

PROBLEMS

Weeds: Control weeds through regular cultivation but avoid root damage that slows plant growth by damaging shallow roots. Mulches may also be used to control weeds. Weed control is particularly important during the first 2 months of growth when plants are growing slowly and compete poorly.

Insects and Diseases:

Insect	Identification	Control
Thrips	Tiny, slender insects that feed on leaves. Leaves turn silver or gray, may twist and die. Thrips hide near where the leaf and bulb meet.	Spray with registered chemicals
Root Maggot	White worm that feeds on seedlings, roots or bulbs.	Apply diazinon granules at planting.
Disease	Identification	Control
Pink Root	Fungal disease that changes roots to a pink color. Roots eventually die and yields severely reduced.	Use 5-year crop rotation. Solarize the soil where chives to be planted.
Downey Mildew	Fungal disease that turns leaves a light tan to brown color. Furry growth, grayish violet in color, may be visible on the surface of infected leaves during moist periods.	Cultural practices that facilitate air movement and drying of leaves will reduce disease severity. Registered fungicides may be used.

Harvest and Storage

Chives may be harvested as early as 60 days after seeding or 30 days after transplanting. Harvest the leaves with scissors or a knife, cutting the plants back to within 1-2 inches of the soil. Harvest 3-4 times during the first year. In subsequent years, cut plants back monthly. Harvest potted chives in a similar manner to garden chives. Chives generally flower in May and June. The small purple flowers and stalks are unpalatable and should be discarded. Chives may be used fresh or dried for later use. Store dried chives in a resealable container in a cool, dry place.

Productivity

One chive seed will produce a clump of chives in a matter of a couple months. The clump can then be harvested as outlined above. 20-25 plants will provide enough chives for fresh and dried use.

Nutrition

A 1 tablespoon serving of raw chives is low in Saturated Fat, and very low in cholesterol and sodium. It is also a good source of thiamin, phosphorus and zinc, and a very good source of dietary fiber, vitamin A, vitamin C, riboflavin, vitamin B6, folate, calcium, iron, magnesium, potassium and copper.

Frequently Asked Questions

- **How big do chives get?** Over time, chives will form a clump that is 8-10 inches tall and may spread nearly one foot across. You will find that the plants are most productive if they are divided regularly.
- **When is the best time to divide my chives?** When dividing plants, do it in the spring. Let the plants re-establish themselves for several weeks before beginning to harvest them again. If you want to grow some indoors, dig and divide in the autumn and replant them outdoors the following spring.

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