

**Latin Name/Genus:** *Vicia faba*

Family: *Fabaceae*

**Difficulty:** Easy

**Season:** Cool season

**Exposure:** Full-sun

**Zone:** Hardy to Zone 2



**Timing:** In mild winter locations, direct sow broad beans seeds October/November; direct sow February to May in other locations, as tall, unhardened plants likely won't withstand winter. Optimal soil temperature for germination: 10-21°C.

**Starting:** Sow seed 5cm (2") deep, 15cm (6") apart in double rows 23cm (9") apart. Germination takes 10-14 days, depending on weather conditions, etc.

**Days to Maturity:** From direct sowing date.

**Growing:** Ideal pH: 6.0-6.8. Keep overwintered plants weeded; provide stakes or strings between rows to stop plants from leaning, as needed.

**Nutrient Preferences:** A broad bean or combination inoculant is recommended to provide a source of nitrogen to the soil prior to planting; enrich soil with compost prior to planting. Broad beans use a relatively high amount of phosphorus, therefore a phosphate boost could benefit the crop, as can sulphur on black or grey wooded soils; no additional nitrogen required.

**Harvest:** Harvest broad beans when the pods appear plump and begin to droop from the weight of the seeds; shell similarly to peas and cook or use in soup. For dried beans, wait until the pods start to shrivel.

**Diseases & Pests:** If black aphids appear in May/June, pinch off the growing tips on which the aphids feed, and spray the plants with blasts of water to dislodge remaining aphids; practice crop rotation.

**Companion Planting:** Also know as *fava* or *faba beans*, broad beans are a great plant for fixing nitrogen in the soil, and do well next to all leafy greens; avoid planting broad beans near onions.