Harvest of the Month
Salad Greens

Thomas Jefferson, 3rd president of the United States, grew 19 varieties of lettuce in his home garden.

Salad Greens – Variety is the spice of life

Salad greens can include a variety of different types of leaves including lettuces like green butter lettuce, red oak leaf lettuce and romaine lettuce; Asian greens like mizuna mustard or tah tsai; the European green kale; and spinach and peppery arugula originating from the Mediterranean.

Most common salad greens are cold weather crops, growing best in the cool temperatures of spring and fall. Here in Walla Walla, plant your spring greens mid March.

Health and Nutrition

Not all greens are created equal. The darker the leaves, generally, the more nutrition they contain. Iceberg is the least nutritious, but still provides fiber and a little vitamin A and C. Arugula contains more A and C but also provides calcium. Spinach and kale take it to another level nutritionally. Spinach is also rich in iron which helps to transport blood around the body to keep muscles working efficiently. One cup of kale has amounts of calcium similar to a glass of milk and 6 times the recommended amount of daily vitamin K.

Sharpstein 3rd graders harvest many types of salad greens to make a spring salad in class!

Other Fun Facts

- Lettuce is a member of the sunflower family.
- Lettuce was discovered as a weed growing around the Mediterranean – Egyptians have been eating lettuce for more than 4500 years as seen in Egyptian tomb paintings.
- Romaine lettuce was named by the Romans who believed it had healthful properties. In fact Emperor Caesar Augustus put up a statue praising lettuce.
- Mizuna is the Japanese word for "water vegetable".
- In 1533, Catherine de' Medici became queen of France; she so fancied spinach, she insisted it be served at every meal. To this day, dishes made with spinach are known as "Florentine", reflecting Catherine's birth in Florence.

When we are eating salad greens, what part of the plant are we eating?
The Leaves!