

Kale

Description

The beautiful leaves of the kale plant provide an earthy flavor and more nutritional value for fewer calories than almost any other food around.

Kale is a leafy green vegetable that belongs to the Brassica family, a group of vegetables including cabbage, collards, and Brussels sprouts that have gained recent widespread attention due to their health-promoting, sulfur-containing phytonutrients. It is easy to grow and can grow in colder temperatures where a light frost will produce especially sweet kale leaves.

There are several varieties of kale; these include curly kale, ornamental kale, and dinosaur (or Lacinato or Tuscan) kale, all of which differ in taste, texture, and appearance. The scientific name for kale is Brassica oleracea.

Ornamental kale leaves may either be green, white, or purple. Ornamental kale has a more mellow flavor and tender texture.

Dinosaur kale features dark blue-green leaves that have an embossed texture. It has a slightly sweeter and more delicate taste than curly kale.

History

Like broccoli, cauliflower, and collards, kale is a descendent of the wild cabbage, a plant thought to have originated in Asia Minor and to have been brought to Europe around 600 B.C. by groups of Celtic wanderers. Curly kale played an important role in early European foodways, having been a significant crop during ancient Roman times and a popular vegetable eaten by peasants in the Middle Ages. English settlers brought kale to the United States in the 17th century.

1 cup of raw chopped kale

Vitamin A	206%	Good source of Fiber
Vitamin C	134%	High in vitamins and minerals
Vitamin K	684%	Lowers risk of cancer
Protein	4%	
Potassium	9%	
Iron	6%	

Radish

A member of the *Brassicaceae* family - also known as cruciferous vegetables. Related to broccoli, cauliflower, and brussels sprouts, the nutritional value of radishes is relatively high, especially when the whole plant is consumed. The tangy flavor of all types of radishes are due to the mustard oil found in cruciferous plants. Radish varieties come in an array of colors and sizes. They can be red, pink, black, purple, or white; the size of a dime, or profoundly large - the heaviest radish ever recorded being a one hundred pound vegetable grown in 1544.

Their history dates back to ancient times, when they were served daily to Egyptian slaves, along with [garlic](#) and [onions](#). The radish is native to Asia, where it spread to Japan. The daikon radish is a very popular in asian [cooking](#). In Europe, the radish became a staple vegetable much later. By the 16th century it was used in traditional medicine for kidney stones and facial blemishes.

Health Benefits of Radishes

Radishes, like other cruciferous vegetables, are high in vitamin C, which is the primary cancer-preventing agent. One cup of the root supplies twenty-five percent of the daily recommended amount of vitamin C. Radish greens have six times the amount of vitamin C found in the root, as well as a significant amount of calcium, iron, and thiamine. These vegetables are also good sources of [folic acid](#), potassium, and the trace mineral molybdenum. Molybdenum is thought to be involved in nervous system development, kidney function, and energy production at the cellular level.

Radishes supply a high amount of indigestible carbohydrates, otherwise known as roughage. Partially due to their potassium content, and as a mild diuretic, radishes are helpful for kidney and urinary tract health. The health benefits of radishes also include aiding in [digestion](#) and liver health because of the presence of sulfur-based phytochemicals which stimulate bile secretion.

1 cup of sliced radish

Vitamin A 0%

Vitamin C 29%

Vitamin K 2%

Calcium 3%

Iron 2%

Lots of nutrition in the leaves - good in stir fry

Good source of fiber and B vitamins

Lettuce

Different lettuces have different nutrients, but most have more nutrients than iceberg lettuce

1 cup of chopped raw lettuce

	Iceberg	Butterhead lettuce	Red leaf lettuce
Vitamin A	7%	36%	53%
Vitamin C	3%	3%	11%
Vitamin K	22%	70%	?
Potassium	3%	4%	?
iron	2%	4%	2%
calcium	?	?	1%

All are a good source of fiber for the body, which helps clean the digestive system and helps the body absorb certain nutrients.

4 main benefits to fiber 1) helps absorb sugars to release them more slowly in the body to prevent spikes and crashes in energy, 2) scrubs the colon and may prevent colon cancer, 3) makes the body feel full to prevent over eating 4) bind with cholesterol to help move it through the system

Mesclun mix of greens:

A mix of young small salad greens commonly includes arugula, red leaf lettuce, mizuma, radicchio

Swiss chard 1 cup of

	Raw	cooked
Vitamin A	44%	214%
Vitamin C	18%	53%
Vitamin K	374%	716%
Magnesium	7%	38%
Iron	4%	22%

Good source of fiber and minerals. Vitamin K is important for bone growth. Swiss chard is part of the goosefoot family along with beets and spinach. It originated in the Mediterranean in Sicily. It is called Swiss chard to distinguish it from the French spinach varieties in the 1800s

Arugula - also known as Rocket 2 cups raw

Vitamin A	47%	good source of fiber.
Vitamin C	25%	originally came from the Mediterranean
Vitamin K	136%	
Folate	24%	
Calcium	16%	
Iron	8%	
Magnesium	12%	
Protein	5%	

Oriental Greens

Mizuna is a nutrition powerhouse high in Vitamin A, C and folic acid. It is from Japan and used in stir fry. It is a mild Japanese mustard. One plant can provide 5 harvests in the right conditions.

Tahtsai or Tatsoi is a mild easy to grow spoon mustard. They are both from the Brassica or broccoli family. This mustard can tolerate temperatures as low as 15 degrees F.

Spinach 1 cup spinach provides

Protein	2%
Vitamin A	56%
Vitamin C	14%
Vitamin K	18%
Calcium	3%
Iron	5%

Spinach is from central and SW Asia originally from Ancient Persia or modern day Iran. Arabs introduced the cultivation of spinach in 1000 BC. Spinach is first mentioned in an English cookbook in 1390 and is called spinnedge. It is high in folic acid which is important for cell growth, division and DNA development.