

# Know 10 Fruiting Vegetables



## About Community in Bloom

Community in Bloom (CIB) is a programme that was launched by the National Parks Board (NParks) in 2005. It aims to nurture a gardening culture among Singaporeans by encouraging and facilitating community gardening efforts. It is also an opportunity to build community bonds and strengthen social resilience in our City in Nature.



Share your love for nature and animals at  
#NParksBuzz #AnimalBuzzSG

For more information, visit our website at [www.nparks.gov.sg/cib](http://www.nparks.gov.sg/cib) or email us at [CommunityInBloom@nparks.gov.sg](mailto:CommunityInBloom@nparks.gov.sg)

For more information on plants in Singapore, visit NParks Flora & Fauna Web at [www.nparks.gov.sg/florafaunaweb](http://www.nparks.gov.sg/florafaunaweb)

For more gardening resources and tips, visit [go.gov.sg/gardening-resources](http://go.gov.sg/gardening-resources)

To learn more about our City in Nature, scan the QR code or visit [www.nparks.gov.sg/about-us/city-in-nature](http://www.nparks.gov.sg/about-us/city-in-nature)



This brochure features 10 of the most commonly cultivated 'fruiting vegetables' in Singapore. This term generally refers to the fruits of food crops that are eaten as vegetables, such as gourds, tomatoes, chillis and beans.

There are numerous varieties of fruiting vegetables that can be grown in Singapore. We hope that this brochure will encourage you to try growing these edibles on your own or in your community garden!



## Why Grow Fruiting Vegetables?

Fruiting vegetables can often be harvested in a short time period. From seed to harvest, the edibles in this brochure take only four to seven months to grow!

Growing edibles as a community means you can reap the following benefits:

- Harvest food when it is fresh and as needed
- Meet people and make friends who have a similar passion for gardening
- Have fun and keep fit

## Differences Between Fruits and Vegetables

We often refer to the raw, plant-produced whole foods that we eat as fruits and vegetables, with savoury produce like edible leaves and roots commonly called 'vegetables', and sweet produce usually called 'fruit'. However, in botanical terms, a fruit is actually the mature ovary of a seed plant, usually developed from a flower. So foods like gourds, tomatoes, chillis and beans, which we might normally call vegetables, are technically fruit. Here are some general differences between fruits and vegetables:

### Presence of Seeds

Fruit – Yes

Vegetable - No

### Nutrition

#### Fruit

- Low in fat and calories
- High in fibre
- Often high in natural sugars

#### Vegetable

- Low in fat and calories
- High in fibre
- Starchy vegetables tend to be high in natural sugars

### Taste and Culinary Uses

#### Fruit

- Generally sweet, but sometimes tart or sour
- Often enjoyed as a dessert or snack

#### Vegetable

- Not sweet or very subtly sweet
- Commonly eaten as part of a prepared dish or main meal



# Bitter Gourd

**Scientific Name**  
*Momordica charantia*



## Plant Characteristics

Arrowroot grows in clusters and can reach a height of 0.5 m. It produces tuberous roots. It takes about 240 to 365 days for the tuberous roots to be ready for harvest.

## Cultivation and Plant Care

This plant grows best in well-draining soil. It requires full sun and moderate watering. It can be propagated by seeds, and requires a trellis. When the fruit is ripe, it turns orange and splits open to reveal the flesh and seeds.

## Culinary Uses

The immature green fruit is cooked and eaten as a vegetable. To reduce the bitter taste, the sliced fruit can be marinated with salt and squeezed to remove the bitter juice.

# Brinjal

**Scientific Name**  
*Solanum melongena*



## Plant Characteristics

Brinjal is a herbaceous shrub. It is also known as Eggplant because the first variety grown out of Asia produced a white, egg-shaped fruit. It takes about 14 days to germinate, and 105 to 133 days to be ready for harvest.

## Cultivation and Plant Care

This plant grows best in well-draining soil. It requires full sun and moderate watering. It can be propagated by seeds.

## Culinary Uses

The fruit is cooked and eaten as a vegetable. In Indonesia, there is a light green, elongated version that is eaten raw.

# Chilli

**Scientific Name**  
*Capsicum annuum*



## Plant Characteristics

Chilli is actually the same species as cayenne pepper and bell pepper. It has a herbaceous growth form. It takes about 14 days to germinate, and 105 to 133 days to be ready for harvest.

## Cultivation and Plant Care

This plant grows best in well-draining soil. It requires full sun and moderate watering. It can be propagated by seeds.

## Culinary Uses

The fruit may be used in various forms – fresh, dried, ripe, immature, cooked or raw. It is popularly used in various dishes such as soups and salads.

# Corn

**Scientific Name**  
*Zea mays*



## Plant Characteristics

Corn is a tall growing herbaceous growth form. There are many varieties of corn which produce kernels in different colours – black, bluish-grey, purple, green, red and even white! It takes four to six days to germinate, and 70 to 200 days to be ready for harvest.

## Cultivation and Plant Care

This plant grows best in well-draining soil. It requires full sun and moderate watering. It can be propagated by seeds.

## Culinary Uses

The kernels are eaten raw, grilled, or boiled in soup. The raw kernels are used to make popcorn, by heating them until they 'pop' from internalised pressure.

# Cucumber

**Scientific Name**  
*Cucumis sativus*



## Plant Characteristics

Grown throughout the tropics, Cucumber is a climber. It takes about three days to germinate, and 100 to 140 days to be ready for harvest.

## Cultivation and Plant Care

This plant grows best in well-draining soil. It requires full sun and moderate watering. It can be propagated by seeds, and requires a trellis.

## Culinary Uses

The fruit has a high water content, and makes a great thirst quencher. It is eaten raw, used in salads, or pickled. The young shoots may be eaten raw or steamed in Southeast Asian dishes.

# Lady's-finger

**Scientific Name**  
*Abelmoschus esculentus*



## Plant Characteristics

Related to Hibiscus, Lady's-finger is a herbaceous annual. The most common varieties produce green fruits, but there is also one that produces red fruits. This plant takes six to seven days to germinate, and 47 to 97 days to be ready for harvest.

## Cultivation and Plant Care

This plant grows best in well-draining soil. It requires full sun and moderate watering. It can be propagated by seeds.

## Culinary Uses

Some studies have shown that the fruit contains very high levels of antioxidants. The immature fruit is eaten raw or cooked as a vegetable, and is usually added to curries and stews.

# Long Bean

**Scientific Name**  
*Vigna unguiculata*



## Plant Characteristics

Long Bean is a climber. This plant takes three to five days to germinate, and about 49 days to be ready for harvest.

## Cultivation and Plant Care

This plant grows best in well-draining soil. It requires full sun and moderate watering. It can be propagated by seeds, and requires a trellis to climb on.

## Culinary Uses

The fruit can be eaten raw or cooked as a vegetable. In some places, it is stir-fried with other vegetables and chilli paste.

# Pumpkin

**Scientific Name**  
*Cucurbita moschata*



## Plant Characteristics

Pumpkin is a climber that produces separate male and female flowers on the same plant. It takes about seven days to germinate, and 90 to 120 days to be ready for harvest.

## Cultivation and Plant Care

This plant grows best in well-draining soil. It requires full sun and moderate watering, and does not grow well in waterlogged conditions. It can be propagated by seeds.

## Culinary Uses

The flesh of the fruit is cooked as a vegetable, or used in soups and desserts. The seeds can also be cooked and eaten.

# Tomato

**Scientific Name**  
*Solanum lycopersicum*



## Plant Characteristics

Tomato is a herbaceous annual. There are many cultivated varieties, with cherry tomatoes being most commonly grown in Singapore. This plant takes about six days to germinate, and 77 to 105 days to be ready for harvest.

## Cultivation and Plant Care

Tomato grows best in sandy clay loam soil. It requires full sun and moderate watering. It can be propagated by seeds or stem cuttings, and requires a trellis.

## Culinary Uses

The fruit is eaten raw or cooked, and used to make condiments and drinks.

# Winter Melon

**Scientific Name**  
*Benincasa hispida*



## Plant Characteristics

Winter Melon is a climber. It takes about seven days to germinate, and 90 to 120 days to be ready for harvest. The fruit has a wax coating that protects it from moisture loss.

## Cultivation and Plant Care

Winter Melon grows best in well-draining soil. It requires full sun and moderate watering. It can be propagated by seeds, and requires a trellis to climb.

## Culinary Uses

The fruit is cooked in soups, candied in sugar for desserts, or stuffed with ingredients and steamed. Interestingly, the wax covering can also be used to make candles.