Variegated Tapioca

Manihot esculenta 'Variegata'

Height: 10 feet

Spread: 10 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 9

Other Names: Bitter Casava, Manioc

Description:

This ornamental plant is grown primarily for its attractive variegated foliage; better color in full sun, yellow tends to mature to cream; will seasonally grow 3 to 4 feet in colder zones; intolerant of frost; a beautiful container or garden accent

Ornamental Features

Variegated Tapioca has attractive yellow-variegated dark green foliage with hints of chartreuse on a plant with a mounded habit of growth. The lobed palmate leaves are highly ornamental and remain dark green throughout the winter.

Landscape Attributes

Variegated Tapioca is a multi-stemmed evergreen shrub with a mounded form. Its average texture blends into the landscape, but can be balanced by one or two finer or coarser trees or shrubs for an effective composition.

This is a relatively low maintenance shrub, and is best cleaned up in early spring before it resumes active growth for the season. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Variegated Tapioca is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Mass Planting
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting
- Hanging Baskets



Variegated Tapioca foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



Variegated Tapioca
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

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Planting & Growing

Variegated Tapioca will grow to be about 10 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 10 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 1 foot from the ground, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 20 years.

This shrub does best in full sun to partial shade. It prefers to grow in average to moist conditions, and shouldn't be allowed to dry out. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America.

Variegated Tapioca makes a fine choice for the outdoor landscape, but it is also well-suited for use in outdoor containers and hanging baskets. Because of its height, it is often used as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the center of the pot, surrounded by smaller plants and those that spill over the edges. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when grown in a container, it may not perform exactly as indicated on the tag - this is to be expected. Also note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.