

FAQ's: Organic Catnip

What is Catnip? The Catnip plant is a member of the mint family. Catnip (*Nepeta Cataria*) is a perennial herb that is sometimes referred to as "Catmint". The plant produces nepetalactones in microscopic bulbs that coat its leaves, stems, and seedpods. When these fragile bulbs rupture, they release the compound into the air, which is why you can find cats chewing on the plant.

How do I care for my Freeman Herbs Organic Catnip? Our Organic Catnip can be watered as needed. Do so by placing it in a shallow dish that contains an inch of water. Let the plant sit for 30 minutes to an hour. Remove the plant and allow it to drain; this will avoid over-watering. Leaving the plant in water for an extended period of time will lead to rot in the root system. Let the soil dry before thoroughly watering again.

How long will my plant live? If properly cared for, a catnip plant can live for years. Transplant it into a larger pot when it becomes root-bound. Proper care includes routine watering, occasional feeding, and plenty of sunlight. You can encourage a fuller plant by pinching off blooms and new growth (the tops of the plant).

Is catnip safe for my cat? Catnip is generally safe for cats, and doesn't pose any major health risks. The herb is safe for young kittens, but they may not develop a sensitivity to it until 4-6 months. While catnip is nontoxic for cats, you should provide it in moderate amounts. It only takes a small amount of catnip to stimulate a reaction in cats.

How do I use Catnip? Catnip is commonly used to encourage cats to explore and play, but it can also be used as a training aid. Rub a few leaves on your cat's scratching post to encourage scratching, or in their carrier to encourage them to enter.

Fresh Catnip: This is the most potent form of catnip. Offer a small number of fresh leaves to your cat by placing them on the floor or in a toy.

Dried Catnip: The most commonly used form of catnip is dried. Dried catnip is typically crushed and sprinkled on toys, scratch posts, and on the floor.

How will it affect my cat? The active compound nepetalactone, triggers a response in some cats, including behaviors like rolling, rubbing, purring, and heightened playfulness. Catnip also has calming effects and can help reduce stress or anxiety in cats, as well as make them more curious or create positive associations in a new environment. Keep in mind that all cats are different, and some may show no behavioral changes after interacting with catnip.

Is catnip safe for dogs? Generally speaking, catnip is nontoxic for dogs. Although it is a stimulant for cats, it has the opposite effect on dogs and acts as a sedative. For some dogs, catnip can help with anxiety and improve sleep. If you think your dog could benefit from catnip, consider adding a few fresh leaves directly to their drinking water. Monitor your dog's response, as every animal responds differently, and the essential oils in catnip may cause stomach upset. Consult with a veterinarian with any concerns.

Harvest: Catnip leaves that have been harvested can be dried or frozen. They can also be stuffed into cat toys at a later date.

