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Kentucky Colonel Spearmint

Mentha spicata 'Kentucky Colonel'



Kentucky Colonel Spearmint flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 24 inches

Spread: 20 inches

Spacing: 20 inches

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 3

Description:

A fan favorite, perfect for making mint juleps; sweet yet spicy aroma, this vigorously mounded spearmint is great for patio containers or raised beds; a lovely addition to cocktails, desserts or teas; pinch often for fresh and aromatic leaves

Edible Qualities

Kentucky Colonel Spearmint is a perennial herb that is typically grown for its edible qualities, although it does have ornamental merits as well. The fragrant oval green leaves can be harvested at any time in the season. The leaves have a delicious taste and a pleasant fragrance.

The leaves are most often used in the following ways:

- Fresh Eating
- Cooking
- Seasoning
- Tea

Features & Attributes

Kentucky Colonel Spearmint features bold spikes of lilac purple tubular flowers with white overtones rising above the foliage in late summer. Its attractive fragrant oval leaves remain green in color throughout the season.

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This is an herbaceous perennial herb with a mounded form. Its medium texture blends into the garden, but can always be balanced by a couple of finer or coarser plants for an effective composition. This is a high maintenance plant that will require regular care and upkeep, and should be cut back in late fall in preparation for winter. It is a good choice for attracting bees and butterflies to your yard, but is not particularly attractive to deer who tend to leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Aside from its primary use as an edible, Kentucky Colonel Spearmint is sutiable for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- General Garden Use
- Herb Gardens
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Kentucky Colonel Spearmint will grow to be about 24 inches tall at maturity, with a spread of 20 inches. When grown in masses or used as a bedding plant, individual plants should be spaced approximately 20 inches apart. Its foliage tends to remain dense right to the ground, not requiring facer plants in front. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 10 years. As an herbaceous perennial, this plant will usually die back to the crown each winter, and will regrow from the base each spring. Be careful not to disturb the crown in late winter when it may not be readily seen!

This plant is quite ornamental as well as edible, and is as much at home in a landscape or flower garden as it is in a designated herb garden. It does best in full sun to partial shade. It does best in average to evenly moist conditions, but will not tolerate standing water. This plant should not require much in the way of fertilizing once established, although it may appreciate a shot of general-purpose fertilizer from time to time early in the growing season. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. This is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America. It can be propagated by division; however, as a cultivated variety, be aware that it may be subject to certain restrictions or prohibitions on propagation.

Kentucky Colonel Spearmint is a good choice for the edible garden, but it is also well-suited for use in outdoor pots and containers. It can be used either as 'filler' or as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination, depending on the height and form of the other plants used in the container planting. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.