

## Sowing instructions Bittermelon

Soak: 24 hours

Indoor sowing: April - June

Germination: 2 - 7 days

Germination temp.: 22-25°C

Sowing depth: 1 - 11/4 cm

Plant distance: 15 - 30 cm

Plant position: greenhouse or hothouse

Days till harvest: 60 - 70

Soak about 24 hours before sowing in tepid water. Sow indoors from April on indoors. Keep warm and keep the soil temperature at about 20 °C and very even to ensure a quick and good germination. Sow in separate pots 1 or 2 seeds each. Cover with a layer of moist soil. Keep moist, but not too wet to prevent the seeds from rotting. Cover the pots with Clingfilm to retain the moisture. Remove the Clingfilm when the seedlings emerge.

Transplant the seedlings in a greenhouse or hothouse after about 1 month. Give them a lot of light, warmth and a high air humidity to stimulate the grow and fruit setting of the plants. Fertilize the female flowers by hand to get fruits. These plants need a lot of feeding to grow. Fertilize each week when the fruits starting to grow a lot of water mixed with a liquid feed. Support the plants. Protect the plants against snails, slugs, birds and other pests. Give water on the ground and not on the plants to prevent rotting. This subtropical plant needs a lot of warmth, sunshine and humidity to thrive. Harvest the fruits when they're young, tender and light green. The old, ripe fruits have a really bitter flavour. Cut the fruits with a knife from the plants.