



# Kids IN THE Garden

UF | IFAS Extension  
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA



## ~Carrots~

### GLOBAL GARDENING

## Let's travel across the world as we Global Garden

In this series of: Kids in the Garden - Global Gardening, we will explore the fun facts about herbs, vegetables and fruits in your garden. **Let's GO!**

**Carrots** — Are over 5,000 years old with seeds being discovered in Switzerland and Germany dating back to 2,000-3,000 B.C.! The origin of the carrot is believed to be ancient Persia, now known as Iran and Afghanistan. The evidence of carrots come from Egyptian tombs and the first classical mention dates to 1 A.D. That is a long carrot history! Carrot Museum dot com in the United Kingdom has a wonderful site for the carrot's history opening new areas of exploration.

For example: carrots were used as medicine before food in some regions. Not surprising, considering they are part of a healthy diet!

**Another Fun Fact:** The carrot was not always orange. In fact carrots were originally purple or white and sometimes confused with the parsnip.

Story has it that the orange color of carrots was adopted by the Dutch to honor the colors in their national flag and dedicated to their royal family—the Principality of Orange!

There are six common colors of carrots: the first were white, purple and yellow, followed by orange, red, and black. Where the orange color became popular is unknown. But you can have fun growing and serving different colored carrots! Explore buying seeds to plant for that colorful variety and taste.

Turn the page to learn how to grow *Daucus carota* . . .

# Growing Carrots

From Seeds with a Variety of Colors

## Carrots

— Grown from seeds, carrots are considered a biennial, twice a year, plant producing flowers in the second growing season. The lacy flowers of unharvested carrots will produce more seeds for re-planting your carrot crop. Carrots enjoy cooler weather with 8 hours of sun. Because Florida may be dry at that time of year, watering is very important. Provide your carrots with loose loamy soil about a foot deep. Containers work well for a pretty patio or porch plant with the lacy carrot green tops. Thinning carrot seedlings allow for room for the remaining carrots to develop. They like one to three inches of space so plant or thin with care.

\*UF/IFAS EDIS: <https://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/edibles/vegetables/carrots.html>

*Daucus carota*  
*A Celebration of*  
*colorful Carrots!*



<http://www.carrotmuseum.co.uk/carrotcolours.html>



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Patience is important with your garden, especially with carrots that are slow to sprout. You will need to keep your soil moist while your baby carrots (seedlings) are growing. If in containers, you can move into the shade if they are receiving too much sun. They will tolerate shade but prefer a good day's worth of sunlight, so take that in consideration when planting in the garden. They love the sunshine, just like you do!

Considered a root vegetable all parts of a carrot are edible. Seedlings and carrot tops make a healthful addition to salads or soups. Carrots are high in Vitamin A from the Beta Carotene in carrots which is good for healthy eyesight. Carrots and its juice are high in fiber and low in sugar. A good juice substitution along with being a nutritious crunchy snack.

Did you know the Japanese name for carrots is 'Ninjin'! They must be a Ninja root vegetable of good health!

For more information on <https://www.healthbenefitstimes.com/carrot/>

## Carrot Halwa, 'Gajar ka Halwa' — An Indian Sweet Pudding

Recipe courtesy of The Kitchn – serves 4

### Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons ghee or neutral cooking oil
- 1 pound carrots, peeled and grated on the large holes of a box grater
- 8 green cardamom pods, seeds only, crushed
- 3 cups whole milk
- 1 1/4 cups granulated sugar
- 1/4 cup raisins
- Pinch saffron threads
- 1/4 cup unsalted pistachio nuts, coarsely chopped

*Carrot halwa, gajar ka halwa, is an Indian pudding dessert made in the fall and winter months for special occasions. It's made with grated carrots, whole milk, dried fruit, and nuts.*

### Preparation:

1. Heat the ghee or oil in a heavy, high-sided skillet or large saucepan. Add the crushed cardamom seeds and stir until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add the grated carrots and fry for about 3 minutes.
2. Add the milk and bring to a boil. Continue to boil, stirring constantly, for 5 minutes. Reduce the heat to low and simmer uncovered, stirring occasionally to keep the milk from forming a film or scorching on the bottom, about 1 hour. The milk should be reduced by over a third.
3. Add the sugar, raisins, and saffron and stir to combine. Increase the heat to medium and cook, stirring frequently, until the halwa is thick and glossy, 15 to 20 minutes. You can serve the halwa warm or cold. If serving warm, scoop into bowl, sprinkle with the pistachios, and serve. If serving cold, press the halwa mixture into small ramekins and chill. When ready to serve, flip out onto plates, sprinkle with the pistachios, and serve.

**Storage:** Leftovers can be refrigerated in an airtight container for up to 5 days.

# Kids IN THE Garden

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