

## Horseradish Harvesting - When And How To Harvest Horseradish Root

<https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/edible/herbs/horseradish/harvesting-horseradish-root.htm>

If you are a lover of all things spicy, you should be growing your own horseradish. Horseradish (*Amoracia rusticana*) is a hardy perennial herb that has been popular for over 3,000 years. Harvesting horseradish plants is a simple task and the resulting condiment can be stored in the refrigerator for up to 6 weeks. Keep reading to find out how and when to harvest horseradish root.

### When to Harvest Horseradish

Horseradish is cultivated for its pungent root. The plant is a large leaved herb that thrives in full sun but tolerates some shade. Hardy to USDA zone 3, horseradish is resistant to most diseases and adaptable to many soil types.

Plant horseradish in the spring as soon as the soil can be worked. Prepare the soil by digging down 8-10 inches and incorporating a generous amount of compost. Amend the soil further with either a 10-10-10 fertilizer in the amount of one pound per 100 square feet or well decayed manure. Let the plot stand undisturbed for a few days before planting the horseradish.

Set the horseradish root cuttings or "sets" either vertically or at a 45-degree angle, spaced one foot apart from each other. Cover the roots with 2-3 inches of soil. Mulch around the plants with compost or leaves to help retain moisture, cool the soil and control weeds.

You can then leave the plants to grow with little other maintenance other than weeding and water or you can strip the roots. Stripping the roots will give you the best horseradish roots. To do this, remove the soil around the upper ends of the main root, leaving the other roots undisturbed. Remove all but the healthiest sprout or leaves and rub off all the tiny roots from the crown and along the sides of the main root. Return the root to its hole and fill in with soil.

Now that the horseradish is growing nicely, how do you know when it's horseradish harvesting time? Horseradish growing season is during the late summer into early fall. So you won't be harvesting horseradish plants until late October or early November, one year after planting.

### How to Harvest Horseradish Root

Horseradish harvesting is a simple process. Dig a trench down a foot or two along one side of the row of plants. Dig the roots from the opposite side of the row, loosening them with a fork or shovel. Grasp the tops of the plants and tug them gently from the soil. Trim back the foliage, leaving about an inch. Trim off side and bottom roots. Save any that are 8 inches or longer for the following year's planting stock.

If you are overwintering planting stock, tie clean root cuttings together and store them in moist sand in a cool, dark area of between 32-40 degrees F. (0-4 C.).

If you are storing the root for future culinary use, wash it and dry it well. Store the root in a perforated plastic bag in the vegetable crisper for 3 months or even longer...or go ahead and process it for use.

To process for use as a condiment, wash the root well and peel it. Cut into half inch slices and puree in a blender or food processor along with 1/4 cup water and some crushed ice.

- If you like it hot, let the puree stand for three minutes and then add 2-3 tbs. of white wine or rice vinegar and 1/2 tsp of salt for each cup of horseradish puree.
- If you want a milder condiment, add the vinegar and salt immediately after pureeing.
- If it is too runny for your taste, use a fine meshed sieve or cheesecloth to drain out some of the liquid.

The resulting condiment can be stored in a sealed container for up to 4-6 weeks in your refrigerator.