

GET GROWIN' WITH YOUR OWN New Mexican Chile Peppers

Things to consider when growing your plants **indoors**:



START HERE

In a small pot, filled with soil (add compost, if accessible), place 2-3 seeds 1/4 inch deep in the soil. Water the soil to moisten and initiate the germination process. Place near a light source, but not direct sunlight (as it may damage your seedlings). Cover with plastic wrap or something similar to keep warmth and moisture in. Continue to moisten the soil until the seeds begin to sprout. Separate sprouted seeds to their own pot once they begin to grow additional leaves so they have room to grow!



WATERING

After germination, water when soil is slightly dry - you don't want to overwater and rot your roots (as it may cause root rot, and you don't want that)..



PESTS

You still need to keep an eye out for pests, even if you are growing indoors. They are rare on pepper plants, but occasionally they appear. If you see aphids, use a soapy spray to get rid of them.



LIGHTING

As your plants grow, place them in direct sunlight (brightly lit windows) that receive many hours of sunlight. Little sunlight results in narrow stems.



GROWTH

To encourage and stimulate growth and strengthen the structure of your plant, rotate the pots in the sunlight, as seedlings reach and lean towards the light.

This process is known as **phototropism**.

ALSO - pinch off only the first few flowers down to the stem, to encourage an abundant fruit set.



www.gardeningknowhow.com



DID YOU KNOW?...

Red and green chile peppers grow from the same plant.



GREEN TO RED

The difference between a red chile and a green chile is the maturity of the fruit.

www.acyennediane.com



Chile

IS IT A FRUIT OR VEGETABLE?

IT'S BOTH!



Botanical definition: a fruit is a seed-bearing structure on a flowering plant. Chile peppers are the product of blooming flowers. Cutting one open demonstrates they obviously house seeds. Therefore, peppers classify as the fruit part of the plant.



Culinary definition: classify vegetables by their use (generally when used in food dishes that are savory, which are salty or spicy rather than sweet). *Examples of a vegetable classification on chile would include being used for enchiladas, salsa, chile sauces and powders.*



PLANTING

Planting chile takes place between March - April.

Pollination

When grown outdoors, chiles are typically self-pollinators, with a little help from the wind.

Helpful indoor growing tip:

Use peak pollen hours (noon to 3 p.m.) to hand pollinate flowers or simulate the wind by gently shaking the plant.



HARVESTING

GREEN CHILE - Harvesting will typically begin in late-July, and will last until mid-October.

RED CHILE - Harvesting will typically begin in early-October and finish off around mid-December.



GREEN CHILE - 4,200 acres were harvested.

RED CHILE - 4,300 acres were harvested.

The value of New Mexico chile production in 2022 was estimated at

\$46.2 million

www.cpi.nmsu.edu

CHILE

Byproducts

What on earth?... There's chile in that? You bet! It's NOT JUST for eating.



Chile is used as an ingredient in:

mace sprays for law enforcement, food for flamingos in zoos to help them stay pink, teas and lozenges to treat sore throats, ointments, liniments, pain patches, medication for arthritis, and much more!

CPI

The Chile Pepper Institute

The **Chile Pepper Institute** is the only international, non-profit organization devoted to education and research related to capsicum, or chile peppers.

Established in 1992, the Institute builds on the research of chile peppers since the famous horticulturalist Fabian Garcia (the father of the U.S. chile pepper industry) began standardizing chile pepper varieties in 1888.

To learn more, visit: cpi.nmsu.edu



Photos courtesy of Joram Robbs



New Mexico State University (NMSU) is a land-grant university that thrives on “research, creativity, and economic development.” Established in 1888, NMSU has grown into a location that serves as home to 60+ research facilities, 5 university museums, and houses the Chile Pepper Institute and the Agricultural Experiment Station that supports research for real-world problems.

To learn more, visit: www.nmsu.edu



New Mexico Agriculture in the Classroom (NMAITC) is a non-profit educational outreach program funded primarily by the membership of the New Mexico Farm and Livestock Bureau and many generous donors. The purpose of NMAITC is to educate the general public, with an emphasis on K-12 students and educators, about the importance of agriculture.

- Classroom Presentations
- Teacher Workshops
- Field Trips & Educational Events
- STEM & Real World Problem Solving

To learn more about our program, or request a presentation, email: agclass@nmflb.org



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