

Rheum x hybridum 'Canada Red' (Rhubarb)

Rhubarb 'Canada Red'; Rheum rhubarbarum 'Canada Red'



Rheum x hybridum 'Canada Red' (Rhubarb) is a clump-forming perennial vegetable grown primarily for its edible leaf stalks which are used most often in sauces, jams or pies. The plant develops from a short crown, producing thick, angular stems and enormous, smooth, heart-shaped leaves that retain their green color throughout the season. In summer, bold spikes of white flowers rise above the foliage. 'Canada Red' tends to produce shorter, more slender stalks than other varieties, but is tender and very sweet and juicy with good red color.

Although usually relegated to the vegetable garden, the impressive leaves and ruby red stems add to the overall interest of the plant. They can make a bold statement in a sunny flower bed.

Grows up to 2-4 ft. high (60-120 cm) and 3 ft. wide (90 cm).

Performs best in **full sun to part shade** in **fertile, evenly moist** but **well-drained soils**.

Fertilize established plants in the spring after growth starts and again in the summer after harvest.

Rhubarb does best in cooler climates, and tends to decline in summers where average temperatures exceed 75°F (24°C). However, it can be grown as an annual in warm climates. The plant will be smaller than the perennial ones, but a little rhubarb is better than no rhubarb at all.

Although rhubarb can be grown from seed, it is generally propagated by divisions taken in spring, about 4 to 6 weeks before the average date of last frost. Use a spade to divide the crown into sections, each retaining a portion of the rhizome (thickened root) and at least one strong bud. Sections from the outer part are better than the centers of old plants. Replant straight away, 3-4 ft. apart (90-120 cm), or wrap in damp sacking until ready to plant. Make sure the buds are planted about 2 in. below the soil surface (5 cm).

Do not harvest stalks until the second year.

Remove any flower heads as soon as they appear. Allow the foliage to die back naturally in the fall, then cut away the old leaves to expose the growing points to winter cold.

Divide the root crowns every 4-5 years.

Keep an eye out for aphids, slugs, snails, honey fungus. Avoid crown rot by dividing clumps before they get too large.

The leaves are highly toxic (oxalic acid). They should be removed and discarded before the stalks are used in cooking.

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Requirements

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Hardiness | 3 - 8 |
| Climate Zones | 1, 1A, 1B, 2, 2A, 2B, 3, 3A, 3B, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, A1, A2, A3 |
| Plant Type | Fruits, Perennials |
| Plant Family | Polygonaceae |
| Genus | Rheum |
| Common names | <u>Rhubarb</u> |
| Exposure | Full Sun, Partial Sun |
| Season of Interest | Spring (Late) Summer (Early, Mid, Late) |
| Height | 2' - 4' (60cm - 120cm) |
| Spread | 2' - 3' (60cm - 90cm) |
| Spacing | 36" - 48" (90cm - 120cm) |
| Maintenance | Low |
| Water Needs | Average |
| Soil Type | Chalk, Clay, Loam, Sand |
| Soil pH | Acid, Alkaline, Neutral |
| Soil Drainage | Moist but Well-Drained |
| Characteristics | Showy |
| Tolerance | Rabbit |
| Garden Uses | <u>Beds And Borders</u> , <u>Patio And Containers</u> |
| Garden Styles | <u>Informal and Cottage</u> |

How Many Plants