



Nook & Nature

By Neha Kunal Deshmukh

FERTILIZER CYCLE & CARE GUIDE

Simple steps for healthy , happy plants



COSMOS



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1. Fertilizer Cycle (Stage-wise)

Sowing / Planting Stage (Feb–April in India)

Soil mix: 40% garden soil + 30% compost + 20% sand + 10% cocopeat.

At planting → Add cow dung compost (200 g per plant) OR vermicompost (100 g).

Avoid too much nitrogen at this stage → causes leafy growth with few flowers.

Growth Stage (2–4 weeks after germination)

Every 20 days → Apply liquid fertilizer NPK 19:19:19 (1–1.5 g/litre water).

Pinch the tip when plants are 6–8 inches tall → makes bushier plants with more blooms.

Budding Stage (5–6 weeks after sowing)

Switch to phosphorus & potassium-rich fertilizers (NPK 10:26:26 or 0:52:34, 1.5 g/litre water

every 10–12 days).

Add banana peel fertilizer / wood ash monthly → enhances color & size.

Flowering Stage (April–June, peak bloom)

Continue P & K feeding every 10–15 days.

Spray Epsom salt (1 tsp/litre water) once a month → boosts bloom count.

Deadhead (remove spent flowers) regularly → promotes continuous blooming.

End of Life Cycle (June–July)

Cosmos is a short-lived annual (3–4 months) → collect dry seeds for next season.



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2. Caring Tips

- ✓ Sunlight – Needs 6–8 hours of direct sunlight daily.
- ✓ Watering – Light to moderate; water 2–3 times per week. Overwatering causes fungal problems.
- ✓ Soil – Prefers poor to average soil; too much fertility = fewer flowers.
- ✓ Spacing – Keep 10–12 inches apart for good airflow.
- ✓ Container Growing – Best in 10–12 inch pots; taller varieties need support.
- ✓ Pests – Usually pest-free; occasional aphids → treat with neem oil.

3. Pro Hacks 🌿

- 🌿 Low-Fertilizer Hack → Less nutrition = more blooms. Don't overfeed!
- 🌿 Deadheading Trick → Extends flowering season by weeks.
- 🌿 Succession Planting → Sow seeds every 15–20 days → continuous flowers.
- 🌿 Companion Planting → Cosmos attracts bees, butterflies & beneficial insects.
- 🌿 Self-Seeding Hack → Let some flowers dry & drop seeds → free plants next season.

4. Blooming Pattern in India 🌸

Season: Summer annual (Feb–June).

Peak Bloom: April–May.

Duration: Continuous blooms for 2–3 months.

Varieties: Cosmos sulphureus (orange/yellow), Cosmos bipinnatus (pink/white/red).

📍 Plot No. 24/2 Balaji Lucky Point, Old Cotton Market Road,
Shree Agro Agencies, Balaji Lucky Point, Amravati, Amravati,
Maharashtra, 444601

📞 +91 9284008858

✉ support@nookandnature.in

🌐 www.nookandnature.in

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