

## Learn A New Skill!

### Hand Pollination

Cucumbers can cross pollinate, so if you are growing more than one variety you will need to hand pollinate to assure purity. Blossoms should be taped shut the evening before bloom to prevent insect pollination then the blossom opens the next morning. Do this for both the female and the male flower which you have selected to be the pollen donor. As early in the morning as possible, open the taped blossoms and pick the male with the pollen bearing stamen at center and use it to dab pollen on the female stigma located at the center of the flower. Then seal the female up again to prevent stray pollen from being brought in by ants or bees. Tie a string around the stem end to mark your pollinated cucumber because the blossom will fall off. Shown below, the female blossom (right) with ovary at base, and the male blossom is at left.



Photo and more information can be found at// [www.canr.msu.edu/resources/smart-gardening-pollination-in-vegetable-gardens-and-backyard-fruit](http://www.canr.msu.edu/resources/smart-gardening-pollination-in-vegetable-gardens-and-backyard-fruit)



Learn More about  
MI Seed Library Network at  
<https://misedlibrary.org/>



Find Michigan State University  
Extension Gardening and Growing  
Resources at  
[https://www.canr.msu.edu/  
home\\_gardening/](https://www.canr.msu.edu/home_gardening/)

and find information about  
cucumber recipes and pickling at  
[https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/  
fresh\\_cucumbers\\_and\\_cucumber\\_pi  
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### Cucumber Trivia:

The 'Boston Pickling' cucumber is an American heirloom introduced in 1877 by the Detroit-based seed company, D.M. Ferry & Co.

A pickling cucumber is sometimes called a Kirby cucumber, and is characterized by a short size and a bumpy skin.

# Michigan Seed Libraries One Seed, One State

## 2022

## 'Boston Pickling' Cucumber

### Growing Information

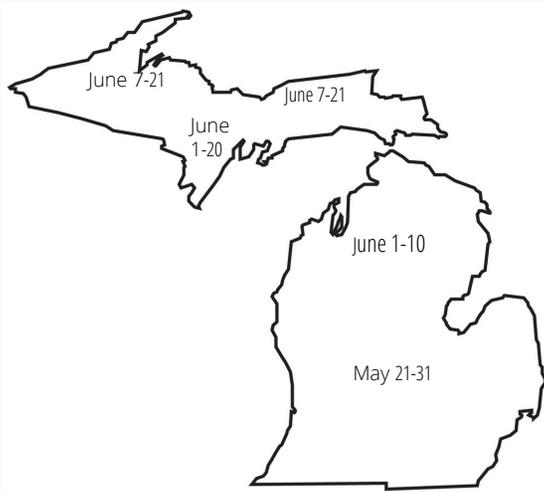


## 'Boston Pickling cucumbers are a great choice for Michigan gardens!

- Early yielding
- Disease resistant
- Vining habit - can be grown on a trellis
- Dual purpose! Great for slicing & pickling
- Low calorie - High nutrition
- Open-pollinated/non-GMO

### When can I plant cucumbers in Michigan?

Cucumbers should be planted after the average last frost date in your region\* Frost can still threaten at any time, so be prepared to cover if temperatures dip below 40 degrees.



\*<https://www.plantmaps.com/interactive-michigan-last-frost-date-map.php>



## Growing Information

### Seeding

Plant cucumber seeds one inch deep in prepared soil.  
Hill method: make a mound of soil & plant 6 seeds per hill, 6" apart. Thin to the most vigorous 3 plants.  
Row method: Plant in rows 36" apart, thin seedlings to 6" apart.  
Trellis method: Plant seeds at the base of a 6' trellis, thin to 6" apart.

### Care

Cucumbers need 1-1.5 inch of water per week  
Water at the base of the plant, rather than the top  
Remove weeds around the base of the plant  
Hand-pick striped cucumber beetles if they appear

### Harvesting

'Boston Pickling' cucumbers will start producing 50-55 days after planting. Harvest when they are roughly 4-5 inches in length. Pick consistently (every other day) to ensure plants continue to produce.

## Saving Seeds

For a good genetic sample, mark cucumbers from several different plants with string and allow them to fully mature until they are large and yellow and the vines have dried. Allow them to cure for a few more week indoors in a dry spot. Scoop out the seed mass and put it into a large jar of water. Let the seeds ferment for 3-5 days. The good seeds will fall to the bottom of the jar. Pour off the scum on top and rinse the seeds in a colander, then dry them on screens or paper towels in for at least three weeks. Dry seeds can be put in paper envelopes, plastic bags, or air-tight containers. Label and store them in a rodent-proof box in a cool, dark place free of humidity. Cucumber seed processed and stored properly will remain good for at least 5 years. Please note: If you are growing more than one variety of cucumber and want to save pure seeds to grow and share, please see the hand pollination instructions on the reverse side.

**Return extra seeds to your local seed library to help grow your community's seed stock!**