



Harvest of the Month | Fact Sheet

Cabbage



Cabbage is a hardy vegetable that grows in various shades of green as well as red (purple). The shape of the cabbage head varies from round to flattened or pointed. Most varieties have smooth leaves, but Savoy cabbage has crinkly textured leaves. Usually, the leaves at the center of the head are eaten rather than the outer leaves. If purchased at a store, these outer leaves have usually been removed. Raw cabbage has a naturally peppery flavor.



Did you know?



Many vegetables evolved from the original wild cabbage including broccoli, brussels sprouts, cauliflower, collard greens, kale, and kohlrabi.



There are at least 100 types of cabbage grown throughout the world. The most common types grown in the United States are Green, Red, and Savoy. The most common types of Chinese cabbage are Bok Choy and Napa cabbage.



Cabbage is composed of 90% water.



The inner leaves of cabbage are often lighter in color than the outer leaves because they are protected from sunlight by the surrounding leaves.



Kimchee and sauerkraut are fermented products made from cabbage.

Selection

Look for cabbage heads that are heavy for their size with even coloring and with fairly thick, pliable leaves. Pre-cut cabbage may have already lost some of its nutrient content.

Storage

Store green cabbage in a sealed plastic bag in the refrigerator for up to two weeks. Savoy cabbage only keeps for about four days. Do not wash cabbage before storing as the moisture may cause deterioration.

Nutrition

Cabbage is an excellent source of vitamin C, vitamin K, and phytochemicals. Vitamin C is important in the body's healing process and may play a role in guarding against heart disease and cancer. Vitamin C also helps the body absorb iron. Vitamin K is important in the blood clotting process and therefore helps us avoid bleeding too much from cuts and scrapes. Phytochemicals are substances that are believed to guard against certain

Handling

Remove the outer layer of leaves. Cut the cabbage head in quarters. Rinse under cold running water. Do not wash cabbage until you are ready to use it. Avoid slicing or shredding cabbage in advance as this will cause it to lose some of its vitamin C content. If you must prepare it an hour or more in advance before cooking, place it in a plastic bag, seal tightly, and refrigerate.

When handling and preparing red cabbage, use stainless steel knives and cookware to prevent color changes.



diseases such as cancer. Red and savoy cabbage are good sources of vitamin A, which helps maintain good vision and fight infection.

School Meal Connection

Cabbage is classified as an “other” vegetable in the school lunch and breakfast meal pattern.

Harvest Season

According to the PA Preferred Seasonal Calendar, cabbage is in season in Pennsylvania from June through December.

Finding Cabbage

Child Nutrition Program operators may be able to find local cabbage in a variety of ways. Check with your produce distributor to learn what they have available. You can search for products through the PA Preferred website or connect with local producers through produce auctions or farmer’s markets. The Food Trust has also developed a Guide to Local Produce in Keystone Schools which identifies producers who are interested in selling to schools.

Preparation



Boil: Cut cabbage into quarters or large wedges. Add about ½ inch of water into a large saucepan and bring to a boil. Add cabbage and continue boiling uncovered, until the pieces are tender, about 8 to 11 minutes.



Steam: Quarter and core cabbage. Cut into wedges. Steam in a steamer at 200°F until very tender, about 30 minutes.



Bake: Preheat oven to 400°F. Cut cabbage into 1–inch thick rounds and place on baking sheet. Brush lightly with oil. Season with salt and pepper. Roast until cabbage is tender and edges are golden, about 40–45 minutes.



Note: While cabbage is cooking it can sometimes give off an odor that some consider unpleasant. This odor is the result of the breakdown of substances in cabbage into sulfur compounds. The reaction is stronger in aluminum pans and when the cabbage is cooked too long. This can be avoided by a briefer cooking time and the use of stainless–steel pots and pans.



Other ways to enjoy cabbage include:

- Cut up cabbage and drizzle with lemon juice or salad dressing.
- Add cabbage to soups, stews, and stir fries.
- Add cabbage to salads, sandwiches, and tacos.
- Add cooked cabbage to mashed potatoes.





Recipe | Stuffed Cabbage Lasagna

50 servings (1 piece)

Credits: 1 cup provides 1 oz equiv meat/meat alternate, ¼ cup other vegetable and ¼ cup red/orange vegetable.

Ingredients	Weight	Measure	Directions
Cabbage	5 lb	2 heads	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Quarter and core cabbage; cut into wedges. Steam in a steamer at 200°F until very tender, about 30 minutes. 2. Meanwhile, bring water and 1 tsp of salt to a boil. Stir in rice, reduce heat to low and cook for 25 minutes (the rice will be underdone). 3. Cook beef in a large pot crumbling with a spoon or spatula, until browned, about 15 minutes. Drain. Stir in garlic powder, onion powder, pepper and the remaining 2 Tblsp salt. Stir in the rice and diced tomatoes. 4. Cut the steamed cabbage into ½-inch strips and break apart. 5. Preheat convection oven to 325°F or conventional oven to 350°F. 6. Assemble the lasagnas in two 2-inch full hotel pans using the following amounts for each pan: Spread 1 cup sauce on the bottom of the pan. Top with about 2½ quarts cabbage, 2 cups meat mixture, 1 cup sauce, about 2½ quarts cabbage, 2 cups meat mixture, 1 cup sauce, about 2½ quarts cabbage and 1 cup sauce. 7. Bake, uncovered, until the sauce is bubbling and the top is starting to brown, about 25 minutes.
Water		1½ qt	
Kosher salt		2 Tblsp + 1 tsp, divided	
Brown rice		3 cups	
Ground beef, 80% lean	5 lb		
Garlic powder		2 Tblsp	
Onion powder		2 Tblsp	
Ground black pepper		2 Tblsp	
Diced tomatoes, canned (undrained)		1½ qt	
Tomato sauce		1 #10 can	

Source: Stuffed Cabbage Lasagna ([VT New School Cuisine](#) p. 176).

Sources

[Pennsylvania Produce: A Guide to Produce Grown in Pennsylvania](#). Penn State Extension.

[Cabbage](#). Tufts University. New Entry Sustainable Farming Project.

[Cabbage](#). South Dakota Harvest of the Month.

[Green Cabbage](#). University of Arizona. College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.

[Watch Your Garden Grow – Cabbage](#). University of Illinois Extension.

[A Nutrition Fact Sheet – Cabbage](#). Montana State University Extension.

[Top 10 Ways to Enjoy Cabbage](#). Produce for Better Health Foundation.



Check out the PA Harvest of the Month website (www.paharvestofthemonth.org) for sources, additional resources, and recipes.

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