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Tips on Growing Lettuce

By Marilyn Pokorney

Lettuce is an easy to grow spring and autumn vegetable. It's two worst enemies are hot temperatures and slugs.

Here are some tips to grow lettuce all summer long, even when temperatures soar.

- *Make sure soil contains a good supply of nitrogen for good leaf production.
- *Make early plantings in full sun.
- *Plant the seeds 1/8 inch deep in a wide row, 6 inches apart in all directions.
- *Plant every two weeks for a continuous harvest all summer long.
- *As the weather warms up, start planting in partial shade. Either on the side of the house that receives morning sun or in the shade of other taller plants such as corn broccoli etc.
- *Keep weeds under control as lettuce has shallow roots and can't compete with deep rooted weeds.
- *Keep soil moist but not wet. Water at the base of the plant and not the leaves wet leaves will encourage disease.
- *Aphids, cabbage loopers, flea beetles, leafhoppers and leaf miners are some of the insects that attack lettuce, but slug are the most notorious for loving lettuce.
- *Avoid pesticides as lettuce leaves are very tender and delicate, and can absorb many insecticides. An insecticidal soap or handpicking usually alleviates the majority of lettuce pests.
- *One tip to avoid slugs is to avoid mulching lettuce.

For more tips on how to control slugs on lettuce and in the entire garden visit:

Tips on Growing Lettuce

<http://www.apluswriting.net/garden/slugs.htm>

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LETTUCE GARDENING

By Arleen M. Kaptur

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Lettuce is a great way to begin this year's garden. There are several different varieties to choose from.

First, there is common lettuce and Romaine lettuce. Then we have this category broken down even further into Head Lettuce (sold in supermarkets under the name of Iceberg, Great Lakes, Imperial, Ithaca, or Oswego). It is tightly compressed and the center ball is pale green.

Loose-leaf lettuce forms a rosette of tender green leaves. Stores sell it as Oakleaf, Ruby (because the leaves are tinged with red), or Salad Bowl.

Butterhead lettuce has a softly compressed head with green outer leaves and pale green to yellow inner leaves. It falls under the market names of Buttercrunch, Dark Green Boston, Tender-Crisp, Deer Tongue, and Summer Bibb.

Head lettuce – 15 foot row yields about 15 heads of lettuce

Loose-leaf lettuce – 15 foot row yields about 2-1/2 lbs. of produce

Butterhead lettuce – 15 foot row yields about 15 heads

Romaine lettuce forms a vase shape and has a tightly compressed head. It stands about 10 inches tall and has a more piquant flavor than the other varieties.

Lettuce should be planted where it will get full sun in Spring and Fall, but partial shade during the hottest part of the Summer season.

Plant your lettuce seeds when night-time temperatures are no longer likely to fall below 25 degrees.

Sow the seeds sparingly about 1/2" deep and thin the plants.

Tips on Growing Lettuce

The pulled plants are good to eat so don't just toss them.

Keep the soil moist but do not wet the foliage any more than necessary.

Head lettuce matures in about 10–11 weeks after the seeds are sown.

Loose lettuce matures in 6–7 weeks, Butterhead is ready in about 9–10 weeks, and Romaine comes to full maturity in about 11–12 weeks.

If you don't use up all your lettuce seeds, don't throw them away. Unused seeds will keep for about 6 years.

So, if you are a salad lover, than growing your own lettuce is just the thing for your garden. Picking your own fresh salad fixings will make that "rabbit food" staple of any fine meal an extra special treat.

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