



Harvest of the Month: Leafy Greens

Video Transcript

Video Available At:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5zzNBwPUTqA&list=PLxD1eXc1FC3V6TYM43aTOg13edkty1vs&index=9>

This Month's Harvest of the Month is leafy greens! The average American eats about 25 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, with ancient Egyptian paintings of lettuce dating back to 79 AD.

Most leafy greens are quick growing, frost tolerant, and generally easy to grow. Lettuce can be planted in succession every two weeks to ensure a steady supply throughout the growing season. Most greens can be grown in container gardens.

While there are hundreds of varieties of lettuce, there are four main types: butter head, crisp head, loose leaf, and romaine. There are about 13 acres of farmland growing lettuce, spinach, collards, and chard across the state. They are easy to find in farmers' markets and they are great vegetables for growing in home, community, and school gardens.

When selecting greens, choose greens that are bright in color. Avoid ones with discolored, wilting, or slimy leaves. Leaf lettuce, such as romaine, should always be washed and dried before storing. For a longer shelf life, store leafy greens away from fruits such as apples, bananas, pears, and tomatoes, because they produce ethylene gas, which makes food like greens spoil faster. Greens are good sources of vitamin A, C, K, and folate. These essential nutrients are critical for the growth and repair of all body tissues. Fiber contributes to maintaining a healthy digestive system.

Additionally, most of these plants contain phytochemicals, which promote long-term health as part of a nutritious diet. Phytochemicals are known for their anticarcinogenic properties, this means that eating vegetables that contain phytochemicals can help reduce the risk of cancer. The USDA MyPlate Guidelines recommend eating between 1 to 3 cups of vegetables daily to maintain a healthy and active lifestyle. Two cups of raw leafy greens is one serving.

Dig Deeper

Get more information, register, or download resources:

Aubree Roth

Montana Farm to School Coordinator

aubree.roth@montana.edu | (406) 994-5996

mtharvestofthemonth.org

Leafy greens are a flavorful and healthy addition to many meals or on their own. While most leafy greens are excellent raw as a salad or added to smoothies, many of them such as spinach, chard, and collards are also wonderful when wilted, braised, or added to cooked recipes. Microgreens are trimmed young plants such as radishes, peas, broccoli, or sunflowers, generally 1 to 3 inches long. They are great for adding color and flavor. Let's make a tasty and nutritious recipe! A simple, snazzy salad. Leafy greens are a tasty and nutritious source of vitamins. Enjoy Montana greens all month long! The Montana Harvest of the Month program showcases a different Montana grown food each month in Montana communities. We hope you'll join us in tasting Montana this month!



The Montana Harvest of the Month program showcases Montana grown foods in Montana 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, FoodCorps Montana, and Montana Department of Agriculture. More information and resources are available at: mtharvestofthemonth.org.

Funds were provided in part by USDA Team Nutrition Training grants, Northern Pulse Growers Association, Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, Montana Pulse Crop Committee, Montana Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. USDA is an equal opportunity provider. The Montana State University Extension Service is an ADA/EO/AA/Veteran's Preference Employer and Provider of Educational Outreach. This publication was supported by the Grants or Cooperative Agreements Numbers, 6 U58DP004818-03-01 & 5 U58DP004818-03-00, and funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention or the DPHHS.