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FACT SHEET

SPECIAL INTEREST HERBS

# GOURMET VEGETABLES

## LETTUCE



### *Lactuca sativa*



#### DESCRIPTION

All of today's lettuce varieties were developed from the wild *Lactuca serriola* which grows freely on waste ground throughout Europe and Asia. In Ancient Egypt times, lettuce was considered an aphrodisiac. Lettuces are the most significant salad crop of all plants and have been bred to please different appeals, from the loose leaf types that you can pick as you need (known as perpetual lettuce) to the tight headed varieties that are completely harvested when ready. These standard lettuces form a heart. The word lettuce is derived from the Latin word 'lac' which means 'milk', describing its milky juice and mild flavor.

'Romaine Parris Island' Large, thick and slightly crumpled leaves that are green in color with creamy white centers. A tender, crisp and sweet favored lettuce with 9in/22.9cm heads. This particular variety is heat and disease tolerant. Slow Bolting. 65 days.

'Iceberg' Large, crisp and light green with a mild flavor. This lettuce has a very large and firm head that looks like a small green cabbage. Named for its pale color, this lettuce has a high water content, making it very crisp and refreshing. Often used in salads and sandwiches. Heat resistant. 75 days.



#### PROPERTIES

Some older species contained a milky latex known as lactucarium, which has had a sedative effect. Modern lettuces, however, contain very little of this juice. Leaves can be cropped as a fresh vegetable as needed.



#### USES

Culinary  
All purpose salad vegetable with a variety of uses, including being eaten hot or cold, as a garnish, or as a compliment to any meal such as hamburgers, salads, tacos, sandwiches etc.



#### GROWTH

Crisphead varieties, such as iceberg lettuce take about 10 to 12 weeks to mature. Cos varieties, such as Romaine, take 10 to 11 weeks to mature. Lettuce can be grown and planted all year round. Companion plant Parsley.



#### CULTIVATION

Likes rich, damp soil and sunny protected position, kept continually moist during the growing season. Premature drying out causes the lettuce to go to seed early, before they have developed to their full size.



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