

Giant Sunflower Planting Tips

One plant should have about 3 square feet. So when planting multiple seeds in an area continue thinning plants till they are at least 3 foot apart.

Most sunflowers are not self pollinating so you need at least two plants to cross pollinate in order to get viable seeds for next season.

Plant ¼ inch below surface. Soak seeds for 1 to 2 hours in one cup of water mixed with one cap full of 3% Hydrogen Peroxide for an hour or so.

Plant when you know that the chance of frost is done.

Germination should occur in 7 to 14 days.

Place your location so as to get as much daylight as possible.

If you choose to pole your plants a tomato pole is fine to make sure a storm does not damage the plant till it gets strong enough to handle harsh weather.

Use strips of soft cloth or soft twine as ties.

Don't use something that may cut into the stalk.

As for your soil be creative, get it rich in nutrients as possible. Make sure that your soil has good drainage. Raised garden beds works nicely.

Sunflower roots will go deep if they can, so it is good if the soil is tilled and broken up deeply. A 10 foot sunflower will drink up to 1 gallon of water a day. So use a watering method that will get deep into the soil.

Once the seedlings begin to pop up protect them from varmints, birds and garden pests.

The first leaves you will see are call dicot leaves. Do not use fertilizer yet.

Once the seedlings begin to get "true leaves" you can then begin to fertilize.

Only use liquid soluble fertilizers.

Use a 10-52-10 till the plant gets to 1 foot high. (good for root growth)

Use a 20-20-20 till the plant gets to 4 foot high. (good for plant stability)

Use a 28-14-14 when it gets over 4 foot high. (Push push push)

Use a fertilizer higher in phosphorous when you see the bud. (good for head growth and seed development)(go back to the 10-52-10 at this point)

Fertilizing should be done about 2 to 3 times a week.

If you see the leaves turning to a lime green you need to back off the fertilizer. This is how to determine if you are pushing the plant too hard or not.

Also always soak the ground with water first before you apply the liquid fertilizer.

Only let your best plants breed with each other makes for better seed stock for your next season. **HAPPY PLANTING!!**

Dave Rumancik- Ohio Valley Giant Pumpkin Growers

