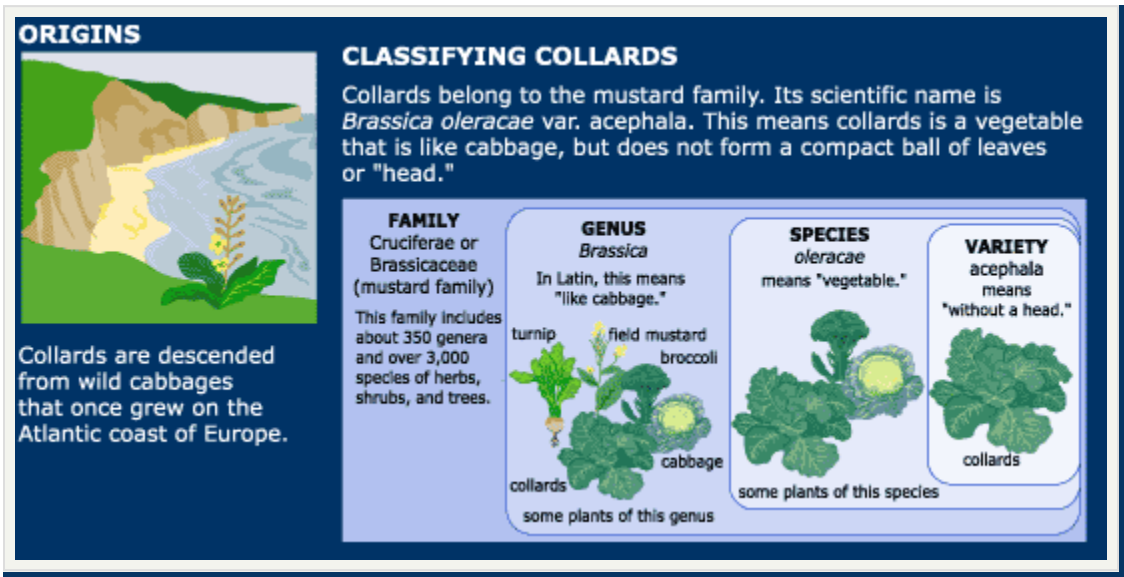
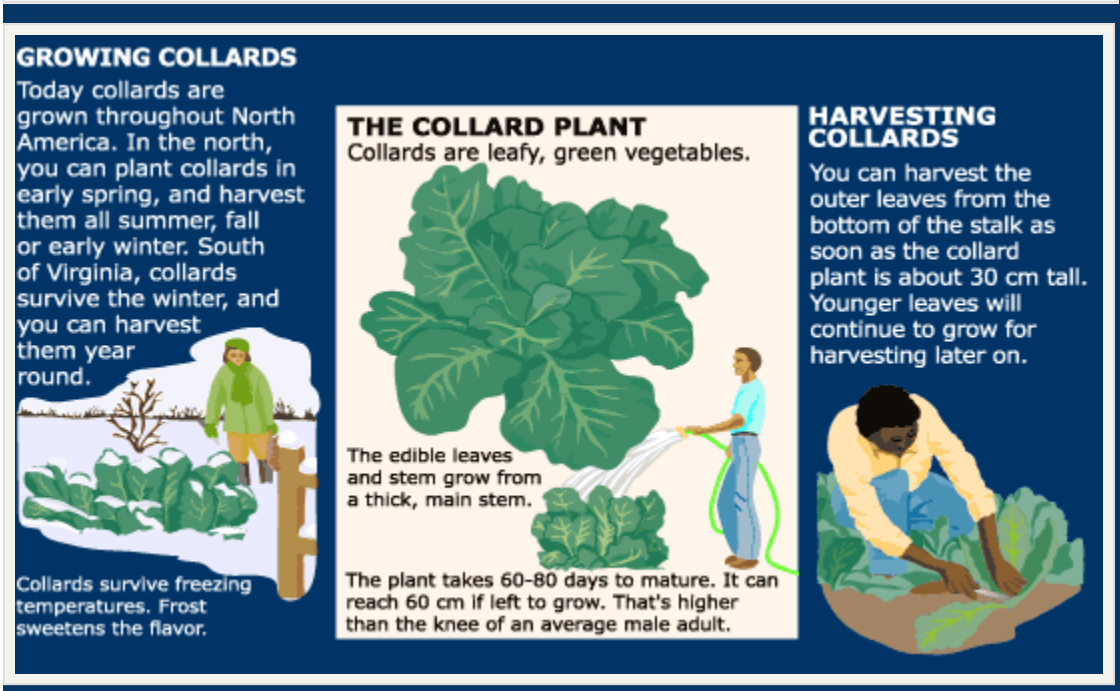
# Collards


ORIGINS
Collards are descended from wild cabbages that once grew on the Atlantic coast of Europe.
CLASSIFYING COLLARDS
Collards belong to the mustard family. Its scientific name is *Brassica oleracae* var. acephala. This means collards is a vegetable that is like cabbage, but does not form a compact ball of leaves or "head."
FAMILY
Cruciferae or Brassicaceae (mustard family)
This family includes about 350 genera and over 3,000 species of herbs, shrubs, and trees.
GENUS
*Brassica*
In Latin, this means "like cabbage."
turnip
field mustard
broccoli
cabbage
collards
some plants of this genus
SPECIES
*oleracae*
means "vegetable."
some plants of this species
VARIETY
acephala
means "without a head."
collards

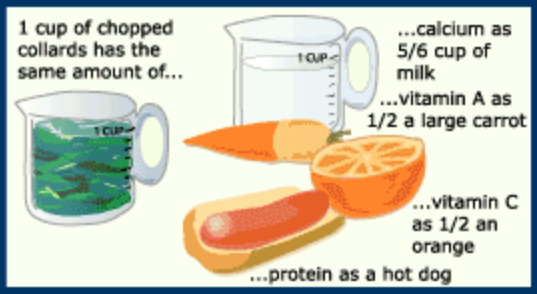

GROWING COLLARDS
Today collards are grown throughout North America. In the north, you can plant collards in early spring, and harvest them all summer, fall or early winter. South of Virginia, collards survive the winter, and you can harvest them year round.
Collards survive freezing temperatures. Frost sweetens the flavor.
THE COLLARD PLANT
Collards are leafy, green vegetables.
The edible leaves and stem grow from a thick, main stem.
The plant takes 60-80 days to mature. It can reach 60 cm if left to grow. That's higher than the knee of an average male adult.
HARVESTING COLLARDS
You can harvest the outer leaves from the bottom of the stalk as soon as the collard plant is about 30 cm tall. Younger leaves will continue to grow for harvesting later on.

## USES

You can eat collards raw in salads or cooked as greens. Cooked greens are an important part of traditional cooking in the southern U.S. They are becoming more popular in other parts of the country as well.

## NUTRITIONAL VALUE OF COLLARDS

Collards are rich in protein, minerals, and vitamins A and C. They contain antioxidants and other substances that may reduce the risk of cancer and heart disease.

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