

URBAN FARMER

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From Seed to Harvest: A beginner's guide to growing Physostegia

Physostegia, also known as lion's heart, Obedient Plant or false dragonhead, is a flower that is easy to grow and quick to spread. Physostegia's common name, Obedient Plant, came about because the flowers can be bent in any direction. The plant also is called False Dragonhead because it resembles snapdragons. Physostegia's flowers come in white, lavender or pink and they grow along spikes in four vertical rows. Oftentimes, the blooms have dots or swirls of a darker color. The square-like stem of the Physostegia plant resembles the mint family.

Physostegia is a beneficial plant because it attracts butterflies and hummingbirds, which can be beneficial to the garden. Physostegia is a perennial that can reach up to 4 feet tall. It typically does not branch.

To plant:

Start the Physostegia from seed eight weeks before transplanting it into the garden. Plant the seeds in the fall, or in the spring after damp stratification for three months at 40 degrees. Physostegia also grows from division of roots, and you should divide the plants in the early spring or late in the fall.

When planting, keep in mind that Physostegia pairs well with Russian sage, catmint and Caryopteris. The Physostegia's spikes also pair well with coneflowers, aster and sedum, so plant these nearby each other.

To grow:

Since Physostegia grows tall, the taller varieties may need to be staked in order to



[Physostegia seed available at ufseeds.com](http://ufseeds.com)

remain upright. They grow best in full sun and they are known to be hardy, tolerating USDA Hardiness Zones 3-10. Although they prefer full sun, Physostegia can tolerate partial shade especially during hot and dry summers. Since it prefers moist conditions, Physostegia is often found on river banks in the wild.

These plants are considered to be drought tolerant, but they do best in moist and slightly acidic soil with a pH of 5.5 to 6.3. Although the plant can spread aggressively, its shallow root system makes it easy to remove if it does get out of control.

To harvest:

When Physostegia blooms, it blooms from bottom to top. The blooms are triangular lobes. Blooms begin in the late summer and should last through the fall. The long-lasting flowers and tall qualities make it a great bouquet addition.



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What Physostegia craves:

Gardeners should not fertilize Physostegia unless it shows signs of nutrient deficiency, such as foliage discoloration or stunted growth. Since Physostegia spreads so easily, it is best to not encourage this method by not adding fertilizer.

Where to buy Physostegia seeds:

You can find Physostegia seeds that bloom beautiful pink flowers on our website at ufseeds.com!



[Physostegia seed available at ufseeds.com](http://ufseeds.com)



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