

## SUNFLOWERS



Sunflowers are a minor crop in the Yuma area, grown locally as a cut fresh flower or, to a lesser degree, a source of feed for wild birds. The sunflower (*Helianthus annuus*) is an annual plant native to the Americas, with a large flowering head (inflorescence). The stem of the flower can grow as high as 12 feet tall, with the flower head reaching over 12 inches in diameter within the "large" seeded varieties. It is the most widely distributed on the sunflower species, being introduced from the Americas into Europe in 1510 by the Spanish and now grown on all continents except Antarctica.

Sunflowers are an important source of edible oil and the seeds are used for food as well.

The sunflower has been identified with the sun, gold, and its image has been worshiped as a god. Here is a slew of sunflower trivia and facts for your science projects, Kids. Sunflowers have motor cells, in the flower head, which move the head so it faces the sun. Heliotropism is the term for this plant characteristic of moving its head. Sunflower "faces" or follows the sun east to west through the sky and return at night to face the east, ready for the morning sun. Heliotropism only occurs during early stages before the flowers form seeds.

Sunflowers are native to the Americas, which means they were first found in the Americas and the seeds were then carried to and planted in other parts of the world

The sunflower originated in America's prairie states and is the state flower of Kansas, where the golden blossoms grow abundantly in fields and along roads.

"Wild sunflowers" are the plants with many flowers on the same plant, but they are becoming popular with gardeners, and now cultivated for their wonderful and showy flower heads. Sunflower colors can range from yellow to orange to reds, maroons and browns.

Native Americans used sunflower meal to make bread; archaeologists found the charred remains of sunflower seeds dating back to the year 800 in Indian dwellings. In Victorian times, the sunflower was a motif for the Aesthetic Movement, a reaction against the Industrial Age. The flower's simple, bold image was carved into chair backs, glazed onto vases and emblazoned on iron railings. Today, it is still a powerful emblem, appearing on products such as pottery and in art.

Sunflowers were originally cultivated by Native Americans as a source for food. Archeologists estimate that Sunflower cultivation dates back to more than 8,000 years ago, and even began before corn, squash, or beans. Until recent years, the only reason for growing sunflowers was to consume them. Growing Sunflowers for decoration purposes only is actually a fairly recent trend.

Sunflower stems were the original filler material for Personal Floatation Devices/Life Jackets. Sunflowers are one of the official flowers of the Leo in the Zodiac. They are also the official flower of the Vegan Society as well as the official representation of "Green" Ideology.

Sunflowers make great subjects for Art. Because of their delicate characteristics and unique dimensions, sunflowers are a common subject for artists to paint. Noted artists Van Gogh and Picasso both enjoyed painting Sunflowers.

The scientific name of sunflowers is *Helianthus*, Helia for sun and Anthus for flower.

Sunflowers are a great choice for planting to attract birds to your yard. Sunflowers are one of the fastest growing plants.

The former Soviet Union grows the most sunflowers. The sunflower is the national flower of Russia.

The sunflower is native to North America and was used by the Indians for food and oil. Some farmers use it to feed their livestock.

Sunflower seeds are typically used to make oil, bird seed and for snacking. They have lots of calcium and 11 other important minerals. They do have 50% fat, but it is mostly polyunsaturated linoleic acid and are considered a healthy snack.

Wild sunflowers are highly branched with small heads and small seeds, in contrast to the single-stem and large seed head of domesticated sunflower. Sunflower heads consist of 1,000 to 2,000 individual flowers joined together by a receptacle base. The large petals around the edge of a sunflower head are individual ray flowers which do not develop into seed.

Sunflower seeds are rich in oil, which they store as a source of energy and food. Sunflower seeds are crushed during the process of oil extraction. The sunflower oil is typically used in cooking.

The name sunflower comes from its scientific name, Helianthus. Helios means sun and Anthos means flower. Sunflowers have a long history. Remains of sunflower seeds found in archaeological digs in North America date them as nearly 3,000 years old.

There are many of different varieties of sunflower, but the most common form is bright yellow, with dark brown centers filled with seeds.

Sunflowers are believed to have first originated in Europe in the early 1500s. The seeds, as well as the flowers themselves, were brought over by Spanish settlers returning to visit relatives.

As well as being grown for pleasure by members of the public, sunflowers are also grown commercially. Part of the commercial growing focuses on producing edible seeds and the other half is concerned with producing sunflower oil. Every mature flower is able to yield 40% of its weight as oil.

The Aztecs were fascinated by sunflowers, which often towered high above the ground. In fact, they even ended up worshipping sunflowers and used images of the distinctive flowers in their temples.

In recent years, a form of low-pollen sunflower has been created. As well as helping to reduce the risk of asthma for pollen sufferers, it's also helped extend the life of the flower itself.

New varieties of sunflowers are continuously being developed. Some of the newer forms are orange, tan or maroon in color, or even have striped petals. Plus, they have green yellow centers instead of the distinctive brown one we all know and love.

One sunflower can have up to 2000 seeds. There are more than sixty different kinds of sunflowers in the U.S.

There are two kinds of sunflower seeds- black and striped. Oil is made from black seeds, while snacks are made from striped seeds.

A sunflower only requires 90 to 100 days to grow. A single sunflower can have up to 2000 seeds.

Growing sunflowers is a great way to attract birds to your yard. More than sixty different varieties of sunflowers can be found in the world. Out of all these, the most common one is bright yellow, with dark brown centers filled with seeds.

A domesticated sunflower has a single-stem and a large seed head. This is in contrast to the wild variety that is highly branched with small heads and seeds.

Sunflower seeds are used to produce numerous things like cooking oil, medicine, paint, animal feed and biodiesel.

In the last few years, a new form of low-pollen sunflower has been created. This method will not only help reduce the risk of asthma for pollen sufferers, but also increase the life of the flower itself.

New kinds of sunflowers that range from orange, tan, maroon or striped petals are being created. Not only are they different in color but, their centers are also green and yellow instead of the original sunflower color we all love.

The tallest sunflower was grown in the Netherlands by M. Heijmf in 1986 and was over 25 feet tall with a flower head over 32 inches in diameter!

The Bonsai technique was used to make the shortest mature sunflower record. The sunflower was grown and was just over 2 inches tall.

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