



VEGGIES 101

HOW TO IDENTIFY & GROW YOUR PLANTS



Hello you Rays of Sunshine! Have you wondered what weird and wonderful plants you came home with? Well look no further, we have put a small description together to help you discover what you are going to grow and eat this summer. If you can't determine what the plant is from the pictures below, plant it anyways and enjoy the mystery!

Generally, most herbs, vegetable or fruiting plants love sun and moist soil. In a perfect world "full sun" conditions means +8 hrs sun. "Part sun" means about 4 hours. Will your plants rebel against you if they do not get all 8 hours? No, but they may protest by deciding not to give you as many fruits. However, if you plant a full sun herb in a deep dark corner under your deck – let's just say it might not survive for too long.

Moist soil means that they generally enjoy a bit of water – not too much (aka. a swimming pool) and not too little (aka a desert)! Water as required to ensure your green babies don't shrivel up and lay down for a 'long nap' in your garden bed. Don't water so much that they start to turn yellow!

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HERBS

Herbs are amazing fresh and are best planted in a sunny location somewhere close to your kitchen for easy access!

Basil



Identifying Feature: Although thin, these shiny leaves are highly aromatic. Gently pinch the tip of a leaf and smell. If you are reminded of delicious freshly cooked pizza, you successfully identified your herb. In addition, look for roundish leaves that have a smooth to slightly toothed margin (outer edge of the leaf). The stem is also notably square instead of round.

Cultivars: There are 3 cultivars this year - Genovese Basil (green), Siam Queen Thai basil (green & purple), Purple Ruffles (dark purple)

Height: 24"

Spacing: 8"

Interesting Fact: Basil can be planted as a companion to tomato plants as it can deter pests and improve flavour.

Grower Link: <https://www.westcoastseeds.com/products/genovese-organic?variant=8709449121852>

Dill



<https://s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/growinginteractive/blog/dill-seedling-2x.jpg>

Identifying Feature: This herb has fern-like fine leaves that nearly look like carrot tops. If you thought you had a carrot – look again it is probably dill! (especially since we did not grow carrots this year!) The leaves should also have the fragrance of pickles.

Cultivar: Dukat Dill

Height: 18-24"

Spacing: 8"

Interesting Fact: Let dill go to flower to help attract beneficial insects like lady bugs and lacewings to your garden!

Grower Link: <https://www.westcoastseeds.com/products/dukat>

Parsley vs. Cilantro



Identifying Feature: Now here is a zinger to identify by leaf! Both parsley and cilantro are similar – with very different taste and cuisine uses. Maybe you are one of the lucky few who carry a special gene in your DNA that causes cilantro to taste like soap (it's really a thing, see here - <https://www.britannica.com/story/why-does-cilantro-taste-like-soap-to-some-people>). If your taste buds cannot tell you the difference, focus on the details of the leaf. Cilantro has a more rounded, full leaf. Parsley has a more divided leaf with three noticeable segments.



Cilantro



Parsley

Cultivar: Santo Cilantro or Dark Green Italian Parsley

Spacing: 6"

Height: 20"

Interesting Fact: Did you know that cilantro seeds are the popular spice called coriander! Collect these seeds to either replant more cilantro or to use in your cooking!

Grower Link: <https://www.westcoastseeds.com/products/santo-monogerm?variant=8709442764860>

<https://www.westcoastseeds.com/products/dark-green-italian>

Sage



Identifying Feature: The smell of this wonderful herb may remind you of your grandmothers stuffing. Give a little pinch and sniff to test it out. The leaves are a dull green-gray and have little tiny hairs on the top surface.

Cultivar: Common Sage

Height: 20"

Spacing: 12"

Interesting Fact: Not only do beneficial insects love this plant but hummingbirds will also feed from the flowers.

Grower Link: <https://www.westcoastseeds.com/products/sage-organic?variant=8709437423676>

Oregano



Identifying Feature: This herb gives you the other delicious smell of pizza. The leaves are the size of mouse ears with a little bit of fuzz.

Cultivar: Organic Greek Oregano

Height: 8"

Spacing: 8"

Grower Link: <https://www.fruitionseeds.com/shop/herbs/organic-greek-oregano/>

GREENS

These wonderful plants are grown to eat their foliage. The general rule of thumb is to harvest old leaves first by gently removing the leaf from the stem. If you wait too long however, old leaves will start to get tough and bitter.

Spinach



Identifying Feature: Although spinach leaves can look similar to basil to the novice plants-person, they definitely don't taste the same! It should taste like spinach 😊. This plant is also more compact than other crops with the leaves sprouting from the base of the plant. Another great identification tip is to look for their accompanying helicopter-esk 'seed leaf' or cotyledon (see picture below). The leaves are also glossy and have a whole leaf margin (the outer edge of the leaf does not have any spikes or edges).



Cultivar: Monstrueux de Viroflay

Height: 10"

Spacing: 4"

Interesting Fact: That bitter taste you often get from spinach is the oxalic acid found in the plant cells. Some cultivars have more than others.

Grower Link:

<https://www.westcoastseeds.com/blogs/how-to-grow/grow-spinach>

Pac Choi



<https://i.ytimg.com/vi/mu-rlPmQH2s/maxresdefault.jpg>

Identifying Feature: Whether you call it Pac Choi, Bok Choy or Pok Choi – identifying this little baby from the related collards, cabbage or kale can be tough for the plant novice. Fear not! First, we did not grow any collards this year. Second, pac choi grows very quickly and is ready to harvest in a month. Look for rounded leaves with a thick bulbous white stem at the base.



1. Chinese Cabbage. 2. Green Bok Choy

Cultivar: White Stemmed Pac Choi

Height: 6"

Spacing: 6"

Interesting Fact: You can harvest the older leaves first or wait until the plant has matured to harvest the whole plant together.

Grower Link: <https://www.westcoastseeds.com/blogs/how-to-grow/grow-pac-choi-choi-sum>

Chard



Identifying Feature: Here's the good news! We selected the fun rainbow cultivar making this chard easier to identify. Here's the bad news.... You might have a yellow, pink or white selection. Is that really bad news? No, it will just make your garden more colourful. Look for the glossy leaves and thick colourful midrib (thick center vein on the leaf) to identify it as chard.

Be cautious however – chard seedlings look deceptively similar to beet seedlings! (See the beets section for more info).

Cultivar: Rainbow Chard

Height: 20”

Spacing: 12”

Interesting Fact: By harvesting the oldest leaves first, these plants will provide plenty of chard until it freezes!

Grower Link: <https://www.westcoastseeds.com/products/bright-lights>

Kale



Identifying Feature: You might be getting cross-eyed at this stage, thinking that all these leaves look the same! It's true, they are similar but the differences are there. Kale's secret is in the leaf edges (called margins) – you will notice these leaves have a wavy or undulating margin. The leaves are also dull (not shiny). Kale is part of the Brassica family and just like any family...all Brassicas have a tendency to look very similar when they are baby plants. Sometimes you just have to be patient and see how they develop into their awkward teenage stage and future responsible adults.

The other important thing to know about kale is that there are 2 different varieties this year which look and taste very different from each other.

Cultivar: Vates Blue Curled Scotch, Lacinato Kale

Height: 16" - 36"

Spacing: 18"

Interesting Fact: Kale contains higher levels of beta-carotene than any other green vegetable, and is also high in vitamin C and calcium.

Grower Link: <https://www.westcoastseeds.com/blogs/how-to-grow/grow-kale-collards>

Lettuce



Identifying Feature: These little seedlings can vary depending on the cultivar. Some will appear as miniature romaine heads, others like tiny butterheads. Any red oak variety will have burgundy foliage.



Cultivar: Estagio (red oak), Mini Green Cos Tamago (romaine), Canagio (butterhead)

Height: 10"

Spacing: 4"

Interesting Fact: Lettuce grows best in cool weather in the spring and fall. Pick individual leaves or wait and harvest full heads.

Grower Link:

https://www.westcoastseeds.com/blogs/wcs-academy/grow-lettuce?_pos=2&_sid=355077e9b&_ss=r

SOLANACEOUS (aka. The Tomato Family)

Welcome to the nightshade family. Unlike the actual nightshade weed however, these plants develop lovely edible fruits for you to enjoy. The trick to any Solanaceous plant is to provide lots of sun and heat!

Tomatoes



Identifying Feature: Tomato leaves are separated into several small leaflets, as seen in the photo. The leaves are dull and have little hairs on them. The stems also have hairs. Tomatoes also release a “special” (unpleasant) smell when the leaves are bruised that screams “don’t eat me”, hence why many people use tomato leaf clippings to make their own pest deterrent spray.

There are two types of growing habits for tomatoes – determinate (bush) and indeterminate (vine). See this link to learn more about each variety and how to properly support the plant.

<https://youtu.be/EfNkJRpftLw>

Cultivar: This year we grew many, many different cultivars. See this list below!






Height: 4 feet to 7 feet

Spacing: 24-36"

Interesting Fact: Determinate tomato plants ripen a heavy crop over a few weeks. Indeterminate varieties bear fruit continuously until frost.

Grower Link: <https://www.westcoastseeds.com/blogs/how-to-grow/grow-tomato-seeds>

Plant	Image	Cultivar	Type	Details
Tomato		TT-764	Mini Orange Plum	Indeterminate (vine)
Tomato		TT-768	Mini Brown Plum	Indeterminate (vine), excellent flavor
Tomato		Yellow Drop	Mini Yellow Plum	Indeterminate (vine), very sweet and delicious

Plant	Image	Cultivar	Type	Details
Tomato		78437	Roma Red	Determinate (bush)
Tomato		8B16453	Beef	Indeterminate (vine)
Tomato		Amish Paste	Roma / Slicer	Indeterminate (vine), heirloom tomato, sauces, thickest pastes
Tomato		Duelle	Grape	Indeterminate (vine), multiple cluster tomatoe
Tomato		Extradena	Beef	Indeterminate (vine), high early yield, TOV
Tomato		Nebula	Cherry	Indeterminate (vine), Minicluster
Tomato		Sweetelle	Grape	Indeterminate (vine), provides a constant fruit set
Tomato		Tomelody	Yellow Pear	Indeterminate (vine), mild flavor
Tomato		TT-750	Cocktail Red	Indeterminate (vine), Cosmopolitan Large caliber cocktail, best salad tomato
Tomato		TT-753	Mini Red Plum	Indeterminate (vine), Super sweet, cherry tomatoes, high production

Pepper



Identifying Feature: Peppers have glossy green leaves with a whole leaf margin (no ruffly edges on these leaves!). Peppers also have a fairly straight main stem with leaves equally spaced, versus being more compact and having the leaves gathered at the base like spinach. All the peppers we grew this year should grow sweet red fruits. Careful though.... Some will grow very hot fruits!







Cultivar: See the list below.

Height: 3 feet

Spacing: 18"

Interesting Fact: Break off the first flower/fruit of the peppers, this will help to get additional yield of subsequent crops.

Grower Link: <https://www.westcoastseeds.com/blogs/how-to-grow/grow-peppers>

Plant	Image	Cultivar	Type	Details
Peppers		Yedda	Yellow bell	
Peppers		Gina	Red Bell	
Peppers		Orbit	Orange Bell	
Peppers		Hungarian Black	Black Jalapeno	Hot pepper, Jalapeño reference scale: 4 times hotter, delivers a certain sweetness at maturity, (5,000 to 10,000 SHU)
Peppers		Arapaho	Cayenne	Hot pepper, larger, Hot with a sweet bell red undertone, (30,000 - 50,000 SHU's)
Peppers		Red Habanero	Habanero	Very Hot pepper, Very Hot, small, lantern-shaped, (100,000–350,000SHU)

Eggplant



Identifying Feature: Eggplant leaves are dull and usually wider at the base and smaller at the tip. They also usually have an undulating margin (outer edge of leaf). This Black Beauty cultivar also has slightly purple veins and stems.

Cultivar: Ping Tung Long

Height: 30"

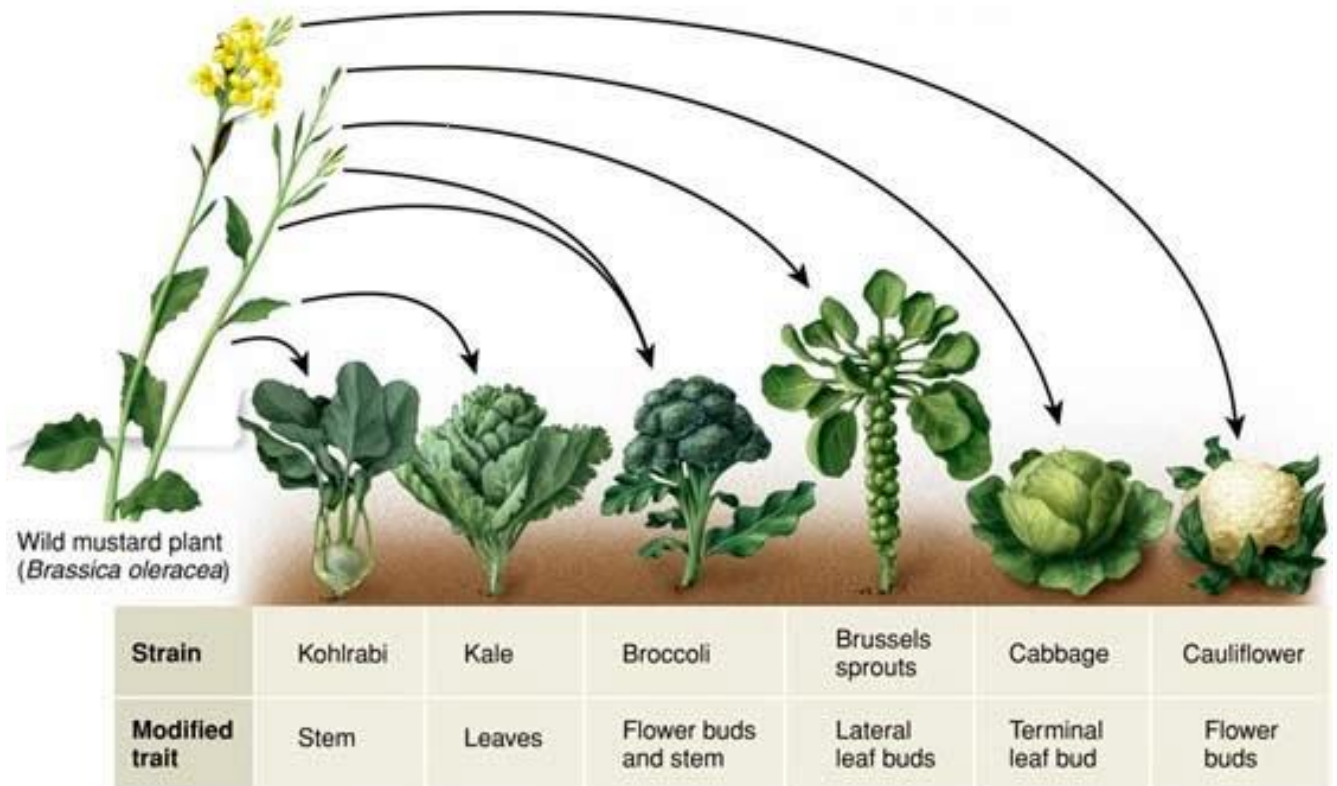
Spacing: 18"

Interesting Fact: These plants love the heat and sun!

Grower Link: <https://www.westcoastseeds.com/blogs/how-to-grow/grow-eggplants>

BRASSICAS (aka, The Cabbage Family)

Did you know broccoli, cauliflower, kale, kohlrabi and cabbage are all variants of the same species of plant! They are all *Brassica oleracea* and originally are evolved from wild mustards.



Broccoli



Identifying Feature: Once again, another member of the Brassica family rears its beautiful head to confuse and confound you! We will be honest here - broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, collard and kale will all look very similar at this stage of its life. Wait until the mature leaves emerge to determine which plant you have. Both broccoli and cauliflower have dull matte leaves that are longer than the rounded collard relations.



1. Cauliflower Leaves. 2. Broccoli Leaves. 3. Collard Greens.

Cultivar: Gypsy

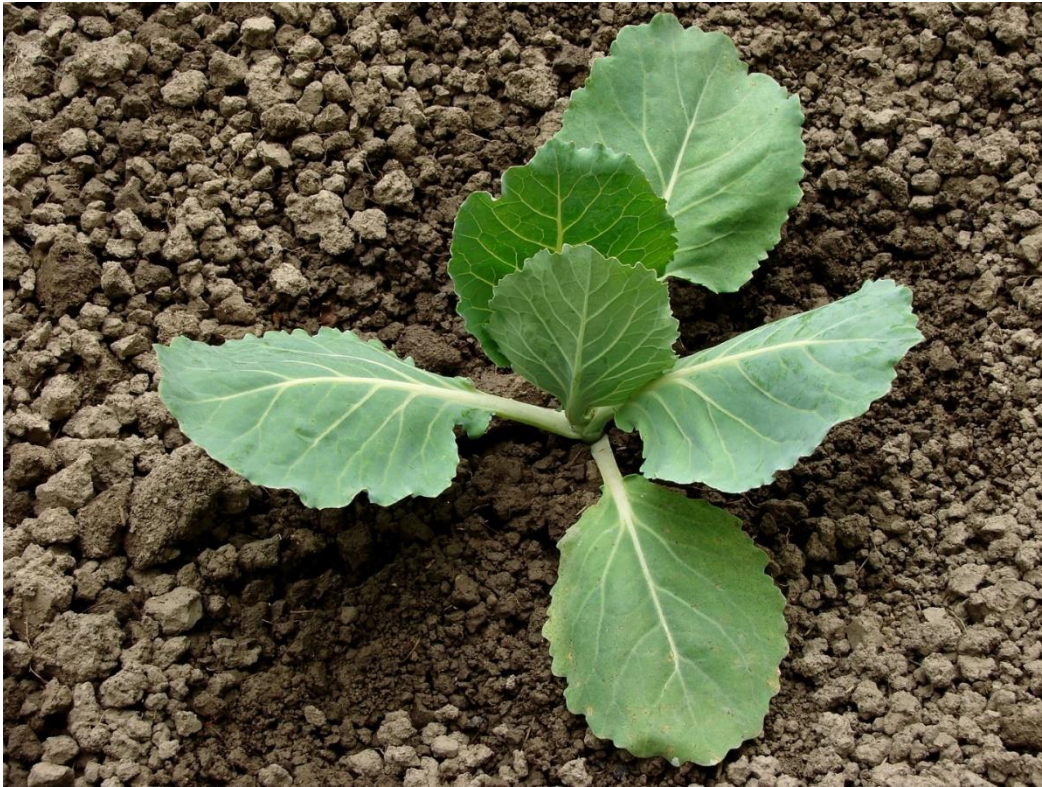
Height: 30"

Spacing: 12"

Interesting Fact: When plants are 20-25cm (8-10") tall, push soil around the stems up to the first big leaf to encourage side shoots.

Grower Link: <https://www.westcoastseeds.com/blogs/wcs-academy/grow-broccoli>

Cabbage



Identifying Feature: There are three very different cabbages this year – your standard grocery store green cabbage (Charmant), Napa cabbage (China Express Napa) and a cross between a cabbage & collard called Mermaid’s Aurora. Technically they aren’t even the same species but that’s getting wayyyy to nerdy! Look for the standard deceptively similar kale/collard/broccoli/cauliflower leaves but this time they should be a more matte grey-green colour. The plant is also more compact with the leaves forming at the base (similar to spinach’s growth habit).



1.



2.

1. Chinese Cabbage. 2. Green Bok Choy

Cultivar: Charmant, China Express Napa, Organic Mermaid's Aurora v.1 Collard x Cabbage

Height: 20"

Spacing: 18"

Interesting Fact: Cabbage heads are ready when they're firm to the touch, and when the interior is fairly dense.

Grower Link: <https://www.westcoastseeds.com/blogs/how-to-grow/grow-cabbage>

CUCURBITS FAMILY

Cucumber & Squash



Identifying Feature: Both cucumber and squash have very similar juvenile leaves that are must larger than anything else you will get from your mystery tray (4" or larger). Unfortunately they will be difficult to distinguish until they mature. Once they do get larger, cucumber leaves are generally 4-6" long where squash leaves are usually much larger (10-12"). When you get to this step here is a great link on how to tell the difference between the two;

<https://www.hunker.com/12527954/how-to-tell-a-zucchini-from-a-cucumber>

Cultivar: See the list below.

Height: 20" if grown on the ground but suggested to grow vertical on trellis to save space.

Spacing: 3 feet unless grown vertical. Sibley Winter Squash will spread 5 feet.

Interesting Fact: We know it's weird, but zucchinis are squashes too. They are considered summer squash. Unlike their cousins however, for maximum flavour its best to harvest them before they get too large.

Grower Link: <https://www.westcoastseeds.com/blogs/how-to-grow/grow-squash>

<https://www.westcoastseeds.com/blogs/how-to-grow/grow-cucumbers>

Plant	Image	Cultivar	Type	Details
Cucumber		Wisconsin SMR-58	Pickling cucumber	Vine, Standard home garden pickle
Cucumber		Marketmore 76	Slicing cucumber	Vine, late season, smooth, refined, dark-green slicer with a crisp crunch and sweet flavour
Cucumber		Green Finger	Slicing cucumber	Vine, Thin, tender skin and crisp flesh with a small seed cavity and great flavour
Squash		Tromboncino	Warm season squash	Very large vine with wonderfully weird squashes. Eat when soft like zucchini or leave to age and harden like butternut squash.
Squash		Sunburst Scallopini Pattypan	Warm season squash	Vine, Small plentiful star shaped squash.
Squash		Black Beauty	Zucchini	Bush,
Squash		Waltham Organic	Butternut Squash	Vine,
Squash		Small Sugar Pumpkin	Warm season squash	Vine, 8" pumpkins, sweet
Squash		Uchiki Red Kuri	Warm season squash	Vine, Dark, red/orange skin over tasty, cream coloured flesh.

Melon



Identifying Feature: This member of the Cucurbits family can be quite difficult to distinguish from the others. Look for rounder margins on fully developed leaves. If not, you will figure this out once the delicious melons start appearing!

Cultivar: Chartanais Melon - Arpon, Tazha, Solomon

Height: 20" (Can also grow vertically)

Spacing: 3 feet

Interesting Fact: Do not water the last week before fruits are ripe, as overwatering can cause bland fruit.

Grower Link: https://www.westcoastseeds.com/blogs/wcs-academy/melons?_pos=1&_sid=d15228bb6&_ss=r

THE MISFITS



Just like the band of misfit toys from Rudolf the Red Nose Reindeer movie, here is a collection of oddities that did not fit anywhere else.

Beets





Identifying Feature: Depending if you received the yellow beets (Touchstone Gold) or the red-white striped beets (Chioggia), these seedlings will have red or yellow stems. Baby beet plants can look very similar to chard as they are basically different variants of the same species. One is grown for the foliage, versus the other develops a bulbous root to eat. As the plant develops gently prod the bottom of the stems to see if a large beet is growing. Regardless, both plants have edible foliage.

Cultivar: Touchstone Gold, Chioggia Guardsmark

Height: 10"

Spacing: 6"

Interesting Fact: Have you ever looked at a beet seed? They are a multi-germ seed able to produce 2 or 3 plants from one seed.



Grower Link: <https://www.westcoastseeds.com/blogs/how-to-grow/grow-beets>

Celery



Identifying Feature: Similar to parsley, celery leaves are split into 3 leaflets. These leaflets are less divided than in parsley. Compare the image of celery above with the example of parsley and cilantro below. Celery also has an upright growth habit.



Cilantro



Parsley

Cultivar: Tango

Height: 20"

Spacing: 12"

Interesting Fact: The leaves are strongly aromatic and useful in soups and savoury dishes of all kinds. Also, did you know celery is a biennial!

Grower Link: <https://www.westcoastseeds.com/blogs/how-to-grow/grow-celery-celeriac>

Corn



Identifying Feature: Here's an easy one! It literally looks like a miniature corn plant or super large piece of grass.

Cultivar: Golden Bantam

Height: 6 feet

Spacing: 8-10"

Interesting Fact: Corn needs other corn friends to help pollinate itself. If your corn is lonely and has no other friends use a paintbrush to help pollinate the female flower with the male flowers.

Grower Link: <https://www.westcoastseeds.com/blogs/how-to-grow/grow-corn>

Sweet Alyssum



Identifying Feature: Sweet Alyssum has been added to these trays as a beneficial insect attractor. This plant is not meant to be eaten, but instead it is meant to help bring more pollinators into your garden so you can have more successful fruiting (the whole 'Birds & the

Bees' thing). If you do not see tiny white flowers look for a stem with small sword shaped leaves.



Cultivar: Snow Cloth

Height: 6"

Spacing: 8"

Interesting Fact: Shear plants after first flowering for a second bloom, as late as early October.

Grower Link: <https://www.westcoastseeds.com/products/snow-cloth>