

Harvest of the Month at Home

Kale



Green Curly Kale



Red Curly Kale



Dinosaur Kale



'Hungry Gap'



'Red Russian'

Did You Know

- Celebrate National Kale Day this October! For more information visit nationalkaleday.org.
- There are over 50 varieties of kale. Lacinato kale is also called dinosaur kale for its bumpy leaves. Please pass the dino salad! There are also ornamental varieties in many colors including white, pink, and purple.
- Kale becomes sweeter after experiencing a light frost.
- Kale has been grown for more than 6,000 years and is in the brassica family along with bok choy, collards, and broccoli.
- Kale is packed full of nutrients. One cup of raw kale contains 684% of the recommended daily value of vitamin K, an essential nutrient that helps blood clotting. Kale is also an excellent source for vitamins A and C and provides calcium and iron. Calcium is necessary for building strong bones.

Cold Weather Greens

Kale is a fantastic addition to any Montana garden. A hardy vegetable, kale thrives in our climate and even becomes sweeter after a light frost. Plant seeds directly in garden or container five weeks before last frost to two weeks after last frost. For fall plantings, plant 6-8 weeks before forecasted first frost. Most varieties will do well in containers at least 8 inches wide and 8 inches deep.

Buying Tips

Buy kale with firm, bright leaves. Baby kale should have small, tender leaves with few stems. Kale stems can be bitter. Remove larger stems or use baby kale. "Mature" kale will be 12-16 inches in length with stems and relatively small leaves. Store in perforated plastic bag in refrigerator up to 5-10 days.

Cooking

Steam kale for a quick side of greens to add to any meal. Remove dried or thick stems. Place kale in a pan with a small amount of water and low-sodium seasonings such as garlic powder, pepper, or herbs. Cook on medium heat for 2-4 minutes, depending on size and age of greens, until desired tenderness. Add raw kale with stems removed and roughly chopped to soups and stews right before serving.



Book Nook

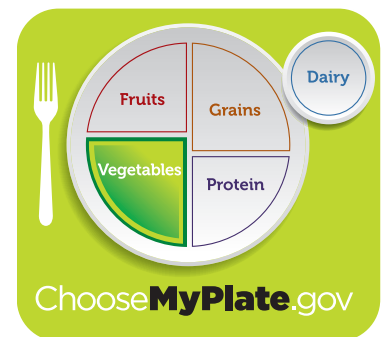
Captain Kale and the Super Foods,
by Amy Roth

The Tale of Kale: Based on a Real Kid's Real Story,
by Lisa Borden



Dig Deeper

For sources and photo credits along with more recipes, lessons, quick activities, resources, and guides, visit: mtharvestofthemonth.org.





Recipes

Choose Your Own Adventure Kale Salad

Round up your favorite ingredients and build a delicious kale salad with this recipe framework.

Source: *City Blossoms* (<http://cityblossoms.org>)

Servings

3- 1 cup servings

Ingredients

3 cups kale

2-3 Tbsp fat – suggestions: avocado, olive oil, vegetable oil, peanut butter, tahini, sunflower seed butter, and almond butter

2-3 Tbsp acid – suggestions: citrus juice (lemon, lime, etc.), vinegar (red wine, balsamic, rice, apple cider, etc.)

Salt to taste – miso and soy sauce are also great salt substitutes

Tasty extras – see below

Something Sweet: a little bit of honey, agave syrup, orange juice added to your dressing can help balance flavors.

Spices: chili powder, cumin, ground ginger, black pepper, red pepper flakes

Fruits & Vegetables (fresh or dried): Mango, apples, pears, raisins, dried cranberries, coconut, tomatoes, pomegranate seeds, carrots, jicama, shredded beets, olives

Beans and Seeds: sunflower, pumpkin (pepitas), flax, chia, garbanzos, lentils

Grains: farro, wheat berries, couscous, brown rice, barley

Herbs: cilantro, parsley, basil, chives, dill, fennel, mint, thyme

Cheese: feta, parmesan, goat cheese, or any cheese cubed or shredded

Nuts: almonds, crushed peanuts, pine nuts, walnuts, sunflower seeds

Preparation

1. Wash kale, trim dried or tough sections, and cut out stems. Cut kale into thin ribbons.
2. Mix fat, acid, and salt in a large bowl.

3. Add kale to bowl, toss with dressing, and massage. Massage the kale by placing the kale-acid-salt mixture in a Ziploc bag and massaging from the outside. The more you massage, the more tender it will be. The dressing should coat the leaves, and the leaves should slightly wilt and turn a more intense green.
4. When the massaging is done, add the pizzazz! Anything you would add to a regular salad can be added to a kale salad. See above for examples of tasty toppings.

Kale Chips

Kale chips are a perfect way to try kale! A food dehydrator will also work for these tasty snacks.

Developed by: Edward Christensen, Assistant Food Service Manager, Missoula County Public Schools

Servings

4- 1 cup servings (large bowl to share)

Ingredients

1 quart kale, raw, stemmed, and cut into chip-sized pieces

1 Tbsp oil, olive, salad, or cooking

3/4 tsp salt

Preparation

1. Preheat oven to 225°F
2. Remove large stems from leaves leaving the kale in "chip-size" pieces.
3. In single layer on sheet tray, place leaves face up, lightly spray with olive oil, and light season the kale with the salt.
4. Bake for 40-60 minutes, or until the kale is completely dehydrated and will easily release from the pan when you shake the pan back and forth. Using a low oven temperature ensures that you will not burn the chips.

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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

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