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## **Growing Cauliflower – How To Plant Cauliflower**

By Kathee Mierzejewski

If you have been wondering how to plant cauliflower you will find that it is not difficult. Growing cauliflower can be done right along with your other closely related plants like broccoli, kale and turnips

Growing cauliflower is best done in cool temperatures with moist atmospheres. You can grow cauliflower as a summer or fall crop. Typically, you will plant cauliflower in the mid spring for an early summer harvest or in mid summer for a fall harvest. It takes eight to ten weeks to produce a summer crop and four to five weeks to produce a fall crop. When growing cauliflower, a fall crop will produce more quality plants than a summer crop.

Hot weather, too low of temperatures, or drought will result in premature heads. When growing cauliflower you need to remember that the plant is sensitive to conditions unfavorable for its growth.

When growing cauliflower, it is helpful have a hotbed or greenhouse to help you produce transplants in the early spring. Cauliflower grows best in soil that is fertile and soft so it can hold enough moisture. When thinking about how to grow cauliflower, you should remember that it requires a rich soil and lots of nutrients.

When thinking about how to plant cauliflower, know that you should plant the seeds  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  inches deep. The rows should be three to six inches apart. You should plant a maximum of eight seeds per one foot of row. If the plant bed starts to overcrowd, you can thin the plants to one inch apart in the row.

When your plants are ready to be planted outside, plant the plants on eight to ten inch rows at least 36 inches apart. Make sure the rows are at least 15 inches apart. When you first water, make sure to use an organic phosphate fertilizer so the plants can get a good contact with the soil.

Make sure you use fertilizer frequently. Cauliflower likes a good magnesium level as well and will show symptoms of deficiency when the soil is allowed to become too acidic.

Be sure to water your cauliflower every five to seven days. This is required for your cauliflower to produce nice heads. It is very sensitive to both over and under watering as well, so be sure to irrigate the plants so they don't get stressed.

Knowing when to harvest is important. If you want to know when to harvest cauliflower, know that the mature heads are a fully developed, clear white and compact head about six inches. You can cut them with a large knife, leaving at least one set of leaves to protect the head.

The time when to harvest cauliflower does not end when you harvest the main head. You can harvest it continuously after that because it will continue to produce little florets after harvesting the main head, much like broccoli. These florets can be harvested and eaten.

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## Simple Roasted Cauliflower

### Ingredients

1 head cauliflower (about 2 pounds), cut into bite-size florets (about 8 cups)  
1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil  
5 cloves garlic, roughly chopped  
1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper  
2 teaspoons kosher salt  
2 teaspoons roughly chopped fresh thyme leaves

### Directions

Preheat the oven to 450 degrees F.

Toss the cauliflower with the olive oil, garlic, and red pepper on a baking sheet; sprinkle with the salt and thyme and toss again. Roast until golden and tender, about 20 minutes. Transfer to a serving bowl and serve.



### Ingredients

5 to 6 cups cauliflower florets, about 1 1/2 inches in diameter (from 1 medium cauliflower)  
1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil  
1 tablespoon sliced garlic  
2 tablespoons lemon juice  
1 teaspoon salt  
1/2 teaspoon black pepper  
2 tablespoons grated Parmesan  
Chopped chives, for garnish

Place the cauliflower florets in a large saute pan or a roasting pan. Drizzle the olive oil over the cauliflower, and season with the garlic, lemon juice, salt and pepper. Place the saute/roasting pan in the oven and cook for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally to ensure even roasting. Remove from the oven and sprinkle with the Parmesan. Garnish with chopped chives and serve immediately while still warm.

### Directions

Preheat the oven to 500 degrees F.