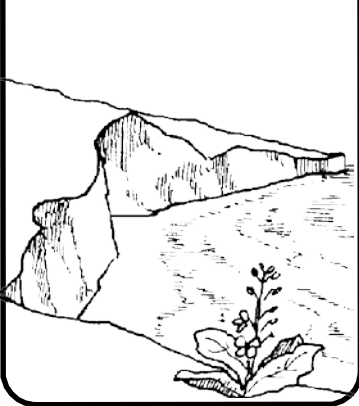


COLLARDS Science Page

DID YOU KNOW?

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 oleracea* 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

collards cabbage

some plants of this genus

SPECIES
oleracea
means "vegetable."

some plants of this species

VARIETY
acephala
means "without a head."

GROWING COLLARDS

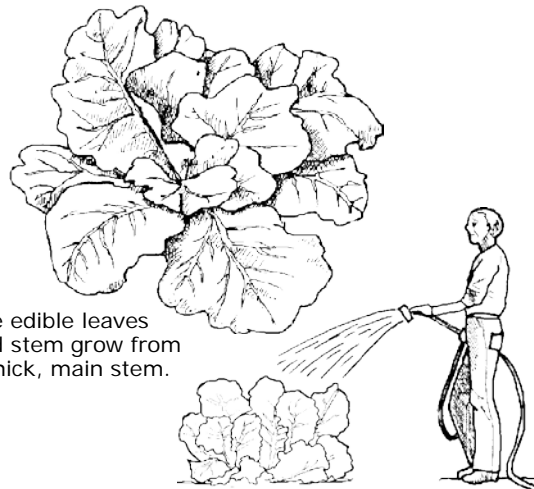
Today collards are grown throughout North America. In the north, you can plant collards in the early spring, and harvest them all summer, fall or early winter. South of Virginia, collards survive the winter, and you can harvest year round.



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.

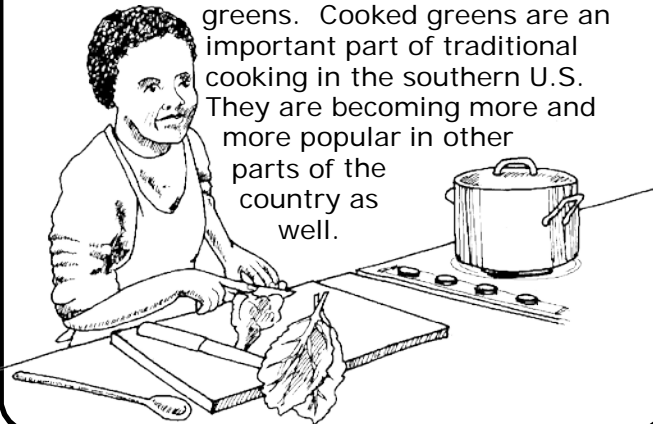
HARVESTING COLLARDS

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 and 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.

1 cup of chopped collards has the same amount of ...

... calcium as 5/6 cup of milk

... vitamin A as 1/2 a large carrot

... vitamin C as 1/2 an orange

... protein as a hot dog



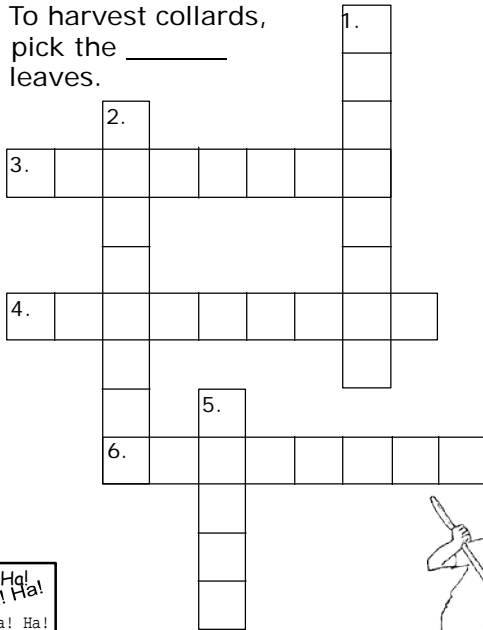
CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Across

- The scientific name of collards is _____
oleraceae var. acephala.
- South of Virginia, collards can be harvested
_____.
- Collard greens are a traditional dish in the
_____ United States.

Down

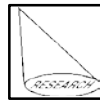
- Collards are rich in protein, minerals, and
_____ A and C.
- Collards descended from wild _____.
- To harvest collards,
pick the _____
leaves.



RIDDLE

How does a gardener mend her pants?

Answer: With collard patches!



SPOTLIGHT ON RESEARCH

Why southern farmers were so healthy

During the early 1900's, nutritionists could not understand why southern farmers were so healthy and well-nourished, even though their diet seemed very poor.

At that time, no one realized that collards are an excellent source of protein, vitamins, and



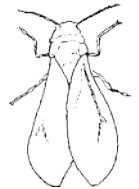
collards next to a door

minerals. When this became known in the mid-1900's, nutritionists came up with a possible explanation as to why southern farmers were so well-nourished. There were collard patches on every farm, and by nearly every door. People were probably getting a lot of the vitamins and minerals they needed from collards!

Source: Boswell, V. R. (1949). Our vegetable travelers. *National Geographic Magazine*. 96 (2)

Which collards resist whiteflies best

The whitefly is a big pest of collards in some parts of the country. Plant scientists at the U.S. Vegetable Laboratory in Charleston, South Carolina, are trying to find varieties of collards that whiteflies do not like to eat. For three growing seasons, the scientists planted and studied 14 different varieties of collards. They discovered that whiteflies prefer collards that do not have glossy leaves. So if whiteflies are a problem in your garden, try planting a variety with glossy leaves!



whitefly

Source: Jackson, D.M., Farnham, M.W., Simmons, A.M., van Giessen, W.A., and Eelsey, K.D. (2000). Effects of planting pattern of collards on resistance to whiteflies (Homoptera: Aleyrodidae) and on parasitoid abundance. *Journal of Economic Entomology*. 93, 1227-1236.



QUICK SAUTEED COLLARD GREENS

Yield: 6 (1-cup) servings

Ingredients

- * 1 tablespoon olive or canola oil
- * 2 pounds fresh collard greens washed, stems removed, and cut into shreds
- * 1 bunch scallions or 2 medium yellow or red onions, sliced
- * 3-4 cloves garlic, minced
- * 1/4 teaspoon salt (optional)
- * 2 tablespoons water
- * A dash of crushed red pepper or hot sauce (optional)

Instructions

- Heat oil in large skillet over medium heat until hot.
- Add garlic and scallions or onions, and saute until slightly wilted, about 1-2 minutes.
- Add the greens, seasonings, and water, stirring the ingredients well.
- Cover the pan, and cook the greens over low heat for 10 to 20 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Healthful Hints for Cooking Collards

- * Cook greens as little as possible to retain more of their bright, darkgreen color and nutrients.
- * If cooking collards with ham hocks or salt pork, boil meat in water for at least half an hour, and drain off the water and fat. Then put new water in the pot, and continue to cook until the meat is done. Then add greens.
- * When collards are boiled, nutrients are leached out into the water. Do not pour this water down the drain. It is full of valuable nutrients. Save it to add to soups or soak it up with a piece of hot cornbread.