

# BROAD BEANS (FABA BEANS) FACT SHEET

Broad beans (*vicia faba*) are hardy, nitrogen-fixing legumes ideal for growing in veg gardens. They thrive in cool climates, providing early harvests (spring or summer) and enriching soil. This year we have selected two varieties:

- Aquadulce Longpod
- Ratio

## **VARIETY DETAILS:**

- Aquadulce Longpod

An ancient variety which is still popular today. Growing to about 3' (92cm) tall bearing long pods containing large pale coloured, flat seeds.

It is recommended to stake the plants to provide support.

Spacing: Plant about 9" (22cm) apart.

- Ratio

A relatively recent introduction from the Netherlands which is proving very successful. Short plants approx. 2' (60cm) tall. Excellent for exposed situations.

Ratio is more attractive than most broad beans being decorative with finely cut, pointy leaves. It doesn't look out of place dotted around in ornamental borders.

An excellent variety which even tastes good raw, straight from the plant.

- special notes: no staking needed; wind-resistant.

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## **GROWING GUIDE:**

site & soil

- sunlight: full sun.
- soil: well-drained, fertile (ph 6.0–7.0). Add compost before planting.
- spacing: 9" (22cm) apart, 18" (45cm) between rows.

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## **CARE:**

- watering: regularly, especially during flowering/pod formation.
- support: stake tall varieties (e.g., aquadulce) if exposed.
- feeding: low-nitrogen fertilizer at flowering.
- pest control:
- blackfly: pinch out tips post-flowering; spray with soapy water.
- mice/pea weevils: use netting; rotate crops.
- disease management:
- chocolate spot: improve airflow; avoid overcrowding.
- rust: remove affected leaves; use fungicide if severe.

## **HARVESTING & STORAGE:**

- when: pods firm and swollen (~15 cm long).
- how: twist pods off; shell beans.
- storage: freeze fresh beans; dry for long-term use.

## **USES:**

- culinary: stews, salads, hummus. Young pods edible.
- soil health: fix nitrogen; dig plants into soil post-harvest ("green manure").

## **TROUBLESHOOTING**

- poor pod set: hand-pollinate by shaking plants.
- yellow leaves: overwatering or nitrogen deficiency.