

Crambe - Growing Guide

Growing Crambe Cordifolia – Colewort

Crambe cordifolia is an attractive clump forming perennial which grows in the wild in the Caucasus. The plant forms mounds of long stalked, kidney shaped to ovate leaves which are bristly and dark green. Each leaf can be up to 14in across.

This plant has a deep growing chubby root and is not suited to pot growing where it rapidly looks starved and sparse. It needs planting out when dormant very early in the spring or in the autumn to get it established and away.

Strong stems appear above the leaves in early to mid summer. These create a mat of many branched panicles of white flowers which, in a mature plant, can spread up to 3-5ft. A most impressive display when a few plants are grown together in a border. Bees absolutely love these inflorescences.

Soon after flowering the leaves die away and the plant becomes dormant by late summer.

This plant is readily propagated from seed sown in trays in a cold frame in autumn or in the greenhouse in spring. In early spring the root system can be divided when dormant or root cuttings can be taken which can then be coaxed into growth with bottom heat in the mist bench. As with most fleshy rooted herbaceous plants root cuttings are the quickest and easiest way to get a decent sized new plant.



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