

## Cardoon

AR004

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OP Open Pollinated

Customer Reviews (0)

"*Cynara scolymus*: Introduced into California in the 1920's by Italian farmers, the artichoke has since become a chosen favorite of gourmet gardeners on this continent. Enjoying cool mild climates, 'chokes are a natural for the maritime Northwest gardener. *C. cardunculus*: Cardoon is a relative of the artichoke. Instead of consuming the flower as with artichokes, the fleshy leaf stems are eaten.

**CULTURE:** Artichokes and cardoon appreciate conditions that foster rapid growth. Start indoors in late January or early February; sow seeds 1/4 inch deep in 4 inch pots filled with sterile seedling mix. When the soil temperature is maintained between 65-75°F, emergence occurs in 10-20 days. Sow heavily and expect 70% germination. Of these seedlings, about 20% will not produce high quality plants. Cull out the small and albino plants. Fertilize transplants with a good all purpose liquid fertilizer such as Earth Juice Grow 2-1-1. Transplant after the danger of frost has passed, but when the seedlings can still receive 10-12 days of temperatures under 50°F, which induces earlier budding. The period of cool temperatures needed to stimulate growth and flowering varies with location and variety. Space transplants 3 feet apart in rows 3 feet apart. Work in 1 cup of our complete fertilizer or a shovelful of composted chicken manure per plant.

After the first year's harvest, remove off-types and less vigorous plants leaving a final spacing of 5-6 feet between plants. In late October, cut plants to about 8-10 inches above ground and cover with straw or leaves to keep the stump from freezing. Uncover in early April. Overwinter survival is likely but not certain. Regrowth will be offshoots of the parent plants.

**DISEASE:** Relatively disease-free.

**HARVEST:** Cut flowers before they start to open. The smaller, immature artichokes are the most tender. Rub the cut 'chokes with a slice of lemon to prevent discoloration.

Cardoon can be harvested green or blanched white by wrapping the young stalks with newspaper or piling straw around the plants for 30 days prior to harvest. Store at 36°F and 100% relative humidity.

Violetto Artichoke

#### AR003

