

# Is Your Broccoli Bolting? Tips for Growing and Harvesting Healthy Broccoli



Has your broccoli ever turned yellow or gone to seed? Follow these tips to keep the soil cool and your broccoli from bolting:



- 1.) Mulching
  - a. The hot weather effect on broccoli will only happen if the heat gets to the roots. A thick layer of mulch will help keep the roots cool and prevent the broccoli from bolting.
- 2.) Watering
  - a. Water frequently! The cool water will help keep the soil cool as well and will stop bolting from happening.
- 3.) Row covers
  - a. Using row covers over your broccoli can keep the direct sun from the plants and soil, keep the soil cool, and prevent broccoli from flowering.
- 4.) Harvesting
  - a. An excellent way to prevent broccoli flowers is to harvest early and frequently. Broccoli is a “cut and come again” vegetable. When you cut the main head, other smaller heads will grow. The side heads will take a little longer to bolt.

## When to Harvest Your Broccoli?

Look for these signs to know when it is time to harvest your broccoli:

- Head Size – The broccoli head typically will get to be 4 to 7 inches wide when it is time to harvest
- Floret Size – When the florets on the outside edge of the head get to be the size of the head of a match, then you can start harvesting broccoli from that plant
- Color – The florets should be a deep green. If you see even a hint of yellow, the florets are starting to bloom. Harvest the broccoli immediately if this happens.
- When your broccoli head is ready to harvest, use a sharp knife and cut the head of the broccoli off the plant. Cut the broccoli head stem 5 inches or more below the head, then remove the head off with a swift cut. Try to avoid sawing at the stem as this may cause unnecessary damage to the plant. After you have harvested the main head, you can continue to harvest the side shoots from the broccoli.