



Grow Fava Beans

Science – Grades 4-6

Students grow “magic beans” just like Jack and the Beanstalk!

Materials:

- Spade
- Garden fork
- Manure or compost
- Don't forget to look for worms!

Instructions:

Favas are a bush bean that grow 30-40 inches tall. They mature and are ready to harvest in 80-90 days. As soon as the ground can be worked, a finger in the soil to the first digit, you are ready to grow a fava bean. Plant favas in early spring for your area and you will pick a fava bean in 3 months. Roots enrich soil with nitrogen. After harvest in midseason, they make room for the next crop. The shells and vines add nitrogen to the garden by putting leftovers through the compost pile.

1. Choose a sunny spot to grow your bean, up to 6 hours a day.
2. Use one wheelbarrow of rotten horse/steer manure or compost and a coffee can of wood ashes into the bed to grow the beans.
3. Prepare the soil with a spade and garden fork, dig down with spade and flip, with your garden fork stir in a 2 inch layer of manure or compost to feed the bean and aerate the soil.
4. After you have made a row with the sides slightly slanted, flatten the top of the row with a rake.
5. Plant two rows of fava beans, about 18 inches apart.
6. Press the broad bean seeds into the soil 1 inch deep, every 5 inches along the row.
7. After beans are planted, walk over them, heel to toe.
8. Water bed until soil is just damp to speed up sprouting.



9. Check bed daily for dry spots and water rows to keep them moist. Water until time to pick the beans.
10. When plants grow to 5 inches, stake them for support and mulch with grass clippings if you don't use pesticides. Look for insects and use a method that is safe to control pests for broad beans.
11. Harvest the beans about three months after planting them. Look for bean pods that are plump and cause the limbs to droop from the weight. You may see edible pods earlier than this – they will be about 3-4 inches long.