

Grow Guide

Sikil Squash

We still have much to learn about growing Sikil squash. Generally speaking, it is similar in habit and climatic requirements to Seminole pumpkin or tropical calabaza. In Florida, plantings could be attempted anytime from March 1st through the first week of September with possible success. Squash are cold sensitive and cannot be grown through winter in most of the state. Local pests and diseases may dictate viability in the worst of the summer heat. Sikil is a rampantly spreading vine which may ultimately end up 15 feet away from the base of the plant. We like to dig small pits which we heavily amend with compost and mulch to plant squash into. It is ideal to plant multiple seeds into each pit and the strongest one or two plants can be left to dominate and weak seedlings thinned out. These pits may be spaced around 5 feet apart. Sprawling squash can be grown around trees but can clamber up and smother some plants without close attention being paid. During dry periods water will be very helpful for squash plantings. Sikil squash can be harvested to eat like zucchinis when they are around the size of a baseball. Skin, flesh and seed cavity are all eaten whole. Organic BT spray can be a useful control against caterpillar outbreaks which sometimes afflict various types of squash vines.

