



Emerald Goddess Gardens emeraldgoddessgardens.com

- Botanical Name: *Stevia rebaudiana*
- Common Name: Candyleaf, Sweetleaf, Sugarleaf
- Plant Family: Asteraceae
- Mature Size: 2 ft.
- Growth Habit: Low Growing Shrub
- Bloom Color: White
- Bloom Form: Inconspicuous Single
- Bloom Time: Fall
- Water Needs: Moderate
- Light Needs: Full Sun to Moderate Shade
- Recommended Zones: 9, 10, 11
- Key Features: Delicate Foliage, Sweet Tasting Leaf
- Suggested Uses: Potted Ornamental, Herb Garden
- Growers Notes : This herb has a short lifespan and may need to be replanted approximately every 2 years.



Stevia rebaudiana or **Candyleaf** is an herb that has attracted vast amounts of attention in the developed world. In comparison to other plants like *Saccharum officinarum* that are used to sweeten foods industrially, the leaves of Stevia provide little to no nutritional content when used to provide sweet taste to foods. This plant is widely cultivated in herb gardens and is an attractive soft leaved shrub that grows to approximately 2 feet in height at maturity.

During Fall, *Stevia rebaudiana* produces inconspicuous white flowers that add to this plant's attractive growth habit. A Brazilian native, Stevia will grow best in tropical climates from Zone 9 up. Some people have had success growing this plant outdoors with cold protection in Zone 8 thought it will die back and resprout from the roots after frost.

Direct planting of 4 inch starters is not recommended. For success with your new Stevia rebaudiana follow these helpful tips:

- Plant in well draining soil.
- Locate in full sun or partial shade
- Provide supplemental irrigation until well established.
- Feed a good quality bloom boosting fertilize with the initial planting and yearly thereafter.
- Protect from frost and freeze until very well established.

For quick answers to your growing or planting questions, just email us at service@emeraldgoddessgardens.com

If you don't know your USDA Planting Zone, you can check the map on our website site at emeraldgoddessgardens.com

Toxicity information generally known in the horticultural trade and gardening circles, if known, is provided for reference purposes only. Medical and/or Horticulture experts in the field of Plant Toxicology should be consulted for specific and reliable information. The absence of information does not mean or imply that a plant is not toxic, only that no information is generally known by us.

This plant is intended for ornamental, decorative use only. Emerald Goddess Gardens tm does not recommend, endorse, or offer the product for any other intended use.

Care of Your New Plant

Here are a few basic guidelines for handling and caring for your new plant:

Direct planting of 4 inch starter size plants or plugs directly into the landscape is not generally recommended, with a few exceptions. So, for the best results with your new plant we suggest that it be repotted into a larger pot and allowed to grow larger until the new pot is filled with roots before setting out.

Check the recommended USDA Zone Range for the plant. Many gardeners are able to successfully grow plants outside their recommended Zones, but this is dependent upon providing the type of environment and care the plant needs.

- Immediately repot the new plant into a larger pot. A 6 inch pot is recommended for starter plugs, and a 10 inch in recommended for 4 inch diameter starter pots.
- Use a good quality commercial bagged potting media.
- Apply a high quality, slow release plant food according to the label directions. Do not use hot, all chemical, quick release fertilizers like 6-6-6 or 10-10-10.
- Check the recommended location in the plant specifics and position accordingly. Note that plants that are suitable for growing in full sun should be acclimated, and young plants should be protected from direct, very hot sun while they are becoming established.
- Maintain consistent and uniform moisture in the soil. Take care not to over water. Some plants prefer to dry a bit between waterings, so check the plant specifics.
- Packing crystals may be re-used to conserve water, but do so with caution as they hold 6000 times their weight in water.
- If re-using crystals, mix and incorporate them thoroughly throughout the potting media.
- Be sure the pot can drain, and that the bottom of the pot does not sit submerged in water for more than a few hours.
- Monitor for signs of disease or insects and treat accordingly.
- Protect from frost and freeze, as even cold tolerant plants can be damaged by cold when young, or during cold conditions more severe or longer duration than the average for the Zone Range.
- Prune or pinch lightly and often when the plant is young and actively growing to strengthen the central stalk, encourage branching, and build uniform shape.
- Monitor for signs of disease or insects and treat accordingly

Many tropical and subtropical plants can be grown as potted plants indefinitely, and can be successfully wintered over indoors in colder climates, so long as they are moved indoors well ahead of temps into the 30°F's, are maintained in warm environment (minimum 40°F) with adequate, full spectrum light, consistent soil moisture is maintained, and any pest or disease issue are promptly and properly addressed.

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