

About Shiitake Mushrooms

Shiitake mushrooms have a rich profile of bio active compounds. A good source of fiber, B vitamins, and essential minerals like copper and selenium, they support immune health, skin, and the energy metabolism. Shiitakes contain polysaccharides, particularly beta-glucans, which have been shown to enhance immune response by stimulating white blood cells and reducing inflammation. They possess a compound called eritadenine, which has been studied for its cholesterol-lowering effects, potentially benefiting heart health. Additionally, shiitake mushrooms contain antioxidants such as ergothioneine, which help protect cells from oxidative stress and may reduce the risk of chronic diseases.

What You Will Need

- Shiitake Mushroom Fruiting Kit (included)
- Humidity tent (included)
- Shallow dish (not included)
- Soaking bucket/pot (not included)
- Potable water (not included)
- 1 tbsp of bleach (not included)



Fruiting Steps

1. To initiate the shiitake growing kit, submerge it in a container/kitchen sink of cool, potable water (city, well, or spring) for three hours. Be sure to add a tablespoon of bleach to kill of any surface molds or bacteria (which are a common occurrence). Weigh down the Shiitake kit carefully to keep it from floating

2. After a good soaking remove and place on a shallow dish. Place the dish with the fruiting log in shade or bright indirect sunlight like a kitchen counter, where it can be observed and cared for.



3. Cut off the top corners of the humidity tent to allow for air exchange. Mushrooms produce CO₂ and require oxygen to breathe. If there is too much CO₂ present, mushroom stems will become longer and caps remain smaller in an attempt to find oxygen.

4. Drape the humidity tent loosely over the fruiting kit. Take it off twice a day and lightly mist with potable water. Put the humidity tent back on. Baby mushrooms will start forming within a few days.



5. Keep misting twice a day under the tent until the mushrooms are about two inches tall. After they reach two inches in height, the humidity tent can be removed and stored for the next flush, but continue to mist twice a day. The shiitake mushroom fruiting kit can fruit up to 3-4 times. It is critical to mist your growing mushrooms twice a day so they do not dry out and cause them to stop growing.

Harvesting

Harvest the mushrooms when the caps begin to flatten out. Twist them off the fruiting kit, and store them in a paper bag in the fridge for up

to one week. Shiitake can be further preserved by dehydrating and storing them in an airtight container with desiccant packs. They can be kept dehydrated for up to a year. When you are ready to use them, soak them in warm water for 15 - 20 minutes to rehydrate them.

Resting

After you have picked all the mushrooms off the fruiting log, it is time for the fruiting log to rest. Allow your fruiting log to dry out completely for about two weeks in a dark place.

The Next Flush

Cold shock your fruiting log by leaving it in the fridge for a week, then submerge the fruiting log in cool, potable water for 5 hours. Repeat steps 3 through 5 for a second and a third fruiting. After the 3rd or 4th time, the fruiting log can be composted, added to your garden, or flower pots for plant and microbe nutrition.

Troubleshooting

Since the substrate for Shiitake mushrooms is also great food for other fungi and molds, you might see some green molds forming on your kit. This is normal.

Remove the green mold by carefully scooping it out with a clean spoon, and spraying that area with 1:10, bleach : water solution. If the mold reappears, treat it again with the bleach solution.

Do not spray bleach directly on your mushrooms. You can also add a cap full of bleach into your soaking water, to help prevent mold on the fruiting log surface.

Cooking With Shiitake Mushrooms

Shiitake have a naturally high glutamate content, which gives them a deep, savory, umami flavor, making them an excellent plant-based substitute for meat in vegetarian and vegan dishes, or adding a hearty taste to broths, soups, and sauces. Shiitake have a dense, slightly chewy texture that holds up well in various cooking methods—sautéing, grilling, roasting, and braising. Their texture adds substance to dishes, enhancing stews, stir-fries, and risottos with a satisfying bite.



Shiitake Fruiting Kit

Lentinula edodes

Your Shiitake mushroom fruiting log is ready to fruit by the time you receive it, but you can refrigerate it for up to two weeks if you are not ready to start fruiting your kit immediately. The brown and the white coloration you see is the Shiitake mycelium holding the whole fruiting kit together. You may notice bumps on the kit which are baby Shiitake mushrooms growing! Do not remove them.