

Home Gardening Series

Peanuts

Craig R. Andersen
Extension Horticulturist -
Vegetables

Environment

Light – sunny
Soil – deep, sandy loam
Fertility – medium
pH – 5.7 to 7.0
Temperature – warm
Moisture – average

Culture

Planting – direct seed, warm soil
Spacing – 4 x 24 inches, thin
Hardiness – tender annual
Fertilizer – medium

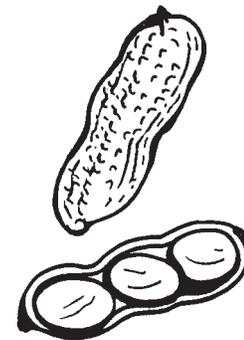
Peanuts – *Arachis hypogaea*

Peanuts (also known as goober peas and earth nuts) are warm-season annuals that resemble clover in appearance.

Peanuts are natives of South America; however, they were carried early to the Old World tropics by Portuguese explorers and are now grown extensively in India, East and West Africa, China and Indonesia. They were brought to Virginia from Africa by the slaves and are now one of the most important crops of the South.

There are four main classes of peanuts. Valencia is the best type for home gardens from Texas to Canada. They mature quickly and can be ready to harvest in 95 days. The Spanish peanuts are the kind you find in

candy and as roasted peanuts. They take another 20 days to mature but grow well in Arkansas. The last two types are the “Runner” and the Virginia peanuts. The Runner types are most commonly used for peanut butter, and the Virginia peanuts are the high-quality, large, roasted nuts. Both of these types require about 130 to 150 days to mature and do not tolerate drought or cool conditions.



Cultural Practices

Peanuts develop best in loose, sandy soil and require a minimum of 120 frost-free days to reach maturity.

Plant individual seeds (or the entire husk containing the seeds) 1 to 1 1/2 inches deep and 10 to 12 inches apart. Allow 36 inches between rows. The seedlings emerge with three clover-like leaflets that rapidly grow into plants 18 to 20 inches high.

Keep the soil loose and hilled to the row of plants. After the bright yellow flowers are pollinated, the

*Arkansas Is
Our Campus*

Visit our web site at:
<http://www.uaex.edu>

Cultivars

Crop	Variety	Days to Maturity	Seed/ 100 Ft of Row	Sources (see "Sources" paragraph below)	Remarks
Peanut	Spanish	110	1 lb	12, 15	Small kernels, 2 to 3 kernels per pod. Compact, upright growth habit. Rapid growing and heavy bearing.
	Early Spanish	105	1 lb	17, 22, 32	Small kernels, 2 to 3 kernels per pod. Upright, compact and heavy yielding plants.
	Improved Spanish	115	1 lb		Early bearing bunch type. Large kernels, 1 or 2 kernels per pod. Heavier yielding than Spanish.
	Improved Virginia	135	1 lb		Large podded, 1 to 2 kernels per pod. Bush type, 18 inches tall, hardy.
	Virginia Jumbo	135	1 lb	5, 12, 23, 27	Strain of the Virginia type. Large kernels, 1 or 2 kernels per pod. Runner type; vines grow 18 inches tall and spread 3 1/2 feet.
	Valencia Tennessee Red	110	1 lb	6, 7	Long pods, 2 to 5 kernels per pod. Easy to grow. Heavy yielder.
	Carolina Black	110	1 lb	31	A rare heirloom; sweet-tasting, black-skinned peanuts that are slightly larger than Spanish; 2 kernels per pod.
	Jumbo (Mammoth Jumbo)	135	1 lb	6	Large-podded, 1 to 2 kernels per pod, shells easily. Easy to grow and harvest.

flowering shoots elongate and send a "peg" into the soil. These pegs, which form the peanuts, readily enter loose soil (they do not have to be covered by hand), but they will not penetrate hard, baked soil. A light covering (1 to 2 inches) of loose organic mulch material around the plants will help keep the soil loose and the peanuts near the surface of the ground. Do not disturb the soil after the flower pegs have buried themselves. Usually 50 to 75 peanuts are formed in each hill. Hand pull weeds in the row.

Dig the plants after they have matured (begun to turn yellow) in the fall. Harvest in early to mid-September. The soil should be dry so that it can

be shaken off the peanuts. Cure the peanuts by stacking the plants in an open shelter or by hanging them in a warm, dry shed or garage for a week. After the plants have dried, shake off any remaining soil and pull the peanuts from the vines. Continue to air-dry the peanuts for another one to two weeks.

Sources

For a list of sources referred to by number, request FSA6106, *Seed Sources: Vegetable and Herb*, for current address, telephone and web site.

DR. CRAIG R. ANDERSEN is Extension horticulturist - vegetables, Cooperative Extension Service, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Cooperative Extension Service, University of Arkansas. The Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability, marital or veteran status, or any other legally protected status, and is an Equal Opportunity Employer.