

Arugula



History

This leafy green vegetable is native to the Mediterranean region and southern Europe. We know that the ancient Romans ate arugula. It was even mentioned in the Old Testament of the Bible as well as the Jewish Talmud. It has been cultivated and gardened for centuries in Britain. Wild varieties can also be found across southern Europe. It is particularly popular in German and Italian culture. Arugula just gained popularity in American over the past few decades.

Arugula plants prefer cooler, damp weather and can survive light frost. Heat creates a strong and bitter flavor in the leaf. The leaves can be harvested six weeks after planting. Any leaves left on the plant after it flowers will likely be bitter. The flowers tend to be white to yellow in color. The leaves have purple “veins.” Leaves that have a “fuzzy” underside indicate toughness.

The leaves are perishable and go bad quickly. If you are not going to eat them within a week, you can consider freezing the leaves for later use in cooking.

Arugula is described as having a nutty and peppery flavor. It is used in salads. The leaves, stems, flowers, and seeds are all edible. It is a good source of vitamins A and C, which are important for eye health.

Fun Facts

- In India, arugula is grown for the oil that can be found in the seeds.
- Arugula is delicate and must be harvested by hand.
- Like other leafy, green vegetables, arugula is a part of the brassicaceae family, which includes broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, turnips, and kohlrabi.
- Arugula is a cruciferous vegetable. It is called this because the flowers have four petals and resemble a Greek cross.
- You may know arugula by its other names- garden rocket or rocket salad.
- Arugula has a somewhat spicy flavor, which some pests are naturally repelled by.



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