

DILL

DILL Eneldo

Anethum graveolens

Apiaceae

ECHO® PLANT INFORMATION SHEET

Description

Dill has been a cultivated, annual plant for centuries from the Mediterranean to southern Russia. Both the Dill seeds and leaves are used in cooking. It is now naturalized and grows wild on roadsides and in waste places of North America, South America and India. It is a relative of anise, caraway, coriander, cumin and fennel. It is a tall 60-100 cm (24-40 in), freely-branching, blue-green, feathery-leafed plant, with yellow flowers in an umbrella-like cluster.

Uses

All parts of the plant are pungent and it has been used medicinally as a stimulant and a calming solution to induce sleep. Dill is popular in cooking and preserving and in attracting beneficial insects. Swallowtail caterpillar larvae are found only on Dill plants. The lacewing and syrphid fly (also called hover flies) are attracted to Dill pollen and also feed on plant-sucking aphids. Oil can be distilled from seeds on the day the heads are cut, and be used for flavoring.

Cultivation

- Rainfall: 50-150 cm (20-60 in)/year
- Soil Types: Moderately rich, pH of 5.5-6.7
- Temperature Range: 7-29° C (45-80° F)
- Light: partial to full sun, though in hot dry spells it will flower quickly. So planting during cooler months, if possible, is important in the tropics.

Dill may be seeded by broadcasting or planting in rows. It does not transplant well. Keep the seed bed moist until germination, then provide moderate irrigation if necessary. Dill will self-sow if left to go to seed.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Dill leaves should be cut as needed, dried on a rack in a cool, shady area. Seeds should be left on the plant to ripen. When the seed head turns to tan, it may be cut and hung to dry in a bag. The seeds will release when dry.

Pests and Diseases

Dill is usually disease-free, but occasionally bothered by aphids.

Cooking and Nutrition

Fresh Dill leaves are the most aromatic of all the plant parts used in cooking. Leaves and seeds lose flavor when cooked, so it is best to add them at the end of cooking. Worldwide it is used to flavor pickles, vinegar, fish dishes, bread, soups, sauces, cheese and curry.