

Oregano

An essential flavoring in Italian cuisine, this herb is also used in Spanish, North African and Greek cooking. There are several different species of oregano. In Wisconsin many species are not hardy and are better grown as annuals or pot plants. Greek oregano (*Origanum heracleotium* or *O. vulgare* subsp. *hirtum*) is more flavorful but less hardy than European or common oregano (*O. vulgare*). The related sweet marjoram, *O. majorana*, is not winter hardy here and tastes different than oregano.

Greek oregano, the most common type available, grows low to the ground, rooting as it grows outward. It is a vigorous spreader, but not invasive. Grow oregano from seed or purchased plants in well-drained soil with full sun. Harvest a few sprigs at a time after the shoots are 4-5" tall. To dry, tie in bunches and hang in a warm, dry shaded place until crisp. Then strip the leaves from the stems and store in an airtight container.

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Additional Resources

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- Article on MG website at <http://wimastergardener.org/article/herb-of-the-year-2005-oregano-marjoram/>

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