

### Varieties include:

**Annum**, meaning 'annual,' which is an incorrect designation, include most of the common of chilli types like Nu Mex, Jalapeño, Belsl and Waxes.

**Baccatum**, meaning 'berrylike', which consist of the South American chillies known as ajís.

**Chinense**, meaning 'from China', which is also an incorrect designation, this species include the habaneros.

**Frutescens**, meaning 'shrubby or bushy', includes the Tabascos .

**Pubescens**, meaning 'hairy', and includes the rocotos.

**Capsicum annum** is the most extensively cultivated throughout the world and because it cross pollinates so easily probably thousands of varieties exist. Annums are really divided into two categories: sweet (or mild) and hot. Too many leaf variations to describe but flower corollas are white with no spots. Popular annums include:

- Ancho
- Anaheim
- Big Bertha
- Bolivian Rainbow
- Cayenne
- Cherry Bomb
- Cayenne
- Cubanelle
- Chimayó
- Chiltepin
- Fresno
- Fiesta
- Firecracker
- Goat Horn
- Hungarian Yellow Wax
- Jalapeño
- Jaloro
- Nu Mex
- Mulato
- Mirasol
- Peter Pepper
- Peruvian Purple
- Pasilla
- Pimiento
- Poblano
- Spur
- Super Chili
- Santa Fe Grande
- Sweet Banana
- Thai Hot

### Capsicum Baccatum

*Capsicum baccatum* originated in Peru or Bolivia and are now found throughout South America. The plants are tall, up to five foot with large dark green leaves. This species is distinguished from the other species by the flower corollas being white with distinctive dark green or brown spots, and anthers being yellow or tan. It's fruity flavour means it is used in salsas or dried and ground into powders. Types include Ají.

**Capsicum chinense** is often referred to as habanero but there are hundreds of similar pod types. Originating from the Amazon and spread into the Caribbean and into Central and South America. Growing from 1 to 5 feet high with pale to medium green large and wrinkled leaves. Flowers have white to greenish corollas and purple anthers and filaments. These are slow growers with a long season. Most countries have their own name for the chinense:

- Habanero (Yucatán)
- Congo Pepper (Trinidad)
- Goat pepper (Bahamas)
- Scotch Bonnet (Jamaica)

**Capsicum frutescens** comes from the Amazon basin in Brazil and the Mexican city of tabasco. Hence the most recognisable one being the tabasco. Now finding their way to India and the Far East where they are called bird pepper. Bushy type of plant growing to 4 feet, with smooth oval leaves up to 2½'. Flowers have greenish white corollas with no spots and blue anthers, with erect pods up to 1½' inches long. Make good pot plants.



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# How to grow... Chillies & Peppers

**SOW IT  
GROW IT**

*It's simple, easy and fresh*

**FROSTS**  
  
*...naturally*

## Peppers



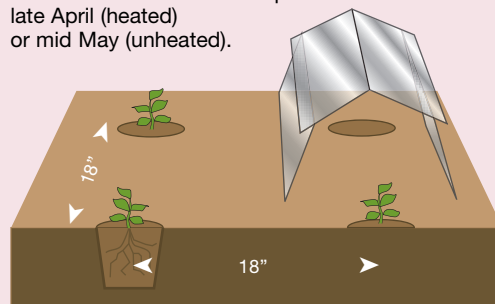
Plants need to be 45cm (18 – 20") apart. If plants are to go outside it is important that all threat of frosts have passed. Mist plants regularly to keep down red spider mite. They may need support if plants become top heavy or unstable. Some growers suggest that you pinch out the growing tip when your pepper reaches its desired size, so that it will encourage bushing out. However others say this is not necessary. At times the plants may need some protection if grown outdoors, protect with plastic covers. Water regularly but do not keep the soil too wet. The soil must be free draining. Add a balanced or liquid fertiliser every two weeks during the growing season. Then add a potassium fertiliser every time you water when the fruits have begun to swell.

### Harvesting

Harvest 12 – 14 weeks from transplanting. It can vary when fruits are ready due to weather or positioning. Some varieties are best when fruits are green. Others may be left on the plant for two-three weeks until they change colour to red or creamy yellow.

### Planting

Cover soil with cloches 2 weeks before planting. Water in and cover seedlings after planting. For Greenhouse cultivation plant out in late April (heated) or mid May (unheated).



### Varieties

- Ace F1
- Bell Boy F1
- Californian Wonder
- Canape
- Carnival
- Clio
- Early Prolific
- Giallo 2000
- Gold Star
- Gypsy
- Midnight Beauty
- Yellow Bell
- Yolo Wonder

Chillies and peppers are tropical and sub tropical plants that like temperatures of around 21°C (70°F) with high humidity of around 70 – 75%. This is not always easily achievable indoors or out.

In temperate climates plants may be grown under cover or outside in a sunny, sheltered site in moderately deep, fertile, well-drained, but not overly wet, soil. They do not take too kindly to being planted in open ground, so containers offer an adequate home.

### Sowing Time

Sow seed in March.  
Plant up and in June.

### Crop Care

Requires fertile well-drained soil. Sow seed in spring in the greenhouse or on the windowsill into trays of compost. Soil must have a pH of about 5.5 – 7. Prick out the seedlings into 6 – 9cm pots. Pot up again into 9" pot about 10 – 12wks after sowing. John Innes No3 is more than adequate for this purpose.

## Chillies



Follow the instructions for pepper growing, but note chillies will require plenty of water. They shouldn't need staking because the fruits are much smaller and generally don't become top heavy. Chillies are not hardy by any means and do require full sun in a sheltered position, and can only be put outside once the threat of frost has passed.

Chillies can be picked green or when they have ripened. This usually takes about 15 – 18 weeks after transplanting.

Just remember the hot flavour increases with the maturity of the chilli fruit and comes from the white pith and seeds inside.

They can make a rather attractive feature on the kitchen windowsill or in the conservatory. Chillies can also be allowed to dry and stored for later use. When needed, use the chillies dry or allow the fruit to soak in hot water prior to use.

### Chilli History

Chillies come in all shapes, sizes and colours ranging from tiny pointed extremely hot, bird's eye chilli to the large mild fleshy peppers like the Anaheim. Indigenous to Central and South America and the West Indies, they have been cultivated there for thousands of years before the Spanish conquest, which eventually introduced them to the rest of the world.

Mexican cooking is one of the world's oldest cuisines. The explorers of the New World brought back to the UK tomatoes, peppers, red hot chillies, avocados, various beans, vanilla and chocolate. These flavours were to change the flavour of Europe.

Today there are probably 400 different chillies grown. They are one of the most widely cultivated crops, grown from the Far East, China, Japan, Thailand and Indonesia to India to Mexico. Some of the more commonly available fresh chillies include jalapeño, Serrano, poblano, yellow wax, bird's eye, habanero and cayenne are now being stocked by many stores and markets. If you cannot find the required chilli called for in a recipe try substituting with one of similar size and heat, or grow your own as they are as easy to grow as tomatoes especially in a greenhouse in pots.

## Tabasco

**Capsicum pubescens** originates in Bolivia and is now being cultivated from the Andes to Mexico and Central America. The common name for this species is rocoto. It is a sprawling plant up to 4 feet high and two foot wide with oval light to dark green leaves that are up to 3 inches long and very hairy. Flowers have purple corollas, purple anthers and stand erect above the leaves. These are hardy plants with a long growing season. As the pods are so fleshy they are usually eaten fresh in salsas, but they are very hot.

### Varieties include:

- Manzano Amerillo
- Manzano Rojo
- Rocoto