

Japanese Buckwheat

Fagopyrum esculentum

(49 days)

Buckwheat is the perfect smother crop, adding valuable green manure to your soil or harvesting for seed. We kind of do both. We thresh the grain for our chickens and add the stalks to the compost pile. **This is THE crop for bee food.** Honeybees just love buckwheat and it makes a highly sought after honey rarely found on the market anymore. You will notice that blossoms are more active in the morning when the plant produces more nectar.

Remember never plant buckwheat 'til all danger of frost has passed. Don't worry though you will have blossoms in about six weeks and seeds a few weeks later. We normally plant several crops of buckwheat during the year. If you are trying to raise different varieties NEVER plant them at the same time as they cross very easily. Just raise one variety, harvest and then plant the next. No worries this is a quick crop.

It is believed Dutch settlers brought the first Buckwheat to the Hudson Valley of New York in the US. It is said that production reached a peak in 1866 when the buckwheat grain was a commonly used as a **livestock feed** and was in high demand for **making flour** . A dye can also be made from buckwheat.

Buckwheat has a high rutin content, which reportedly gives it a powerful effect on the circulatory system. Doctors and homeopaths often prescribe rutin tablets for certain heart ailments, poor circulation, chilblains and varicose veins. Hardening of the arteries is said to respond particularly well to buckwheat's rutin acid content, as do chilblains, cold feet and hands and fragile capillaries. If combined with vitamin C, buckwheat is said to assist in the removal of hemorrhage into the retina of the eye, reportedly lowers high blood pressure and is said to be invaluable for convalescents. To make buckwheat tea use 1/4 cup fresh leaves and flowers in 1 cup boiling water. Steep 5 minutes. Strain and sip slowly. Sweeten with buckwheat honey.

Seeding Rate: A seeding rate of 36 to 72 pounds per acre or 16 seeds per square foot .