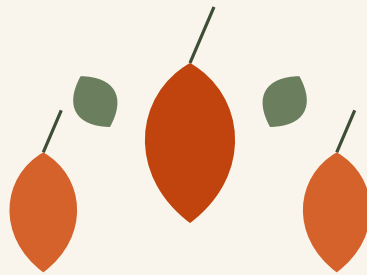


THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO

GROWING CAYENNE PEPPERS

From Seed to Spice — A Garden-to-Table Journey



BEGINNER FRIENDLY

FULL SUN

SPICY ★★★★★

HARVEST IN 70 DAYS

PLANTING & CARE

Everything you need for a thriving cayenne crop



GERMINATION TEMP

21–29°C (70–85°F)

DAYS TO HARVEST

70–100 days

SUNLIGHT

6–8 hours full sun

WATERING

1–2 inches / week

1 SEED STARTING

Start seeds indoors 8–10 weeks before the last frost date. Fill seed trays with a moist, well-draining seed-starting mix. Press seeds ¼ inch deep, cover loosely, and place on a heat mat set to 26°C (80°F). Cover with a clear dome to retain humidity.

- Use a heat mat — warmth is non-negotiable for germination.
- Seeds sprout in 7–21 days; be patient.
- Once sprouted, move to bright light (14–16 hrs/day).
- Thin to one seedling per cell when 2 true leaves appear.

2 TRANSPLANTING

Harden off seedlings for 7–10 days before moving outdoors. Gradually increase outdoor exposure. Transplant after all frost risk has passed, when nighttime temps stay above 10°C (50°F).

- Space plants 45–60 cm (18–24 in) apart.
- Plant at the same depth as in the pot.
- Water in immediately with diluted liquid fertiliser.
- Mulch around the base to retain moisture.

3 SOIL & FEEDING

Cayenne peppers love rich, loamy soil with excellent drainage. Aim for a pH of 6.0–6.8. Amend beds with compost before planting.

- Feed with balanced fertiliser (10-10-10) at transplant.
- Switch to low-nitrogen, high-phosphorus when flowering.
- Top-dress with compost monthly.
- Avoid over-feeding nitrogen — you'll get leaves, not peppers.



HARVEST, PESTS & PRESERVING

Reap the rewards of your hard work

HARVESTING

When to Pick

Cayennes are ready when fully red and firm — about 70–100 days after transplant. Green peppers are edible but milder; wait for deep red for maximum heat and flavour.

How to Harvest

Use clean scissors or pruning shears. Cut the stem, leaving a short piece attached to the pepper. Never pull — you may snap a branch. Harvest regularly to encourage more fruit production.

Scoville Scale

Cayenne peppers measure 30,000–50,000 Scoville Heat Units (SHU). For reference: jalapeño = 2,500–8,000 SHU.



CAYENNE: 30K–50K SHU

Mild

Medium

Hot ■■■■

COMMON PESTS & PROBLEMS

APHIDS

Spray with neem oil or insecticidal soap. Introduce ladybirds as natural predators.

SPIDER MITES

Increase humidity and spray undersides of leaves with water. Use miticide if severe.

BLOSSOM DROP

Usually caused by temperature extremes or inconsistent watering. Maintain even moisture.

ROOT ROT

Ensure excellent drainage. Never let plants sit in waterlogged soil.

PRESERVING YOUR HARVEST

DRYING

Hang bundles in a warm, dry, well-ventilated space for 2–4 weeks. Or use a dehydrator at 55°C (130°F) for 6–10 hours. Store whole in airtight jars away

POWDERING

Grind fully dried cayennes in a spice grinder or blender. Sieve for a fine powder. Store in small, labelled glass jars — potency lasts 1 year.

PICKLING

Slice peppers and pack into sterilised jars with garlic, herbs, and a 1:1 vinegar-water brine. Seal and refrigerate for up to 3 months or process in a water bath for shelf

FREEZING

Wash, dry, and freeze whole or sliced on a baking sheet, then transfer to bags. No blanching required. Use from frozen within 12 months.