RICE GROWTH INSTRUCTIONS

Welcome to the Growth instructions for your very own rice plant! The growth kit is equipped with all the essentials for bringing your rice plant to life. To participate in our growth contest, go to **www.zijlstraverschoor.nl/contest**.

The growth kit and growth instructions are part of the project **Rice in a Different Light**, a collaboration between photographers Jasper Zijlstra & Jeroen Verschoor and biologist Dr. Martina Huber. To learn more about their collaboration and Dr. Martina Hubers' research, visit **www.zijlstraverschoor.nl**.

Included in the growth kit

pellet of dried substrate

fertilizer

6 rice seeds

What you need at home

small bowl

small plate / saucer

15 cm grow pot

+ a lot of water & a warm and sunny spot!

Step 1. Place the substrate pellet into the bowl, with the holes facing upward.

Step 2. Place 2 rice seeds in each of the big holes in the corners (and 1 in each of the small holes).
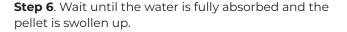
Step 3. Fill all the holes with fertilizer.

Step 4. Pour 1 cup of water in the bowl (not on the pellet directly, that will make everything float away) and wait for 1 min until water is soaked up.

Step 5. Repeat the process with another cup of water and let soak.

Step 6. Wait until the water is fully absorbed and the pellet is swollen up.

Step 7. Now, the pellet is soft and can be transferred into the pot. Place the pot on the saucer, bend the pellet in the center and place it into the pot with the corners facing up.

Step 8. Explore your home for a lovely spot for your rice plant! Your plant will like as much warmth & direct sunlight as possible!

What will happen now?
Your seeds will start germinating: with the moisture and warmth, the seeds get woken up and start to get ready to bring a new seedling to life. It will take approximately 5 to 7 days until a small green tip will start emerging from the soil. If you are lucky, even more than one seedling will come out and establish to a full plant!

What's important for the coming weeks?
Always keep the soil good moist - a tip: just pour water in the saucer and keep an eye on maintaining a small amount of water.

What happens after 4 weeks?
The rice plants will continue growing and follow the natural life cycle of a rice plant. It will keep growing bigger, with more leaves and tillers until it reaches a maximum (maximum tillering stage) depending on the variety you chose and how ideal the spot is where you have put your pot and how well you cared for your plant, this can take 12 up to 14 weeks.

Then, the rice plant feels it is big and strong enough to start with producing flowers (it enters the reproductive phase). In this time it starts producing the initial hulls for the flowers and seeds. You see this as a thickening where the uppermost leaves come out. This period takes approximately 35 days in the field. At home, this will take longer.

The flowers of a rice plant are very small and white little beads that flow away when you touch them. Because rice is a wind pollinated plant, it does not need insects to come along. And because rice is wind-pollinated, it can also be fertilized when it is on its own, just experiencing some draft or wind.

With the fertilization, the development of the seeds will start. The seeds of the rice plant, are the rice kernels that we eat. Until the seeds are fully developed and ripe, it takes approximately 30 days under natural conditions in the field. At home this will take longer.

When can I harvest the rice?
When you see that the rice plant is getting dry leaves and the tips of the panicles are becoming brown, you can stop watering. The rice plant will be drying more and more until almost the whole panicle is dried out. At this time you can cut off the panicles and dry the seeds.

Can I eat the rice? And what do I need to do for it?
Yes, of course! They are all organic and grown with love - so they will taste especially delicious! Detach the seeds from the panicle and take off the husk from the seeds. Now you have whole grain rice, which is the rice that still has the outer skin around the grain, that contains all the precious nutrients and minerals. If you want to have polished white rice, you can do this with the mortar and pistil, to remove the tiny layer around the kernel.