

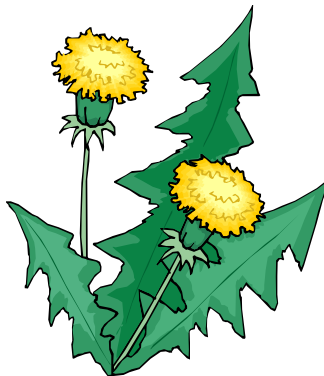


## Don't Forget the Green in Summer Meals

There are many delicious leafy, green vegetables. Summer is a great time to enjoy these colorful, tasty vegetables fresh.

Here are a few reasons to include them in your meals:

- Leafy greens are rich in vitamins and minerals.
- Some are good sources of calcium to help maintain healthy bones and reduce risk of osteoporosis.
- They are high in vitamin A. A half-cup of broccoli supplies more than the daily requirement of vitamin A.
- Vegetables are a good source of fiber.
- Most greens have less than 15 calories in a half-cup.
- Greens have no cholesterol and are almost fat free.



In the summer, especially at farmers' markets you might find beet greens, collards, dandelion greens, spinach, kale, mustard greens, Swiss chard or turnip greens.

These greens should be washed thoroughly. Trim off any roots, separate the leaves and swish them around in a large bowl of cool water; do not soak. Lift out the leaves, letting the sand and dirt settle. Pinch off tough stems and the midribs (the part of the stem that extends into the leaf).

Mild-flavored greens like spinach, kale or chard can be steamed until barely tender. Stronger-flavored greens like collards, mustard or turnip greens will be better if cooked longer in a seasoned broth. They should also be blanched before adding to soups or stews to avoid a bitter flavor.

### Cooking and Salad Greens

**Cooking greens** refer to leafy green vegetables that have long been used in Southern-style cuisine. Recently they have become more widely used because they are more available and recognized as a good source of nutrients.

**Salad greens** are those that are used without cooking. There are many choices of salad greens in addition to the traditional iceberg lettuce. As a general rule the darker green the leaf the more nutritious.

**Here are a few of the salad greens you may find this summer:**

**Arugula** – small, flat leaves on long stems often displayed with roots attached.

**Mâche** – delicate, perishable, fingerlike and velvety with a mild taste.

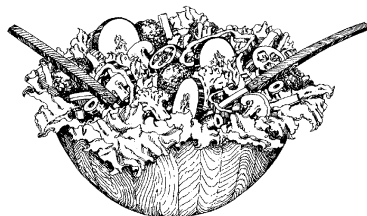
**Mesclun** – a mix of young spring greens.

**Radicchio** – used in Italy, has a mildly bitter flavor with a spicy taste.

**Radish greens** – add a pepper flavor to salads used in small amounts.

Wash salad greens the same as cooking greens. Be sure to remove excess water before making the salad.

This summer try at least one new green.



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## Salad Dressing

Keep your salad healthy and low calorie by following these suggestions:

- Serve the dressing on the side – keep the salad crisp.
- Choose fat-free or lowfat dressing.
- Create your own dressing- juice from lemon wedge, salsa or flavored vinegar.

## Herb Salad Dressing

¾ cup tomato juice  
¼ cup vinegar  
1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley  
1 tablespoon chopped chives  
1 clove garlic  
½ teaspoon salt  
Pinch of each – oregano, sugar, cayenne pepper, and black pepper

In a bowl, whisk together all ingredients until well blended. Keep refrigerated. Remove garlic clove before serving. Makes 1 cup.

Nutrition information per tablespoon: 3 calories, 0g fat, 108 mg sodium.

