UBERLANDIA CARROT

Daucus carota var. sativus

ECHO® PLANT INFORMATION SHEET

Description

Most carrot varieties are temperate biennial plants requiring two years to complete the life cycle. Normally, a cold period during the dormant winter season is required for the first year plants to send up flowering stalks that produce flowers and seeds during the second growing season. Dr. Warwick Kerr used tropical flowering carrot strains that set seed in tropical environments developed in southern Brazil over a one-year study at the Federal University of Uberlandia in Brazil to produce the Uberlandia Carrot variety. The Uberlandia Carrot has been selected for good performance in the lowland tropics. The flavor was judged less than some of the temperate carrot varieties in ECHO tests. However, the many other virtues of the Uberlandia Carrots make them a desirable choice in the warm tropics

Uses

Earliest uses of carrots were medicinal rather than for food; today carrots are one of the best vegetable sources of pro-vitamin A. This pro-vitamin is from the orange-colored carotene pigments contained in the carrot root. These pigments are converted in the human body to vitamin A, a vitamin known well for promoting healthy eyes in children, prevention of night blindness and promotion of healthy skin. In Java, the leaves are sometimes eaten. Both the tops and the roots have been used as small animal and livestock fodder.

Cultivation

- Elevation: 0-2000 m (6500 ft)
- Rainfall: average rainfall of 310-410 mm (12-16 in)
- Temperature: 4º - 29º C (40º - 84º F)
- Soil: well drained, fertile and of a sandy texture Carrots are grown from seed.

Sow seeds in shallow trenches approximately 1 cm (0.5 in) deep. Place seeds 2.5 cm (1 in) apart. Cover with 0.5 cm (0.25 in) of fine soil. Germination requires 7-10 days. Thin seedlings to 8-10 cm (3-4 in) apart.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Carrots generally require from 60-70 days to reach maturity. Larger carrots can be removed earliest to prolong the harvest season. Carrots store well for a long period under refrigeration at 0.5º C (33º F). Carrots also may be stored for shorter duration in an underground vented storage pit or root cellar. Because Uberlandia Carrots are not yet a well-defined strain genetically, seeds collected from parent plants produce a great variety of offspring. Dr. Kerr selected Uberlandia Carrots using 6 criteria: (1) the size between 12-18 cm (5-7 in), (2) parallel sides, (3) red xylem (the inner core), (4) resistance to local diseases, (5) late flowering, and (6) no green on the top of the root. Dr. Kerr encourages growers to carry out their own Uberlandia Carrot selection following these instructions. After 90 days dig up all the carrots. Select the best 30 according to the above standards or standards of your own. Re-plant these carrots right away and allow them to go to seed. The red xylem can be observed by cutting 3 cm (1 in) of the tip off the end of the carrot. Do not replant if the xylem is yellow.

Pests and Diseases

Carrots, like other root crops, may suffer from nematode infestation. Rotate carrots with non-root crops to reduce nematodes and soil-borne diseases. Wireworms, larvae of click beetles, also infest carrot crops. Numerous mite species, as well as aphids, damage carrot tops. A number of fungal and viral diseases have been reported on carrots. Use fresh seed sources to secure strains free of contamination and rotate crops to help reduce disease problems.

Cooking and Nutrition

Uberlandia Carrots are prepared and consumed in the same ways as other carrot varieties. They may be eaten raw, cut into strips as a snack food, made into juice, or shredded for salads. Carrots also are served cooked as a vegetable or added to soups and stews. They also may be pickled, glazed, or used in baking.

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