



# Know What You Grow!



## Lettuce

**Scientific Name:** *Lactuca sativa*

**Recommended Varieties:**

Butterhead, Batavian, Romaine, Loose Leaf varieties. Crisphead (iceberg) is difficult to grow in home gardens.

**Common Pest(s):**

The most important insect pests of lettuce in California are aphids, leafminers, caterpillars and whiteflies. Pest problems vary according to the growing region and time of year.

**UCANR Catalog**

Master Gardeners Handbook

Photos: Creative Commons

### Growing Information

**Cool Season Plant**

Lettuce is a cool-season vegetable and is very sensitive to high temperatures. Plant in late fall or early spring for best results. The optimal growing temperatures are 73°F during the day and 45°F at night. Most California growing regions have daytime temperatures from 63° to 83°F and night temperatures from 37° to 53°F. At the high end of the temperature range, lettuce may bolt, causing bitterness and loose, fluffy heads.

**Ideal Planting Window**

Inland Valley: August; November-March

Desert: September-December

**Growing Guidance**

Seeds should be planted  $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$  inch deep and thinned when plants have 3 to 4 true leaves. Transplants should have 4 to 6 mature leaves and a well-developed root system before planting.

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## Interesting Facts

Lettuce is leafy vegetable that belongs to the sunflower family. It originates from Mediterranean region, but it can be found around the world today. Lettuce prefers colder climate, which postpones development of flowers and ensures proper development of leaves.

Lettuce produces a mass of leaves that grow around short stem. Some varieties of lettuce produce yellow, golden, reddish, bluish or variegated (multi-colored) leaves.

Ancient Egyptians cultivated lettuce 6,000 years ago. It was important part of their diet, based on the paintings in the tombs of many Egyptian rulers.

The name "Iceberg" originates from the preservation method that was used at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in California. When refrigerators were not available, large quantities of ice were used to prevent spoilage of lettuce in the trains on their trips to the market. Carriages were filled with icebergs that floated on top of the lettuce to their final destinations, hence the name - iceberg lettuce.

[Soft Schools](#)

## Contact Information



**RIVERSIDE COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**

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## Nutritional Information

### Nutritional Value

1 cup serving of Romaine lettuce is 8 calories and contains protein, calcium, omega 3s, more vitamin A than a carrot, iron, water, and is rich in Vitamins B1, B2, B3, K and fiber.

### Recipe: Lettuce Wraps



### Ingredients:

12 Yummy Dino Buddies cooked according to package instructions

Iceberg lettuce

1 medium carrot cut into sticks

2 celery stalks cut into sticks

red cabbage shredded

spinach leaves

[BBQ sauce](#)

### Prepare:

Cook Yummy Dino Buddies according to package instructions.

While the Yummy Dino Buddies are cooking, prepare the other ingredients. On a plate give each child 3 Yummy Dino Buddies, lettuce leaves, and a small cup of BBQ sauce with a clean paint brush. (A spoon can work too.)

Place the other ingredients on a big cutting board in the middle. Allow them to create their scenes and then show them how to add the veggies and the Dino Buddies to the lettuce and wrap them up to eat!

[Simple Joy](#)