

Mushroom Box™ Growing Instructions:  
**Wine Cap (Garden Giant) Mushrooms**  
[www.mushroombox.co.uk](http://www.mushroombox.co.uk)

### Introduction

Garden Giant mushrooms are a favourite for many mushroom growers, and capable of reaching truly giant sizes – up to 24 inches in diameter, although they are considered inedible at this size. For eating, they should be picked at the 2-6 inch diameter stage.

### Growing Indoors

- 1) Select substrate. They should grow well on any hardwood substrate. Wine caps will grow on straw but have a greater tendency to contaminate when using straw. Wine cap mushrooms grow extremely well on wood chips.
- 2) Pour Boiling water into the substrate-filled myco bag filled.
- 3) Leave this to cool for several hours – until it reaches room temperatures
- 4) Pour off all of the excess water, leaving it to drain for at least 30 minutes, to avoid water pooling at the bottom of the bag.
- 5) Add the wine cap mushroom spawn, mixing throughout the substrate and seal the top of the bag.
- 6) Incubate the bag at 21-28C for 25 days, during which, white fluffy mycelium will be seen growing throughout the substrate
- 7) Next, without opening the bag, break up the block of substrate – this will stimulate new growth
- 8) After a further 12-14 days, open the top of the bag and roll down the sides to form a wall of 100mm height around the perimeter.
- 9) Add approximately two inches of moist (but not wet) garden soil. Make sure there are no worms, woodlice or other insects, but do not pasteurise or sterilise the soil. Alternatively, others have succeeded by using non-soil casings (such as peatmoss or vermiculite) having first extracted microflora from soil by watering active garden soil and using the leachate to rehydrate the vermiculite or peatmoss casing. This can be heat-treated to 54-60C for 30 minutes for increased resistance to molds etc.

**THE PRESENCE OF SOIL MICROBES IS ESSENTIAL FOR FRUITING WINE CAPS**

- 10) Twice a day, spray the top of the soil and the sides of the bag to keep the soil/substrate moist, but ensure that the soil or substrate is not allowed to get waterlogged.
- 11) The mycelium should grow up through the soil, and when it reaches the surface, with luck you should see baby mushrooms forming. It may take several weeks before the mushrooms start to appear. With luck you should be able able to pick mushrooms approximately 6weeks after adding the casing layer

## **Growing Outdoors**

Required:

At least 4 barrows full of woodchips

Mushroombox Wine Cap Spawn

Straw

Plenty of water

Rakes/Shovels

First choose the spot. You want somewhere shaded from direct sun, wheren the woodchip moisture can be maintained without drying out. Somewhere naturally moist and not exposed to the wind or weather is ideal – for example under existing trees. In fact, if you can site your growing area underneath deciduous trees, you have a ready-made system for topping up the substrate! You also need to choose a spot which you visit regularly so that you see the mushrooms when they appear.

- 1) Clear the area you wish to use of any plants.
- 2) If you have access to plain brown cardboard, lay this out over the area you intend to use
- 3) Pour approximately half of the woodchips over this area, to make a layer of approximately two inches in depth
- 4) If you have a total of 100kg of dry woodchips (or 400kg wet weight), add 20kg of MushroomBox™ Wine Cap Spawn.
- 5) Cover the spawn with the remainder of the woodchips, to form a top layer of a further two inches.
- 6) Using a spade, mix the three layers thoroughly to create a uniform mixture.
- 7) Generously sprinkle water over the entire area, ensuring that the whole mass is well saturated.
- 8) Ensure that the woodchips are kept moist, and after approximately 10weeks, check the pile by digging a small hole in the woodchips. The woodchips should

be uniformly moist, and you should see them infused with white root-like mycelial growth.

- 9) Start to water the bed twice a day, ensuring that it is never allowed to dry out, and with luck you should start seeing wine cap mushrooms popping up within two weeks.
- 10) Once the mushroom have established themselves, they may continue to grow for many years, if you replemish their food supply by adding fresh woodchips and mixing in to the existing pile annually.

### **Eating Wine Cap mushrooms.**

Wine cap mushrooms are a delicious delicacy, but it is recommended that you do not eat them for more than three days in a row, as it can be a challenge for some people's digestion.

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If you enjoyed growing these mushrooms, please visit our website to find out more about our range of mail-order Mushroom Boxes™ and other mushroom kits.

You will also find growing tips, step-by-step pictorial guides, and recipes.

<http://mushroombox.co.uk>