

**ASPARAGUS CROWNS**



The Pacific brand is the only New Zealand bred variety of asparagus, bred by Aspra Pacific for New Zealand conditions.

## PACIFIC PURPLE

Pacific Purple is the latest bred variety and is totally purple. This variety has been released world-wide and is very popular.



**NEW  
PRODUCT**

## PACIFIC ENDEAVOUR

Pacific Endeavour is a green variety with a slight purple blush. This variety is for early season.



**NEW  
PRODUCT**

## PACIFIC CHALLENGER

Pacific Challenger is a green variety with a high tolerance to phytophthora.



**NEW  
PRODUCT**

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## ASPARAGUS CROWNS

### When to plant -

- The best time to plant asparagus is when soil temperatures rise in spring.
- North Island - mid September to mid October
- South Island - from early October
- Planting asparagus any earlier than this often results in the death of plants through disease associated with wet cold soil or frost damage.

### Site preparation -

- Make sure the site is free of perennial weeds before planting.
- Asparagus like deep soil that is well drained and free of compaction layers. Best soil is a sandy loam, loamy sand or free drained volcanic soils.
- They also like plenty of organic matter so dig well-rotted garden compost or mushroom compost into the soil prior to planting.
- A high pH (6.0-6.5) is preferable as well as high levels of phosphate.
- Prior to planting use Morton Smith-Dawe Dolomite Lime and Superphosphate and dig into the soil. Spreading the fertiliser on the soil surface and dig deep to bury the fertiliser to the depth that most root growth will occur, around 15cm depth.

### How to plant -

- Open a trench approximately 20cm deep with a flat bottom approximately 20cm across.
- Plant the crowns down one side of the trench placing each crown 20cm apart.
- Plant another row of crowns along the other side of the trench but in the gaps of the first row.
- This gives a staggered double row with about 10 plants per m length of row.
- Do not fill the trench but cover the crowns with 5cm of loose soil. This will ensure the crowns get away to a good start.
- During the following summer and autumn slowly fill the trench with soil as you hoe any weeds on the sides of the trench.
- By the following winter, the trench should be filled with soil and the soil surface should be flat again.

### Fern removal in winter -

- Once the fern has completed died off and turned brown, cut the dead fern off at the ground level and either compost it or burn it.
- The stalks that remain at the soil surface can be buried with soil or compost to help rot them down. This makes picking the following spring much easier.

### First harvest -

- Normally this is two years after planting the crowns.
- If the crowns grow well in the first year and spears emerge that are 15mm in diameter or bigger these can be picked one year after planting the crowns. This is a bonus harvest season and will only last two weeks.
- Normal harvest starts two years after planting and the season usually lasts 3 - 5 weeks.
- Following years, the harvest should last around 6 - 10 weeks.

### Bed life -

- A well-kept garden bed planted with the recommended variety should last up to 20 years with some beds in New Zealand lasting up to 58 years.