

GROWING SUMMER PURSLANE

Summer purslane has a succulent crunchy bite with fresh mild sweetness and sour notes due to its oxalic and malic acid content. It is rich in vitamins and minerals, one of the best greens to eat for a health boost and is often grown as a micro green.

Seed Sowing

Sow your summer purslane seeds under cover from March and outside from June. They are fast-growing and suitable for successive sowings. Sow seeds in modules with a fine covering of compost and water with a fine spray. Direct sow your seeds in rows around 20 cm apart; sow the seeds in shallow drills and thin out later to 10 cm. You can mix your seed with horticultural sand to help spread them evenly in the rows; they are small seeds and hard to see.

Transplanting

Ensure your seedbed is free from weeds, then transplant plants at 20 cm apart in rows 10 cm apart and water them in well.

Plant Care

One of the easiest annuals to care for, if it's really hot and dry, they will show signs of wilting so water them; however, they do not like overwatering. Weed regularly to prevent competition for nutrients.

Challenges

Summer purslane does not suffer from any pests or diseases. It doesn't like heavy clay or very wet ground as it will rot out and prefers hot and dry conditions.

Harvest

Leaves and young shoots are ready in 6-8 weeks; pick leaves to add to salad or cut stems, leaving enough for regrowth. Leaves harvested in the early morning have a better flavor.

Culinary Ideas

Summer purslane is a powerhouse of nutrition, containing vitamins A, B, and C, calcium, magnesium, iron, potassium, omega-3, and antioxidants. Use the juicy leaves in salads or to garnish dishes; slender tips can be used in stir-fries, crispy tempura, lightly steamed with fish, chopped into a green salsa verde, or even pickled to enjoy in the winter months.

Seed Saving

Let your purslane flower, pick the whole plants, and hang them upside down over a sheet to collect the tiny black and shiny seeds. Let the seeds dry thoroughly before storing them in a cool, dark place.