



Protea

PROTEA OBTUSIFOLIA

This seed is not for beginners. Protea is a native to South Africa, where dry periods cause wildfires. Many seeds from plants in this region (referred to as fynbos,) require fire or the chemicals that result from a fire, in order to germinate. Protea is one such plant that requires the chemicals that result from a fire (thankfully not the heat, for this particular species!)

Protea seeds are also highly susceptible to fungal diseases, therefore, the seeds should be soaked in a 1% hydrogen peroxide solution for 10 minutes. Hydrogen peroxide is normally available in a 3% solution and should be diluted to a 1 part hydrogen peroxide, 2 part tap water or distilled water solution. Do not use rain water.

After the hydrogen peroxide soak, seeds should then be soaked in what is referred to as smoke water, which is water that has been infused with smoke from burning vegetation, for 24 hours. I do not recommend trying to make your own smoke water. A link to smoke water made from fynbos vegetation (the vegetation that is found in the same region of Africa that protea is grown(including protea itself) can be found here: <https://a.co/d/ciqRqla>

If the product is out of stock, liquid smoke can be used in a very small ratio of 1 part liquid smoke to 100 parts tap or distilled water (again, do not use rain water.) A link for liquid smoke can be found here: <https://a.co/d/7ha4gws>

I prefer this product, but it is not always in stock.

I do not recommend any other type of liquid smoke as it may contain ingredients that can actually inhibit germination. This product contains natural smoke flavor (which is a result of infusing water with smoke) vinegar (protea needs slightly acidic conditions,) molasses and caramel color, which will not harm the seed. This method is actually approved by the American Society for Horticultural Sciences.



Liquid smoke will increase the germination of the seeds by a whopping 40%, so yes, it is necessary.

After the 24 hour smoke water soak, prepare pots with soil that has been sterilized (you can microwave it.) Protea needs acidic and VERY well draining soil. I use peat moss (acidic) mixed with perlite and granite or lava rock (often sold as bonsai media.)

The seeds can take anywhere from 1-3 months to germinate, but under the temperatures described below, they typically germinate in 1 month. Germination is 80% if you follow the instructions.

Seeds should be planted in spring in cool locations where the plant will be brought indoors or spring or fall in warm locations 9B+ The seeds need varying temperatures to germinate, being in the seventies during the day and no cooler than 50 degrees at night. DO NOT ATTEMPT TO GERMINATE THESE INDOORS AT A CONSTANT TEMPERATURE. THEY WILL NOT GERMINATE. THEY NEED FLUCTUATIONS.

Protea is a perennial in zones 9B+. It can tolerate temps down to 30-40 degrees, but is best brought indoors if temps drop to or below 32. It is a fairly small tree, reaching no more than 5-6 feet so it is manageable in a pot.

While Protea loves heat, it is not a fan of humidity and will not tolerate wet feet, hence the great importance of rocky and well draining soil. It is best grown in warm desert environments such as parts of Arizona, Nevada and California where conditions are warm and dry.

This is one of only 2 seeds in my entire inventory that I cannot guarantee germination for, due to the involvement of what is needed for germination. I can tell you that I have successfully germinated the seeds with the methods described above though and it is truly rewarding to succeed in germinating seeds that are so specific in their requirements. It is truly one the most beautiful flowers known to man.

This is for 10 seeds

My seeds, bulbs and bare root plants are guaranteed to provide you with a decent yield. If you are dissatisfied with your order for any reason or the seeds don't sprout, please message me before leaving a review and I will provide advice, replace or refund. I truly care about my customers and my plants!

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions you may have.

Happy Planting!
Kimberly (SeedCult)