



All about Kale

Brassica oleracea

COMMUNITY GARDEN TO KITCHEN SERIES



**"The only things that are super
are heroes and phosphate"
~ witty person**

Kale belongs to the Acephala Group of brassicas. Seeds germinate best between 8 - 30°C soil temperature.

Sow 10 mm deep in trays or seedbed.

Space plants 30 - 45 cm apart.

Harvest the young, tender, centre leaves

There are many varieties of kale.

'Blue Curled Scotch' has finely curled, very decorative, blue-green leaves on a compact plant. It is extremely hardy, slow to bolt in spring and tolerant of both hot and cold weather. Grow it as a winter vegetable or as an ingredient in salad mixes. As a microgreen it has blue-green fringed leaves. It has a peppery cabbage flavour.

'Red Russian' has tender leaves that have blue-green veins and are tinged reddish-purple with frilly edges. It is very hardy; tolerant of both hot and cold weather. Grow it as a winter vegetable, as an ingredient in salad mixes or a garnish. It has a sweeter flavour than traditional Scotch kales.

'Black Tuscan' has unique, dark green, heavily savoyed leaves; it is also called a "dinosaur" type. It is tolerant of hot and cold weather. Grow it as a winter vegetable or as an ingredient in salad mixes. Grown as a saladmix it takes 30 days; to full size takes 65 days.

Compatible with (can grow in same bed):

Dwarf (bush) beans, beets, celery, cucumber, onions, marigold, nasturtium, rhubarb, aromatic herbs (sage, dill, camomile)

Avoid growing in same bed:

Climbing (pole) beans, tomato, peppers (chilli, capsicum), eggplant (aubergine), strawberry, mustard

Kale is a good addition or substitute for cabbage varieties. Cavalo Nero (Black Tuscan) can be grown in slightly smaller spacing.

Very winter hardy. Flavour is improved by frost. Ornamental varieties are colourful, and edible. Rotate with other crops to avoid clubroot.

Kales can be classified by leaf type:

Curly-leaved (Scots Kale)

Plain-leaved

Rape kale

Leaf and spear (a cross between curly-leaved and plain-leaved kale)

Cavolo nero (also known as black cabbage, Tuscan Cabbage, Tuscan Kale, Lacinato and dinosaur kale)

Because kale can grow well into winter, one variety of Rape Kale is called Hungry Gap, named after the period in winter in traditional agriculture when little else could be harvested.

An extra-tall variety is known as Jersey kale or cow cabbage

During World War II, the cultivation of kale in the U.K. was encouraged by the Dig for Victory campaign. The vegetable was easy to grow and provided important nutrients to supplement those missing from a normal diet because of rationing.

In Scotland, kale provided such a base for a traditional diet that the word in dialect Scots is synonymous with food. To be "off one's kail" is to feel too ill to eat.

Kale plants like to grow in a rich soil, high in organic matter with a slightly acidic pH (5.5 - 6.5 pH). You're growing it for the foliage, so the high nitrogen content provided by organic matter is crucial.

But Wait, there's more!

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Quick Facts

- * Frost hardy
- * Full sun
- * Fertile, well-draining soil
- * Sow early spring and early autumn
- * Keep moist, feed monthly
- * Can be potted
- * "Cut 'n' come again"



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Nutrition Facts

Amount Per 100 grams

Energy 117 kJ (28 kcal)

Carbohydrates 5.63 g

Sugars 1.25 g

Dietary fiber 2 g

Fat 0.4 g

Protein 1.9 g

Vitamin A equiv. 681 µg (85%)

beta-carotene 8173 µg (76%)

lutein zeaxanthin 18246 µg

Thiamine (B1) (5%) 0.053 mg

Riboflavin (B2) (6%) 0.07 mg

Niacin (B3) (3%) 0.5 mg

Vitamin B6 (11%) 0.138 mg

Folate (B9) (3%) 13 µg

Choline (0%) 0.4 mg

Vitamin C (49%) 41 mg

Vitamin E (6%) 0.85 mg

Vitamin K (778%) 817 µg

Trace metals

Calcium (7%) 72 mg

Iron (7%) 0.9 mg

Magnesium (5%) 18 mg

Manganese (20%) 0.416 mg

Phosphorus (4%) 28 mg

Potassium (5%) 228 mg

Sodium (2%) 23 mg

Zinc (3%) 0.24 mg

Water 91.2 g

In the Netherlands, it is very frequently used in a traditional winter stamppot dish called boerenkool, which is a mix of kale and mashed potatoes, sometimes with fried bits of bacon added to it, and usually served with rookworst ("smoked sausage").

In Ireland, kale is mixed with mashed potatoes to make the traditional dish colcannon. It is popular on Halloween when it is sometimes served with sausages. Small coins are sometimes hidden inside as prizes.

In Italy, cavolo nero is an ingredient of the Tuscan soup ribollita.

A variety of kale, kai-lan, is a popular vegetable in China, Taiwan, and Vietnam, where it is commonly combined with beef dishes.

A traditional Portuguese soup, caldo verde, combines pureed potatoes, diced kale, olive oil, broth, and, generally, sliced cooked spicy sausage. In Brazil, where it was introduced by the Portuguese, it is an indispensable side dish for the national stew feijoada.

In the eastern African Great Lakes region, it is an essential ingredient in making a stew for ugali, which is almost always eaten with kale. Kale is also eaten throughout southeastern Africa where it is typically boiled with coconut milk and ground peanuts and is served with rice or boiled cornmeal.

In Italy, kale (cavolo nero) is part of many dishes such as "casseula" (pork stew), polenta (corn porridge) with kale, Parmesan cheese and olive oil and "pizzoccheri", buckwheat tagliatelle served with kale, melted fontina cheese and potatoes.

A whole culture around kale has developed in northern Germany, especially around the towns of Bremen, Oldenburg and Hannover and the region of Dithmarschen. There, most social clubs of any kind will have a Grünkohlessen or Kohlfahrt ("kale tour") sometime between October and February, visiting a country inn to consume large quantities of kale stew, Pinkel sausage, Kassler, Mettwurst and Schnapps.

These tours are often combined with a game of Boßeln. Most communities in the area have a yearly kale festival which includes naming a "kale king" (or queen).

Kale is very high in beta carotene, vitamin K, vitamin C, and rich in calcium. Kale is a source of two carotenoids, lutein and zeaxanthin. Kale, as with broccoli and other brassicas, contains sulforaphane (particularly when chopped or minced), a chemical with potent anti-cancer properties.

Boiling decreases the level of sulforaphane; however, steaming, microwaving, or stir frying does not result in significant loss. Along with other brassica vegetables, kale is also a source of indole-3-carbinol, a chemical which boosts DNA repair in cells and appears to block the growth of cancer cells. Kale has been found to contain a group of resins known as bile acid sequestrants, which have been shown to lower cholesterol and decrease absorption of dietary fat. Steaming significantly increases these bile acid binding properties.

Kale freezes well and tastes sweeter and more flavourful after being exposed to a frost..Tender kale greens can provide an intense addition to salads, particularly when combined with other such strongly flavoured ingredients as dry-roasted peanuts, soy sauce-roasted almonds, red capsicum flakes, or a sesame-based dressing. When combined with oils or lemon juice, kale's flavor is noticeably reduced. When baked or dehydrated, kale takes on a consistency similar to that of a potato chip.

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