

URBAN FARMER

LOVE THE EARTH

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

Echinaceae, more commonly known as coneflower, are care-free heavy bloomers that bloom from summer to fall. It is an easy flower to grow from seed, and it is known to be drought resistant and long lasting. They are commonly purple, but also can grow in white and yellow. Coneflower is a native to the eastern part of the United States.

To plant:

Although coneflower plants are easy to care for, the seeds are tough to germinate. To plant coneflower from seed, take the seeds and sprinkle them on a damp paper towel that has been folded in half. Fold the paper towel in half again to cover the seeds between the two damp halves. Then, place the paper towel in a plastic bag, seal it and keep it in a refrigerator for eight to 12 weeks. This treatment copies winter conditions, which will allow the seeds to break dormancy to then germinate. After the cold treatment, sow two coneflower seeds in 8-inch pots and cover with a small sprinkling of soil. Cover the pots with a clear plastic bag but remove this once seedlings sprout so they can receive the full amount of light.

To grow:

Once coneflowers produce their second set of true leaves, transplant them outside into an area that receives full sun. Wait until after the last frost to do this. During seasons where rainfall is normal, coneflowers do not require any additional watering. The coneflowers thrive in poor soil and are drought resistant, often thriving in dry seasons. Once the flowers die at the end of



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

the season, cut the plant back by a third. This will encourage rejuvenation in the plant, and it may bloom a second time prior to the cold seasons.

To harvest:

Coneflowers make excellent cut flowers due to their vibrant color, long-lasting blooms and lengthy stems. Their seeds also can be harvested for future planting. Harvest seeds by clipping the heads of the plant when they have died. Pull off the petals and, while wearing gloves, rub the cone with your fingers to remove the seeds. Put seeds in a paper bag in a dry area and leave the seeds until they dry. Once dry, store in a sealed bag until you are ready to go through the germination process.

What Echinaceae craves:

Since coneflowers thrive on poor soil, they don't require much fertilizer to grow. However, a little bit can encourage the flowers. During the coneflowers' first season,



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fertilize them twice by sprinkling granular fertilizer around the plants. Fertilize new plants for the first time after six weeks of growth. Provide the second fertilization six weeks after the first. Established coneflower plants will be fed in a similar fashion with granular fertilizer but feed them for the first time prior to new growth in the spring. Continue to fertilize established coneflower plants every six weeks after the first feeding.

Where to buy Echinacea seeds:

Urban Farmer has a variety of Coneflowers that are very attractive to butterflies and birds.

Check out our Echinacea seed selection on our website at ufseeds.com!



White Swan Echinacea seeds available at ufseeds.com



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