

# CHUFA FOR TURKEYS

IMPERIAL WHITTAL

Americas No. 1 game bird loves the tubers produced by this perennial sedge.

■ by Whittail Insttue Staff

Also known as ground almonds or tiger nuts, chufa is a perennial sedge that produces underground tubers that are a highly preferred, high-energy food source for turkeys and waterfowl. Chufa tubers rank No. 10 among the most important waterfowl foods in the United States, and many believe they're the No. 1 choice for turkeys. Whittail Institute Turkey Select Chufa is a high-quality chufa seed Whittail Institute has sourced through its broad range of contacts in the seed industry for customers who manage properties for turkeys and deer. Turkey Select should be planted in spring after there's no remaining chance of frost. Exact dates, which vary regionally from April to June, appear on the back of the product bags and are posted at [whittailinstitute.com](http://whittailinstitute.com). Plant it early enough to leave 100 to 120 days for the plants to mature before the first frosts of fall. During summer, the plants produce underground tubers, and when the

chufa foliage dries in fall, the tubers are mature, and turkeys dig them up and devour them. Although chufa is a prolific-growing perennial, smaller plots in high-density turkey areas can be wiped out the first fall. But if you plant enough to withstand the initial attack, it can last for years, benefiting spring and fall turkey hunters. Obviously, the right amount will vary from case to case based on how much you plant and how many turkeys are in the area. Chufa can do well in a wide variety of soils, but light, loamy soils with a pH of 5.5 to 7.5 are optimum. Tuber production is generally lowest in sand. Also, planting in clay can make it more difficult for turkeys to dig up the tubers. Soils that retain moisture (but not wet) are optimum. Chufa can even adapt to temperary or seasonal flooding, provided the plants are not submerged. Prolonged flooding during the growing season or drought conditions can severely reduce

tuber production and chufa survival. Also, be sure the area you select receives a lot of sunlight. Even as little as 30 percent shade can substantially reduce tuber production. Be sure to closely follow the Turkey Select planting instructions, on the back of the bags and at [whittailinstitute.com](http://whittailinstitute.com), because chufa generally needs a seedbed that's largely free of competition from weeds. In sites where grass competition is expected to be especially heavy, it can be wise to incorporate Roundup into seedbed preparation. Turkey Select is also Arrest MAX-approved to help you keep competing grasses in check through spring and summer after planting. Turkey Select is available in 10-pound bags that plant 1/4 acre. For additional information, go to [whittailinstitute.com](http://whittailinstitute.com), or call (800) 688-3030.

