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SPECIAL INTEREST HERBS

# GOURMET VEGETABLES

## SOYBEAN - EDAMAME

*Glycine max*



### DESCRIPTION

Edamame, or green soybeans, are a perennial vine/climbing plant. The soybean is thought to have originated from Manchuria /Siberia or Southern China. According to historical evidence, it was brought from the north between 400-200 B.C., and was called "Ebisu (alien) Beans" It was introduced to Japan in the Yayoi period, together with paddy rice. It can grow up to 90-1.2m/36-48in. in height, and when grown in the right conditions will produce a bountiful crop of nutritious, bright green soybeans.



used in many dishes both in their natural 'raw' state and processed into well

known soy products such as soy bean paste, soy sauce, tofu, miso and soy milk products. Edamame soybeans are quite soft to the bite and are predominantly eaten raw. Refrigerate, freeze, cook, or blanch the pods as soon as possible after picking to maintain flavor and nutrients.



### GROWTH

Careful attention to control the growth of weeds will aid in producing good soybean crops. They require a slightly moist soil environment and respond well to fertilizers such as pot ash. Growing soybeans with other plants will help to create nitrogen rich soil and increase fertility. Edamame soybeans usually reach maturity in 70 days depending on the conditions of growth such as water availability and weather. Edamame soybeans produce a quick crop in cool damp weather. In hot dry weather the plants often run to seed before they have had sufficient time for mature bean growth. In warmer climates they produce an excellent crop in late winter.



### CULTIVATION

Edamame is easy to grow, similar to growing bush beans. Grow Edamame in full sun. Plants are adaptable to most soil types. In spring, once the soil has started to warm up, sow the seeds 8cm/3in. apart and 2.5cm/1in. deep, spacing rows about 1m/24 in. apart. The seeds easily rot if over watered, so a 'dripper' system or light watering in the evenings is recommended. Make successive sowings, every week or two, to ensure fresh Edamame all summer long. When the plants reach a height of 10-15cm/4-6 in. high, add a layer of organic mulch (hay, leaf mold, salt hay, grass clippings) around each plant; keep the mulch at least 2.5cm/1in. from the stem. Water thoroughly during dry periods. Foliar feed or fertilize when the plants begin flowering. At maturity Edamame soybeans will be bright yellow/green and ready to be harvested.



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