

Broad Beans

Vicia faba · Legume family

DIFFICULTY Easy

TYPE Annual, direct sown, cool season

MATURITY 80–100 days



SUN
Full sun



WATER
Regular



SOIL PH
6.0–7.0



SPACING
20cm × 45cm



DEPTH
4–5cm

01 Nitrogen fixers

Broad beans are one of the best soil-building crops for a [homestead](#) — vigorous nodulated roots, cold-hardy, and productive through winter when little else is growing.



nitrogen-fixing nodules along the roots

may need a stake or trellis

02 Planting

METHOD	Direct sow into well-prepared beds.
SOIL	Well-drained, moderately fertile.
TIMING	Sow in autumn in mild zones for a winter crop, or early spring in cold zones.

Planting timing varies significantly by Australian climate zone. Set your zone above (or use the Find My Climate Zone tool) for guidance tailored to your own area.

03 Growing care

- Stake or support tall varieties — they can topple in wind once loaded with pods.
- Pinch out growing tips once flowering, to discourage aphids and boost pod set.
- Water regularly through flowering and pod fill.
- Leave roots in the ground after harvest for the nitrogen benefit.

04 Problems

- **Black aphid** — clusters on tips; pinch out tips, hose off.
- **Chocolate spot** — fungal spotting in wet, humid weather; improve airflow.
- **Rust** — orange leaf spotting; remove affected leaves.
- **Poor pod fill** — dry conditions during flowering; water consistently.

05 Harvest & storage

SIGNS	Pods feel plump; pick young for tender beans, or let mature and dry for storage.
METHOD	Pick by hand, snapping at the stem.
CURING	For dried beans, leave pods on the plant until they blacken and rattle.
STORAGE	Fresh: fridge a few days. Dried: airtight, cool, dark — keeps a year or more.
PRESERVING	If eating fresh, see Freezing Produce (blanch and freeze); if left to dry, see Canning & Bottling for canning cooked beans.

06 Companions & rotation

PLANT NEARBY	AVOID NEARBY	ROTATION NOTE
Potato Brassicas Corn	Onion Garlic Fennel	Excellent soil-building precursor to heavy feeders like brassicas or corn.