

# MOLES SEEDS

## Parsnip

Cultural Leaflet: ZZ607

Parsnips have been cultivated in northern Europe since Roman times. They are long standing in the field and can be harvested gradually or all in one go. Parsnips can also be grown as a “mini veg.” crop. The flavour, intensified by cold weather, resides immediately under the skin, therefore scrub or peel lightly. As tap-rooted plants, parsnips are unsuitable for plant sales.

### Soil conditions

A neutral or slightly alkaline soil is best. Parsnips dislike very acid soils. pH 6.5 – 7.5 is optimum. A stony soil will give misshapen roots. Avoid recently manured soils. A rich soil, slightly on the heavy side, will give strong, well-shaped parsnips.

### Propagation

Sow February to April but if the weather is wet and cold leave until late March. 2.5 – 4.5 kg per hectare. Spacing 5-10cm in row by 45-90cm between the rows. Parsnips germinate between 5 and 21°C but a soil temperature of 10 – 21°C is preferred.

### Seed formats

Graded and pelleted formats are available for certain varieties to facilitate sowing – see catalogue for further details. A recent innovation is primed seed, which lead to improved and faster germination over a wider range of temperatures.

### Harvesting and Storage

They should be ready from October and can be harvested until February. Parsnips have good standing ability.

### Pest and Disease

Canker is the most common problem. It appears as a brown discolouration on the roots. These brown areas then rot and bacterial and fungal infections enter the plant. The common causes are mechanical damage to the roots, cracking caused by heavy rain after drought, or soil insects damaging the root surface. Acid soil and over-manuring will also cause canker problems. You cannot heal canker once it is present, but the Moles Seeds catalogue does include certain varieties with improved canker resistance. Carrot fly maggots may invade the roots. Small brown spots may appear on the leaves; this is harmless.

*Information provided for guidance only, as cultural practices and climatic circumstances vary.*

(12/15)

