

# URBAN FARMER

LOVE THE EARTH

## From Seed to Harvest: A beginner's guide to growing Baptisia

Baptisia, also commonly known as Blue Indigo or False Indigo, is an excellent option for beginning gardeners because it is an easy-to-care for perennial. Although it is a perennial flower, the dense leaves can give it a shrub-like appearance, which makes it an excellent landscape filler.

### To plant:

When planting, be sure to select a spot in your garden where you know Baptisia is going to stay because it doesn't transplant well since the roots can reach 12 feet deep and several feet wide. Although Baptisia is an easy-to-care for plant once it is established, it does take some time to get there, so gardeners should expect to be patient and not see any blooms for several years after planting the seeds. Fresh seeds should be the ones you plant but those aren't available you can plant hardened seeds. If planting hardened seeds, store in the refrigerator for 6 to 10 weeks before planting. Then, scarify the seeds by wearing them down with sandpaper or cutting them slightly with a knife, and then soak the seeds in water for 24 hours and begin them indoors.

### To grow:

Baptisia does best when grown in well-drained soils in USDA Hardiness Zones 5-9. They prefer to grow in full sun, and they are very drought-tolerant once they become established. If you do plant in partial shade, you may need to provide staking to support the plant. Also, they don't require pruning or deadheading, unlike many plants and shrubs. Baptisia makes an excellent companion plant to peonies and Siberian Irises. When the growth season is over, you



[Baptisia seeds available at ufseeds.com](http://ufseeds.com)

may want to cut the plant back to the ground as the first hard frost will turn it black and it will look unappealing.

### To harvest:

Baptisia foliage, along with its blooms, can make for great contrast and add a different height when arranged in bouquets. When the blooms aren't in season, you can utilize in the foliage in bouquets.

### What Baptisia craves:

Never add lime to your soil near Baptisia since it prefers slightly acidic soil to grow in. If you do wish to fertilize your Baptisia, do so by using a slow-release, balanced fertilizer in the spring. If you want to fertilize several times, use a balanced fertilizer in the spring and some supplemental fertilizing in the summer.

### Where to buy Baptisia seeds:

Find Baptisia seeds on our website at [ufseeds.com](http://ufseeds.com)!



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