

RHUBARB

Rhubarb, often called pie plant, is a cold-season perennial that is extremely winter hardy and drought tolerant. The crop is produced spring into summer from crowns consisting of buds and fleshy rhizomes. The bright red stalks are used in cooking, baking, and preserves. The leaves are toxic and should never be eaten.

PLANTING: Plant in early spring with crown 1-2” below the surface in well amended soil. Mature plants will grow 3’ tall by 4’ wide, so allow plenty of space. Select an area in full sun (at least 6 hours per day) and water thoroughly after planting.

CULTURE: Rhubarb will tolerate most soils but grows best in fertile, well-drained soil high in organic matter. It prefers lightly to moderately acid soil with a liberal application of fertilizer every spring. Beginning the second year stalks may be harvested individually over a 4-6 week period, or the entire plant stripped at once. Tug leaves side-to-side and out rather than cutting to avoid leaving ends to rot on the plant. If it sends up flower stalks simply cut them off. Flower stalks reduce productivity. Rhubarb is extremely tough and will thrive even when somewhat neglected.

VARIETIES EXPECTED FOR 2026

CANADIAN RED	Red stems inside and out with sweet, tart flavor. Delicious for sauces and pies.
VICTORIA	Broad, crimson stalks that shade slightly to crimson inside. Thick and tender with tart flavor. Vigorous, upright grower that is reliably hardy.

