (*Phaseolus aureus*) been used for food since ancient times. These sprouts have nutrient value similar to asparagus and mushroom, which contain high quantities of Vitamin A. Sprouts can be canned or frozen in addition to eating them fresh. Mung bean seeds can be purchased from mail-order commercial seed companies and health food chain stores. (**Caution:** Regardless of the source, *do not* use seeds that have been treated with a fungicide. Treated seeds are not edible and can be recognized by the coating of pink or green dust on the seed coat.)

Mung beans seeds can be sprouted in many different containers; glass jars, crocks, plastic pans, or cement vats are most common. Wooden kegs or metal cans may be used but these may alter flavor. Sprouts can be grown for various periods of time ranging from 3 to 10 days depending on the type of seeds used. Start new seeds at three-day intervals for a continuous fresh supply of edible sprouts.

The following is a listing of other kinds of seeds that may be sprouted: alfalfa, cabbage,

clover, fenugreek, mustard, radish, sesame, sunflower, adzuki beans, chick peas, lentils, mung beans, green peas, wheat, rye and triticale.

Procedures for Sprout Preparation

1. Wash seed (about 2 oz) and soak in lukewarm water 6 to 8 hours or overnight at room temperature.
2. Next, put the seeds in a jar covered with cheese cloth after the soaking process.
3. Continue to keep the seeds sprinkled with water at least 2 to 3 times each day. The sprinkling may be done once early in morning and again before retiring to bed at night. It helps to roll the jar (container) around during each sprinkling to allow for easy lengthening (growth) of the sprouts until they are 2 1/2 to 4 inches long and ready to eat.
4. For best results, use only non-chlorinated water such as well water, spring water, or distilled water, because the chlorine in city water can cause poor sprouting. Sprouting is best done at 70 to 80°F in a dark place. It will take 3 to 7 days to obtain mature sized sprouts, depending on the temperature.
5. Place mature sprouts in a water-filled container and wash to remove seed coats and fibrous roots. The seed sprouts will

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sink to the bottom and the seed hulls will float to the top. Gently skim the seed hulls off by hand or with a small wire strainer. Allow sprouts to drip drain.

6. Sprouts are best when used immediately after washing, but can be stored for several days in the refrigerator

(38 to 50°F) in closed glass and plastic containers or freezer bags.

7. The size of mature sprouts will vary. Allowing the sprouts to grow too long (over 4 inches) may cause them to become bitter.