

Carrots

(Daucus carota var. sativa)

M. Poffley, formerly Horticulture Division, Darwin

PLANTING OUT

In the Top End carrot plantings are limited to the cooler months from April to June. High temperatures result in short thick roots. Soils must be deeply dug (at least 25 cm) prior to planting. Shallow soils lead to forked, distorted, rough roots. Sow direct to the bed. To facilitate even sowing the seed is mixed with a fine sand and dribbled through the fingers in rows 25-30 cm apart. The seed is given a light covering of soil or saw dust and the row firmed down using a board and standing on it. When the plants are 5 cm or so high it is necessary to thin them out to 5 cm spacings. The beds must be kept weed free as this can have considerable affect on yield. Occasionally the crowns become raised above the soil; these should be covered again or they become green.



FERTILISER

Carrots are not heavy feeders and fresh compost or animal manure is not recommended as roots become spongy and rough. However if the previous crop had received large amounts of compost or animal manure the carrots would definitely benefit. A mixed fertiliser at the rate of 50 g/m² worked into the soil 2 weeks before sowing should be sufficient for the crop.

However 2-3 side dressings of a 50:50 mix of urea and muriate of potash starting at the 4 leaf stage can be beneficial depending on the condition of the crop. This should be applied at the rate of 20 g/m².

WATERING

In initial stage frequent waterings are necessary as young plants wilt quickly. The soil in the root zone should be maintained in a moist condition. Irregular watering and drying out of the soil can result in split or misshapen roots.

HARVESTING

When the tops of the roots obtain a diameter of 2-3.5 cm they can be considered ready for harvesting. A good watering a couple of hours prior to harvesting greatly facilitates lifting of the carrots. Young roots can be harvested in about 2½ months. Harvest roots as needed. Fortnightly plantings will ensure continuity of supply over the season.

Please visit us on our website at www.primaryindustry.nt.gov.au

Published: Tuesday 14 April 1998.

While all care has been taken to ensure that information contained in this Agnote is true and correct at the time of publication, the Northern Territory of Australia gives no warranty or assurance, and makes no representation as to the accuracy of any information or advice contained in this publication, or that it is suitable for your intended use. No serious, business or investment decisions should be made in reliance on this information without obtaining independent/or professional advice in relation to your particular situation.