



COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

SALAD GREENS



There are hundreds of varieties of salad greens. They are also called leafy greens. Lettuces belong to the Asteraceae, or sunflower family. Spinach and chard belong to the Amaranthaceae family. Arugula, cress, collards, kale, cabbages, and other greens belong to the Brassicaceae family.

Salad Greens are typically divided into four categories - microgreens, baby greens, leafy greens, and head lettuces. People began cultivating salad greens in Ancient Egypt over 6,000 years ago. The salad greens we eat today come from the Mediterranean region of the world.

Salad greens can taste sweet, mild, bitter, or peppery. They can be eaten raw, juiced, steamed, boiled, sauteed, charred, stewed, or stir-fried. Salad greens grow fast. They can be grown all year in hydroponic container gardens, greenhouses, hoop houses, and on micro farms inside shipping containers. When grown outside in Michigan, they are harvested from spring to early summer.



SALAD GREENS ARE

Depending on the type, salad greens are:

- An excellent source of folate. Folate supports the production of healthy red blood cells and is important during periods of rapid growth, like pregnancy.
- An excellent source of vitamin K. Vitamin K is vital for blood clotting and healthy bones.
- A good source of vitamin A. Vitamin A plays an important role in the healing process and eye health.
- A source of vitamin C.* Vitamin C is important to the body's tissues and supports a healthy immune system.
- A source of fiber. Fiber helps us feel fuller and benefits the digestive and cardiovascular systems.

*Foods that are high in vitamin C, calcium, and/or iron can help protect you from lead absorption.

MICHIGAN MADE

Salad greens grow well everywhere in Michigan. Types commonly grown in the state include arugula, beet greens, collard greens, cress, endive, herbs, kale, lettuce like iceberg, romaine, leaf, butter, and baby leaf, mache, mustard greens, radicchio, sorrel, spinach, and Swiss chard. Growing in popularity are Asian leafy greens like pac choi and tatsoi.

FUN FACTS

- The most popular salad items in the United States are leafy greens mixed with tomatoes, carrots, onions, and cucumbers.
- The word salad comes from the Latin term *herba salta* which means salted vegetables.
- Dark green lettuce leaves are more nutritious than light green lettuce leaves.
- Crisphead lettuce received the nickname Iceberg lettuce in the 1940s because it was the only lettuce that survived being shipped across the county in ice-packed train cars.

BUYING AND STORING

- Choose fresh salad greens that are dry, bright in color, and crisp. Avoid leaves that are limp, wet, spotted or damaged.
- Salad greens can be purchased loose or packaged in bags, boxes and plastic containers.
- Wrap fresh salad greens in damp paper towel and place in a plastic bag. Store in the refrigerator and use within three to five days. Keep store-bought salad greens in their original packaging.
- Rinse unwashed salad greens in cool water. Pat dry.
- If packaged salad greens are labeled triple washed, additional washing is not required.





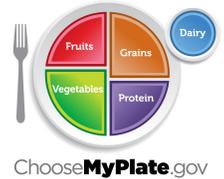
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MORE THAN FRESH

In many stores you can buy salad kits that contain salad greens, dressing, and other add-ins such as nuts, dried fruit, or cheese. Choose salad kits that are mostly fresh greens with dressings that are low in saturated fat and sodium (salt).

EAT FROM THE MYPLATE FOOD GROUPS

MyPlate focuses on whole grains, lean protein, low-fat dairy, and half the plate being fruits and vegetables. Salad greens are part of the Vegetable Group. Most people need 2–3 cups of vegetables per day. For more information visit: myplate.gov.



IT ALL COUNTS

Fresh, frozen, canned, and dried fruits and vegetables, and 100% fruit and vegetable juices count toward your daily MyPlate goals.

BLUEBERRY ORANGE MIXED GREEN SALAD

Time: 10–15 minutes | Makes: 4 Servings | Serving Size: 2 cups

Nutrition Information Per Serving: Calories 140, Carbohydrate 14g, Dietary Fiber 3g, Protein 5g, Total Fat 8g, Saturated Fat 1g, Cholesterol 5mg, Sodium 209mg

Always wash hands before preparing food. Wash all fresh fruits and vegetables before using.



INGREDIENTS

6 cups mixed salad greens

1 ½ cups fresh blueberries

½ onion, sliced thin

4 tablespoons light poppy seed salad dressing

One 11-ounce can mandarin oranges, drained

2–3 tablespoons roasted sunflower seeds

¼ cup crumbled feta, goat, or Cotija cheese (optional)

Salt and pepper (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a large salad bowl, combine salad greens, blueberries, and sliced onion.
2. Add salad dressing. Toss gently to combine.
3. Carefully fold in the mandarin oranges.
4. Top with sunflower seeds and cheese, if using. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

CHANGE IT UP

- Add more color by adding shredded purple cabbage or carrots.
- Add fresh or dried fruit such as strawberries, pears, apples, or raisins.
- Substitute light or low-fat raspberry vinaigrette dressing for the poppy seed dressing.

TRY THIS

- Use Bibb or butter lettuce to make lettuce cups. Fill with cooked ground turkey or soy crumbles and diced veggies. Top with low-sodium peanut sauce.
- Blend a handful of salad greens, like spinach or kale, into a smoothie.
- Add fruit, such as apples, berries, melons, pears, peaches, or plums to fresh salad greens.