

Caraway

Family	Apiaceae
Botanical	Carum carvi
Parts Used	Seeds, roots and leaves
USDA Hardiness	3A - 7B
Light	Full Sun
Soil	Well drained
Duration	Biennial



Propagation Soil pH requirements: 6.1 to 7.8 (mildly alkaline)
From seed; direct sow outdoors in fall or in spring after the last frost.

Water As needed, do not over water

Growing Once seed germinates, thin the caraway plant to 8 to 12 inches apart. In colder climates, mulch the roots of the plant heavily with straw or organic mulch, which will add nutrients to the soil. Germination is slow and sporadic when growing caraway seeds, and the herb may be intercropped to help prevent weeds and manage soil conditions.
Very little cultivation is required in caraway growing, but adequate moisture is an important component in the first year. The foliage of caraway plants need to be kept dry during irrigation, so a drip hose is an excellent way to keep the soil moisture level up. Cut the plant back in the fall as it will die back and re-sprout in spring. Caraway has few pests or disease problems. Plant a second crop a year after the first for consistent production.

Medicinal Uses Carminative, anti-spasmodic, expectorant, emmenagogue, astringent, galactagogue, aromatic, anti-microbial and stimulant.

Benefits A calming herb to ease flatulent dyspepsia and intestinal colic, especially in children. Stimulates the appetite, relieves period pain, and increases the milk flow in nursing mothers.

Preparation One ounce of the bruised seeds infused for 6 hours in a pint of cold water makes a good Caraway julep for infants, from 1 to 3 teaspoonsful being given for a dose.

Fines Herbes

Culinary Uses

The roots may be boiled and treated like cooked parsnips or carrots. The young leaves can be used in salads or for seasoning soups and stews. Caraway is aromatic and has a distinctive bitter, sharp, nutty taste, with warm, sweet undertones. Used in Europe to flavor rye breads, biscuits, cakes, stews, meat dishes, cheeses, sauerkraut and pickles; they are also often combined with potatoes and apples. They can be used in English comfits and seed cakes, the Arabic spice mixture tabil, North African harissa paste, and north Indian curries. Liqueurs such as kummel, schnapps and aquavit are all flavoured with caraway.

Polish Sourdough Rye Bread

Original recipe makes 3 loaves

Ingredients:

- 2 (.25 ounce) packages active dry yeast
- 1 teaspoon white sugar
- 2 cups water
- 4 cups rye flour
- 1 cup buttermilk, room temperature
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 8 cups bread flour
- 1 tablespoon caraway seed

Directions:

1. The night before making the bread, in a medium sized mixing bowl, dissolve one packet of yeast and the sugar in 2 cups of water. Let stand until creamy, about 10 minutes. Stir in the rye flour until the mixture is smooth. Cover and let stand overnight.
2. The next day, dissolve the remaining package of yeast in the buttermilk. Add the rye flour mixture, the baking soda, the salt, 4 cups of the bread flour and stir to combine. Add the remaining 4 cups of bread flour, 1/2 cup at a time, stirring well after each addition (you may not need to add all of the flour). When the dough has become a smooth and coherent mass, turn it out onto a lightly floured surface and knead until smooth and supple, about 8 minutes. Sprinkle the caraway seeds on the dough and knead them in until they are evenly distributed throughout the dough.
3. Lightly oil a large mixing bowl. Place the dough in the bowl and turn to coat with the oil. Cover with a damp cloth and let rise in a warm place for about 1 hour or until the volume has doubled.
4. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C).
5. Turn the dough onto a lightly floured surface and divide into three pieces. Form each piece into a loaf and place in 3 lightly greased 9x5 inch bread pans. Cover and let rise until nearly doubled, about 1 hour.
6. Bake at 350 degrees F (175 degrees C) for about 35 minutes or until the bottom of the loaves sound hollow when tapped.



Historical Facts

The seeds of this annual or biennial have been used for 5,000 years for flavoring and for their carminative effect. The history of caraway dates back to the Stone Age. Caraway seeds were discovered in the refuse areas of prehistoric communities in southern Europe. Those finds are believed to indicate that the plant was a part of early man's daily life.

Additional Tips

Nutrition Facts

This food is low in Saturated Fat, and very low in Cholesterol and Sodium. It is also a good source of

Fines Herbes

Protein, Vitamin C, Magnesium, Phosphorus, Potassium, Zinc, Copper and Manganese, and a very good source of Dietary Fiber, Calcium and Iron.