SAKATA®
PASSION in Seed

Merton

F1 Hybrid Cauliflower

OUTSTANDING QUALITIES

- **WIDELY ADAPTED**
- **EXCELLENT YIELD POTENTIAL**
- **VERY UNIFORM CURDS**
- **EXCELLENT WRAPPING**

Merton is a variety for warm season production. Unlike most other cauliflower varieties, **Merton** withstands summer heat very well. The leaves tend to wrap around the head and provide protection against the sun. It produces dense white curds with a typical dome shape which is perfect for pre-packaging and processing.

SPECIAL VARIETAL REQUIREMENTS

- Suitable for spring, summer and autumn production and not for winter
- Contact area representative for a sowing guide

CHARACTERISTIC	MERTON
KIND	F1 hybrid cauliflower (*Brassica oleracea* L. convar. *botrytis* (L.) Alef. var. *botrytis* L.)
SEASON	Summer, spring, autumn
MATURITY	Medium (around 75 - 85 days from transplant)
CURD SIZE	Medium to large
CURD SHAPE	Dome
CURD WEIGHT	600 – 900 g (could be bigger depending on spacing)
CURD COMPACTNESS	Very good
CURD COVER	Excellent
CURD COLOUR	White to ivory
CURD TYPE	White dense dome curds
FLAVOUR	Very good
PLANT SIZE	Medium to large
FIELD HOLDING	Good
YIELD POTENTIAL	Very high
SUGGESTED SPACING	36 000 plants per ha
MARKET SEGMENT	Bulk packaging, pre-packing, processing
SPECIAL FEATURES	Very widely adapted and reliable with excellent curd quality

* Characteristics given are affected by production methods such as soil type, nutrition, planting population, planting date and climatic conditions. Please read disclaimer.

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GENERAL TIPS FOR CAULIFLOWER PRODUCTION

Climatic requirements
Cauliflower has very similar temperature and moisture requirements for optimum growth and development as cabbage but is much less adapted to extreme heat or cold. The average minimum for cauliflower is about 7°C. The plant can recover completely when light frost occurs at a young stage. However, if mature heads are not protected by leaves they can be easily damaged by a few days of frost, especially during sudden cold periods. Quality and yield are poorly affected by hot weather and cauliflower maturing in summer will often have poorer attributes. Production is therefore favoured from autumn through to spring, except in very cold areas. Growers in cooler areas are able to take advantage of good production during summer when there is a demand for quality cauliflowers. However, there are particular varieties that have been bred for heat tolerance and can, therefore, produce good quality heads during summer months.

Transplanting
In summer, 4-week old seedlings are ideal, whilst in winter this may have to stretch to 8 weeks. A good norm to follow is to transplant after the development of the first true leaf. Hardening-off is especially necessary when the plants are to be planted out during warm conditions. Seedlings should be carefully inspected before transplanting into the field. Check that the terminal bud is not damaged as these results in blind unproductive plants that should be discarded. The ideal seedling should be healthy, have no more than 3 true leaves, be 125 - 150 mm tall, have a straight stocky stem and not be root-bound.

Crop rotation
Crop rotation is important in reducing soil-borne pathogens and pests surviving in infected plant residues and with a specific host range.

Rotations are often designed to include a green-manure crop in order to increase the organic content of the soil. Crops belonging to the family Brassicaceae (cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, Brussels sprout, Chinese cabbage, kohlrabi, turnip, radish, kale, horseradish, watercress & various mustards) should not be planted in the same field more than once every three years but can follow any unrelated crop in a rotational system. Cruciferous weeds must be rigorously controlled during the period when brassica crops are not grown otherwise much of the benefit of crop rotation can be lost. Green mealies and legumes are the most suitable green-manure crops for brassicas. These crops should be ploughed in while they are still green and at least 8 weeks before planting.

Riceyness of cauliflower
Symptoms
- The curd appears uneven and fuzzy and the floral parts may begin to grow up through the head prematurely

Causes
- Planting a variety in the incorrect slot
- Environmental and water stress

Control
- Plant varieties in their suggested slot

Disease resistance definition
Resistance: is the ability of a plant variety to restrict the growth and development of a specified pest or pathogen and/or the damage they cause when compared to susceptible plant varieties under similar environmental conditions and pest or pathogen pressure. Resistant varieties may exhibit some disease symptoms or damage under heavy pest or pathogen pressure. Two levels of resistance are defined:

High/standard resistance (HR): plant varieties that highly restrict the growth and development of the specified pest or pathogen under normal pest or pathogen pressure when compared to susceptible varieties. These plant varieties may, however, exhibit some symptoms or damage under heavy pest or pathogen pressure.

Moderate/intermediate resistance (IR): plant varieties that restrict the growth and development of the specified pest or pathogen, but may exhibit a greater range of symptoms or damage compared to resistant varieties.
Moderately/intermediately resistant plant varieties will still show less severe symptoms or damage than susceptible plant varieties when grown under similar environmental conditions and/or pest or pathogen pressure.

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