

A close-up photograph of a healthy basil plant with vibrant green, serrated leaves. The leaves are densely packed and show some natural texture and color variations. The background is slightly blurred, focusing attention on the foliage.

FBMG Help Desk
Question of the Week

I have a very nice and healthy plant in my garden and I don't know what it is. It hasn't bloomed this summer but has grown considerably. Help!

Congratulations it's a Basil!

What is Basil?

A very versatile, sometimes prolific herb.

Basil is an easy to grow herb belonging to the mint family. You can find a number of varieties, each with their distinct attributes. It's uses are many and it is found worldwide.



It is not surprising that you found a 'volunteer' in your garden.

It grows indoors, outdoors, or even in hydroponics. It grows well in Texas as well as most of North America, Europe, Asia and Africa.

Considered an annual in most locations, once the night temps drop below 45 degrees it is time for the final harvest of the season.

In folklore and in many parts of the world it is used medicinally. It is being studied for its medicinal properties in the USA.

Sweet Basil is one of the most common.

Varieties of Basil

There are numerous varieties of basil:

Relatively easy to find locally, you can experiment with any of these easy-to-grow varieties. There are different aromas, flavors and uses!



- *Sweet Basil*
- *Holy Basil*
- *Thai Basil*
- *Purple Leaf Basil*
- *Lemon Basil*
- *Lime Basil*
- *Cinnamon Basil*

- *Opal Basil*
- *Italian Basil*
- *Cardinal Basil*
- *Boxwood Basil*
- *Lettuce Basil*
- *Greek Basil*
- *Many, many More!*



Growing Basil

There are many ways to cultivate and grow Basil



How to cultivate:

- Seed
- Seedlings
- Cuttings
- Wind
- Bird



How to grow:

Basil can be planted in the ground, a raised bed, in a container, as part of a vegetable/herb garden, or as part of your flower garden. It can even be grown hydroponically



Culinary Uses For Basil Are Many

Chefs worldwide use it in many ways!

Recipes are easy to find!



- *pestos*
- *salads*
- *sauces*
- *soups*
- *drinks*
- *dried or fresh*
- *sautéed or raw*



Chocked full of nutrients, Basil has:

- ***Calcium, Vitamins A & K, Manganese, Magnesium, Iron, Zinc and Potassium***

Use Fresh, Dehydrated or Frozen

Harvest from your Garden for Year

Round Use!

- Fresh
- Dried
- Freeze-dried
- Frozen
- Pressed



- *Fresh - straight from the garden*
- *Dried - hang upside down or put in a dehydrator*
- *Freeze-dried - with a freeze dryer machine*
- *Frozen - in zip loc baggies or in ice cubes*
- *Pressed - with a flower press or in book for art projects*



Always label your herbs as after preserving as they do change appearance.

Harvest in the late morning after the dew has evaporated.

Quite Hardy and Easy to Grow

On occasion mitigation of some common pests and disease may be needed.



Pests such as Japanese Beetles and slugs can usually be picked off by hand or washed away.



To reduce susceptibility to disease, you should try to harvest in late morning, water from the bottom, provide good air circulation, and use fresh soil for new plantings in containers.

Prevention is key!

*Do you have questions
about your home
landscape and plants?*

*Contact the Fort Bend
Master Gardener Help Desk*

*Email:
FortBendmg@ag.tamu.edu*

*Phone:
281-341-7068*

*The Help Desk is manned
Monday thru Friday,
9am-Noon*

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