

# Cabbage

## History

Cabbage began as a wild plant in Europe and the Mediterranean along bodies of water. Ancient Egyptians and Greeks had great respect for cabbage, as they thought it had medicinal qualities. The Greeks began cultivating cabbage as early as 600 B.C., and the Romans began growing it too. Later, it was introduced to the British Isles. Because cabbage is fairly easy to grow and can adapt to various conditions, it is grown around the world today. China is the leading producer and consumer of cabbage.

Cabbage prefers a cool, mild temperature. Too much exposure to cold or hot temperatures will cause the seeds to grow into flowers instead of leafy heads. The head is ready for harvest when it is firm, typically after 2-3 months. Pick it by hand and store in the refrigerator for up to one week.

Cabbage is a low-calorie food with an excellent amount of vitamin K, which helps regulate blood and its flow.



## Varieties

**Cannonball cabbage** is called a “mammoth Brussels sprout” because they only grow to be one foot wide. The leaves are dense and used for shredding into sauerkraut or coleslaw.

**January King cabbage** has curly blue-green leaves with splashes of purple. It can be planted in the fall and harvested into the winter. It only grows to be one pound per head.

**Napa cabbage** is oblong with frilled yellow-green leaves. It is softer and sweeter than most cabbage.

**Red Drumhead cabbage** is a tough, red cabbage that is usually shredded for salads.

Savoy cabbage has yellow to green leaves and a mildly earthy taste. It is used in kimchi.

## Fun Facts

- Cabbage is a cruciferous vegetable. It is called this because the flowers have four petals and resemble a Greek cross.
- Cabbage is related to cauliflower, broccoli, kale, turnips, rutabagas, and Brussels sprouts.
- Early Greek and Roman civilization suggested using cabbage to treat deafness.
- Cabbage is 93 percent water.



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