



MORRIS NURSERY



Incorporated

1837 Patterson Road (Hwy. 108) Riverbank Ca. 95367 (209)527-5553

P.O. Box 577378 Modesto, Ca 95357

Growing, Planting & Care of Asparagus

Choose a site where you can grow the plants for 10 to 15 years without disturbing. Asparagus performs best in full sun and in soil with a PH of 6.0 to 7.0. Now comes the important part, the soil must be well draining, with plenty of organic matter and rich in potassium and phosphorus. Before planting, mix in lots of steer manure, as much as 2" thick, or *Master Nursery Paydirt w/Soil 'n Rich* or *Bumper Crop*. Straw, humus or peat moss also can help loosen heavy clay soils. Do not be skimpy with the organic material. Remember, this bed will be in production for at least 10 years. Mix in recommended amounts of either *Master Nursery Tomato & Vegetable Food* or *Dr. Earth's Organic Tomato, Vegetable & Herb Food*.

To produce enough asparagus for fresh table use, figure 6 to 10 crowns per family member. Crowns should be planted 12" apart in rows 3' to 5' apart. Dig a trench 7" to 12" deep and cover crowns with 2" of soil. As shoots appear, cover with soil being careful not to cover up the foliage until the trench is filled level with soil surface.

Refrain from harvesting any spears the first year. The new planting needs to produce lots of fern so the roots grow stronger and more productive for the future. The second year, you can pick spears larger than your pinky finger. The third year, pick index finger sized spears for two to four weeks until they get smaller than your pinky. In subsequent years, you can harvest for six to eight weeks or until spears get too thin. I am told that picking in the early evening produces the most tender spears.

Side dress plants in fall with *Dr. Earth* food and mulch in winter with good organic mulch. In fall, cut back ferns when they turn brown after frost and cultivate soil being careful not to harm the crowns.

