

Agave species

Agave americana

Agave attenuata

Agave victoriae reginae

Agave attenuata, commonly known as the spineless Agave is a great slow growing succulent for water conserving gardens. The soft grey-green leaves grow to about 80 cm and are fleshy and somewhat translucent clumps of plants grow to about 1.5m wide and with time an individual plant can develop a stout trunk to about 1.5m. They produce dense greenish yellow flowers on arching spikes that can reach 3 metres. This species can handle poor soils but does best in rich soil with ample water. They need protection from frost. These are classic clean, no-fuss, minimalist plants that makes picturesque container plants for around the pool or in a rockery. A great slow growing succulent for water conserving gardens. It prefers a sunny location and small containers. Unlike other members of its family this plant doesn't die after flowering. It freely suckers resulting in a beautiful mass of plants and makes a large trunk with age. Let soil dry before watering.

Propagation

WHEN TO SOW – In warm areas, or in a glass house - at any time. In frost prone areas sow when the danger of frost has passed.

WHERE TO GROW – Full sun or part shade in any well-drained soil. They can be grown in the garden or in large pots.

SOWING – Place seeds in a cup of water, leave overnight then drain and sow. Fill a pot or tray with moist Seed raising mix with about 30% perlite added to improve drainage, wet thoroughly and compress. Sow seeds thinly on the surface and cover with a thin layer of soil. Keep the soil moist but not damp. Cover with clear polythene until germination in about 2-5 weeks.

CULTIVATION - Thin the seedlings out if crowded, transplant or pot into a very well-draining medium at 1 inch (2.5cm). Disturb the roots as little as possible. Water in well and water regularly until established, thereafter as needed. Overwatering can be a problem and it is best to water from below – immerse the seed tray or tube in a shallow water bath for a few minutes say each few days and then allow to drain. Protect against snails and slugs during germination and seedling stage.