

Radish

History

Radishes originated in China thousands of years ago and gradually spread west. They became an important food of ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome. Radishes were extensively cultivated in Egypt during the time of the Pharaohs. Ancient records show that radishes were eaten before the pyramids were built.

The radish did not spread throughout the rest of Europe until much later. It is documented to have been found in Germany in the 13th century, but did not reach England until 1548. Shortly after this, radishes were being grown in North America. They were growing in Mexico in the year 1565 and cultivated in Massachusetts in 1629.

Today, radishes are grown in almost every state. Wisconsin-grown radishes are available throughout the fall and winter, but most radishes seen in grocery stores across the country were grown in California and Florida.

Varieties

There are five common radish varieties grown in the United States. The most well-known variety is the Red Globe radish. This radish is small (1-4 inches) and has red and white coloring. It is commonly eaten whole or sliced on salads. The other radishes grown in the US are the Daikon, California Mammoth White, White Icicle, and Black varieties.



Fun Facts

- Radishes are a type of root vegetable.
- Radish leaves may be harvested and eaten.
- Ancient Greeks offered gold replicas of radishes as an offering to their god Apollo.
- “Radish” comes from the Latin word “radix” - meaning “root.”
- Most radishes can be stored in the refrigerator for up to two weeks.
- To improve storage length, cut off the leafy radish tops as they break down faster than the root.
- The “hot” flavoring of a radish is found in the skin so if you peel the radish you lose most of the flavor.



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