

Kale –

Kale adds color and visual appeal to any garden. It was one of the earliest cultivated brassicas and is very closely related to collards. The succulent, mild flavor of kale is a wonderful addition to salads and stir-fries. There are two main groups – the Scotch group that has very curly leaves and the Siberian group that includes the Russian types.



Red Russian Kale

Red Russian Kale originated in Siberia (northeast Asia) and has beautiful dark red stems. Its leaves are green with “toothed” edges, and red veins. Kale is a relative of wild cabbage. Kale tastes sweeter if it is frozen or exposed to frost when growing, although you can also bake it and eat it like a potato chip!

Until the end of the middle Ages, kale was one of the most common green vegetables in all of Europe. Kale has twice as much vitamin C as orange juice and more calcium than milk! It is also a good source of vitamins A and K.



Lettuce –

Most lettuces are hardy, cool-season crops that can be planted as early as the soil can be worked. Many do best when the air temperature is 60-70 degrees and will germinate in soil as low as 40 degrees.



Lettuce comes in lots and lots of different varieties. Not all are green—some is red, or purple, or a mix of these colors. Butterhead lettuces have a very mild flavor—like butter. Some lettuces are called Oakleaf Lettuce because they look like the leaves of oak trees. Eating darker lettuce leaves gives you more vitamin A, although all lettuce also has vitamin K and potassium.

Lettuce was first cultivated in ancient Egypt, where people used the seeds for oil as well as eating the leaves. Their varieties of lettuce grew to be 30 inches tall (two and half feet!)

European Greens – Arugula is a member of the mustard family. It is also called salad rocket! Arugula consists of vibrant green leaves attached to a pale creamy green hued stem. The leaves can be harvested when young and mild in flavor or when fully mature at 3 or 4 inches in length. Arugula has a peppery flavor and tastes of nuts and mustard.

Arugula is native to the Mediterranean region (Italy, Morocco, Portugal, and Turkey). It was brought to North America by British colonists. Arugula's spicy aroma and flavor make it naturally resistant to pests



Asian Greens – Kyoto mizuna, mustards, tah tsai, pac choi

These are truly Asian in origin and because of the diverse climate through the Far East, many varieties grow well in most areas of North America.



Tah tsai



Kyoto mizuna



Komatsuna Mustard

Komatsuna Mustard Greens are sometimes called “spinach mustard.” It has smooth, mild and dark green leaves, and you can eat it raw in a salad like spinach. It is also sometimes called Komatsuna, which is a Japanese word that means “small pine tree greens.” This variety is from Japan, where it is sometimes pickled or eaten in a stir-fry.

Mustard greens are a good source of beta-carotene, calcium, vitamin A, and vitamin C.

Spinach — Some of the finest spinach varieties available in the world today are developed and produced in northwest WA. Determining which of the varieties are superior to others is sometimes a difficult job. Some factors to consider when evaluating spinach are 1) flavor, 2) strong, vigorous growth, 3) resistance to forming seed or bolting, 4) disease resistance.



Spinach is thought to have originated in ancient Persia (which includes modern Iran). Arab traders carried spinach into India, and then the plant was introduced into ancient China.

Spinach is an annual plant and is rich in antioxidants, vitamin A, vitamin C, and vitamin E, especially when fresh, steamed, or quickly boiled.

Swiss chard — this is a member of the Beet family. Over the years, they have been bred and selected for their succulent greens instead of their roots. Cultivated by the Greeks, chard is quite popular today. Swiss chard is extremely bolt resistant, allowing for extended harvests.

Chard has broad wavy and crinkled green leaves with white, yellow, or red stalks and veins flowing throughout the foliage. The chards makes its food in its huge leaves and then transports nutrients to the rest of the plant through those colorful veins.

Chard is a good source of vitamin A, potassium, and iron.



Collards — a cold-weather hardy member of the cabbage family grown for winter greens. Well known in the South, it thrives in many other parts of the country. Collards like rich, neutral pH soil just like all other brassicas crops. Seeds can be planted directly into the ground when the temperatures are 55-75 degrees.



Easter Egg Radish

Easter Egg radishes are a mix of pink, white, purple and red variety radishes. The roots of the Easter Egg radish are small and round—the part we eat! The color of the radish's skin may be white to pink to crimson to purple. Their flesh is bright white and crisp with a mild radish flavor. The Easter Egg radish produces green leaves that grow from the root above ground, which are also edible. Easter Egg radishes are a good source of Vitamins A, C, potassium, zinc and dietary fiber. Radishes originated in ancient China and made their way to Greece and Egypt, where they were used as a means of payments for workers building pyramids.

