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Growing Lavender



Much of California including the Modesto area has a Mediterranean climate that is ideal for growing lavender.

Choosing Plants: Look for cuttings rather than seed started, plants. Choose a variety that is the right size for your space.

Planting: Lavender needs full sun and well-drained soil. Where soil drains poorly, grow lavender in raised beds. Set full-size varieties 3 to 4 feet apart. Mulch with decomposed granite or gravel, not compost.

Watering, feeding: Keep baby plants and new transplants moist, but not soaked. Well established plants need little water. Irrigate deeply but infrequently, when the soil is almost dry. Plants require little or no fertilizer.

Pruning: Do this every year immediately after bloom. Cut back 2 to 4 foot tall varieties by a third, low-growing types by 2 to 4 inches.

Harvesting: Snip stems when the bottom third of their blossoms are open; Remove leaves from the stems, gather stems in bunches of no more than 100, and secure each bundle with a rubber band. Hang upside down in a cool, dry, dark place to dry.