



LOTUS GERMINATION & GROWING INSTRUCTIONS

When to Germinate - In our part of the world the optimum time is Spring when temperatures are averaging around 25-30°C or at least by the first month of Summer. This is because the seedlings will need the better part of a whole growing season to develop sufficient rhizomes or flower and produce seed ensuring the plants survives into the following seasons. Lotus seeds have an extremely long viable life. Seeds from Chinese tombs over 5000yrs old have been germinated successfully! So there's no rush if you have missed the optimum time of year.

How to Germinate - Seed should be filed or scraped on concrete until you're through the hard, dark exterior skin. This lets the water into the seed. In other words you file 1-2mm off one or both ends of the seeds. Place the seeds in a glass of warm to hot (not boiling) water on a sunny windowsill. Usually the viable seed will sink but often floaters can also germinate so give them a chance. **Change the water everyday** especially if it goes cloudy. Warm water is best. The first leaves should emerge within a week and rise up out of the glass, it's fun to watch!. At this stage they can be planted out. The seedlings can then be planted 2-3cm deep in a well-fertilized medium (growing medium details below) covered with about 100mm of water.

Ponds and Containers - Lotus is a vigorous grower with a spreading rhizome. When mature the leaves can emerge from about 2.5m of water and the stems can rise 1m out of the water depending on the depth of the water. Because of its vigor lotus does not prosper in a small container, I recommend a minimum container size of about 400-500lts. The container can be a large planter bag or pot submerged into a pond or one that holds water itself like a bathtub or ceramic pot. In the later case the container should be filled with soil or medium to about 200mm from the top allowing for this much water to cover the soil. If you're intending to grow lotus in a farm dam or large earth based pond remember that lotus will grow into a depth of 2.5 meters so if your pond or dam doesn't exceed a depth of 3m anywhere the lotus may occupy the whole area which may disadvantage other life forms in the pond and the aesthetic appeal of the pond, it's nice to be able to see some of the water surface. In our experience a couple of rhizomes planted at one end of a .5ha

dam, the depth of which did not exceed 2m, the lotus covered the entire surface of the dam in 3yrs, part of the dam has since been deepened.

Soils and Growing Medium - Lotus will do best in a rich heavy or clayey soil that is fertilized with well-rotted manure. We grow everything organically so cannot advise on artificial fertilizers. However we have used chicken manure based pellet fertilizers wrapped in paper parcels and buried in the soil with good results. The soil should be covered with water and if the manure is fresh, allowed to stand for 2-3 weeks while the manure rots. If plants are introduced to this mix too soon they may also rot so prepare the container beforehand.

Disclaimer - The information here is given in good faith drawn from our own experience and because people apply advice differently and under varying conditions we cannot guarantee success.

Good luck & good growing