
ENVIRONMENTAL HORTICULTURE

Environmental Horticulture #EH380



PARSLEY

PRODUCTION AND CONSUMER CARE

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INTRODUCTION

- Common name: Parsley
- Scientific name: *Petroselinum crispum*
- Bright green biennial herb
- Grows to about 1 foot in height
- Produces long stalks of tiny yellow-green flowers the second season
- Finely chopped leaves are used as flavoring in many foods
- Often used as a garnish
- Seeds are harvested for extraction of apiol, an oil used in treatment of malarial diseases

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

- Grows well in a deep pot which accommodates the long taproot

- If growing in a hot climate, provide a partially shaded location
- Requires well drained but moist media
- Media can be enriched with a fertilizer high in nitrogen
- Can be grown indoors in a sunny location such as a windowsill
- Can be transplanted and moved indoors in winter to provide a year-round harvest

PROPAGATION

- Germination is notoriously difficult and requires 3-6 weeks at 70°F
- Soaking seeds overnight before sowing shortens the germination period

- Seeds should be covered by ½ inch of media and set 1 foot apart
- When plants are fully grown they should be set 8 inches apart, so some thinning may be necessary
- Renew beds every two years for maximum leaf production since the plant dies down after two growing seasons
- Will self-seed if left to flower

DISORDERS

- Leaf spot (*Alternaria radicina* and *Septoria petroselini*)
 - Small brown spots appear on leaflets
 - Fungicides can help control the disease
- Root rot (*Fusarium* spp. and *Rhizoctonia solani*)
 - Lower leaves will turn yellow and brown
 - Ultimately the entire plant may die
 - Avoid planting in areas previously devoted to parsley
 - Avoid excessive seed densities
- Damping off (*Pythium* spp. and *Rhizoctonia* spp.)
 - Seedlings die at random
 - Plant on raised beds in well drained soil or media

CONSUMER CARE

- If growth becomes coarse during the summer, cut off leaves and water well
- Leaves should be harvested from the outside of the plant
- To prevent the plant from going to seed, continue to remove outer leaves and flowers
- Can reduce itching from mosquito bites when crushed and rubbed on the skin

CULTIVARS AND SPECIES

- *P. crispum*: curly leaf parsley
- *P. neapolitanum*: Italian or flat leaf parsley; stronger flavor than curly leaf species

References

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parsley>
<http://www.botanical.com/botanical/mg/mh/p/parsle09.html>
<http://www.global-garden.com.au/gardenherbs4.htm#Parsley>
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