



The Montana Harvest of the Month program showcases Montana grown foods in Montana schools and communities. This program is a collaboration between Montana Farm to School, Office of Public Instruction, Montana Team Nutrition Program, National Center for Appropriate Technology, Montana State University Extension, Gallatin Valley Farm to School, Montana Department of Agriculture, Montana Organic Association, and FoodCorps Montana. More information and resources are available at: mtharvestofthemonth.org



Prior to preparing, wash greens thoroughly in running water to remove any soil. Cooked greens reduce in size by 75-80% compared to fresh greens. Blanch or Boil. Remove dried or thick stems. Bring water to a boil, enough to cover the raw greens. Add greens and blanch depending of type of greens: collards, 8-15 minutes; beet greens, turnip greens and mustard greens, 5-8 minutes; chard, 2-4 minutes; baby greens, less than a minute. Cook until desired tenderness is reached. Braise. Cut large greens and keep small greens whole. Remove dried or thick stems. Drizzle cooking oil in a heated pan, add low-sodium seasonings if desired. Cook greens over low heat for about 20 minutes or until desired tenderness is reached. This method is ideal for collards, chard, and kale.



Cooking

Buy greens as fresh as possible. Avoid greens that have brown, yellow, spotted, wilted, or slimy leaves. Store greens in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for 2-5 days.

Buying Tips

Leafy Greens



Leafy Greens

Did You Know

- While there are hundreds of varieties of lettuce, there are four main types: butterhead (e.g., Boston, bibb), crisphead (iceberg), looseleaf (e.g., red leaf, green leaf), and romaine.
- Most varieties that can be used for cooking, such as collards, kale, mustard greens, turnip greens, and bok choy, are part of the cabbage family (Brassicaceae). Other varieties of greens, like Swiss chard, are related to the spinach family (Amaranthaceae).
- The average American eats about 30 pounds of lettuce every year. That's about five times more than in the early 1900s.
- Salad greens may be one of the oldest known vegetables. There are pictures of wild forms of lettuce in Egyptian tomb paintings and written accounts of lettuce that date back to 79 AD.

Nutrition Information

As a general rule, the more green or vibrant the type of greens, the more vitamins and minerals it contains. While leafy greens have different nutritional profiles, most greens are a good source of folate, vitamin A, vitamin C, calcium, and potassium. Potassium and magnesium help lower blood pressure levels. Leafy greens contain fiber and low amounts of carbohydrates which helps with management of type 2 diabetes and weight loss. Most greens also provide vitamin K, which helps the body stop cuts and scrapes from bleeding too much and starts the healing process. Vitamin K promotes good kidney health, helps protect the body against inflammatory diseases, and protects the body against osteoporosis.

Dig Deeper

For recipes, lessons, quick activities, resources, and guides, visit:

mtharvestofthemonth.org