



BRASSICAS

The members of the genus Brassica are known as cruciferous, a group of vegetables that have gained a reputation as disease fighters. Studies show that these vegetables contain nitrogen compounds called indoles, which appear to be effective in protection against certain forms of cancer, particularly stomach, colon and breast cancer. All Brassica vegetables also contain dithioliones, compounds that have anti-cancer and antioxidant properties. Most Brassicas are good sources of dietary fiber and contain sulfur, which has antibiotic and antiviral characteristics. They are abundant in Autumn and Winter; some are available year round.

The Co-op features 100% organically grown produce in its Produce Department and Deli.

Bok Choy

(Chinese Cabbage, Chinese Chard and Chinese Mustard Greens)

Firm, crisp stalks have a mild and juicy sweetness. The green leaves have a soft texture and peppery cabbage taste.

Raw stalks are good in salads, juices or added to soups. Leaves and stalks are good steamed, stir-fried or added to soups, especially miso. Stir-fry in a bit of toasted sesame oil with ginger, garlic, water chestnuts, red bell pepper and mung bean sprouts, and top with toasted sesame seeds.

Bok Choy contains 13% RDA of calcium and is very high in beta carotene (supplies 60% RDA of vitamin A); a good source of vitamin C, folic acid and potassium.

Broccoli

Florets, stalks and leaves are all edible and packed with nutrients.

Blanch broccoli until bright green, then plunge into ice water and add to stir-fries, pasta dishes, soups, casseroles and salads, or use for dipping. Peel stems and cut or shred and add to soups, casseroles or sautées. The leaves can be prepared like chard or spinach.

Broccoli is abundant in B5 (pantothenic acid), vitamins A and C, folic acid and calcium.

Broccoli Raab

(Rape, Rabe, Choy Sum, Rapini)

This Chinese flowering broccoli is pleasingly pungent.

Steam until just tender and serve with olive oil, lemon juice and freshly ground black pepper.

High in potassium, calcium and vitamins A and C, and beneficial to the heart, lungs and intestines.

Brussels Sprouts

Brussels sprouts can be blanched or chopped to ensure even cooking and to cut down on cooking time. They are wonderful roasted with oil and balsamic vinegar. Try them chopped and sautéed with bacon and shallots and topped with a dash of nutmeg.

Good for the pancreas, high in vitamins A and C, folic acid and calcium.

Cabbage

Round-head cabbage comes in green, red, white or purple varieties.

Shred for use in salads or slaws. To cook, lightly steam, sauté or stir-fry. Serve hot with one of the following: garlic and butter or olive oil; ground coriander; chopped fresh parsley, cilantro or dill; sour cream, caraway seeds and paprika. It is delicious cooked slowly and gently with onions and a dash of red wine.

Raw cabbage is soothing for the digestive system and great for cleansing the body. It is a rich source of vitamin C and iodine. Outer leaves are better than inner leaves for calcium and vitamin E content since the inner leaves are not exposed to the sun.

Cauliflower

Serve raw florets with dips and in salads. Add to soups or steam for 4–5 minutes until just tender, yet firm. Excellent with Indian spices, such as in curry dishes. Steam until soft and mash with oil or butter for an alternative to mashed potatoes. To make “cauliflower rice”, grate raw cauliflower with a box grater and saute with onions and garlic in olive oil, serve as you would rice.

Cauliflower is a good source of boron, a blood purifier and good for constipation. It is high in vitamin C and folic acid.

Collards

This cruciferous green has an assertive, earthy flavor between cabbage and kale.

Take leaves off of stem (optional) and quick-braise or stir-fry in narrow ribbons. Steam and use as a wrap for any combination of cooked veggies, beans and grains. Also great sautéed with onions and mustard seeds and finished with a dash of apple cider vinegar.

It is an excellent source of calcium, iron, and vitamins A and C.

Kale

This hearty green is available in different varieties that can be used interchangeably.

Add baby kale to a salad. To make a raw kale salad, remove stems (optional), and cut into ribbons. Add ½ t. sea salt to each bunch of kale and massage to break down cells for about two minutes. Serve drizzled with olive oil and apple cider vinegar with grated carrots, raisins and toasted pumpkin seeds. To make kale chips, cut into bite size pieces, toss with sea salt and olive oil, spread in an even layer on a baking sheet and bake on low in the oven until crisp. Sauté kale in olive oil with garlic until bright green, add a splash of broth or water, cover and cook a minute or two until liquid has evaporated and kale is at your desired texture.

Rich in B vitamins, kale is particularly beneficial to the nervous and digestive systems. It also builds calcium in the body.

Sources

The Complete Vegetarian Cuisine
by Rose Elliot

The Wellness Encyclopedia
by UCB Wellness Letter Editors

Whole Foods Companion
by Dianne Onstad



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Kohlrabi

Part of the turnip family, kohlrabi has a crisp texture and tangy, turniplike flavor.

Leaves may be cooked like kale. To use the root, peel off the thick, green skin. Kohlrabi adds a sweet radish flavor when grated and raw. Raw kohlrabi can be peeled and cut into strips for dipping or stir-fries, or grated into salads. Try roasting kohlrabi tossed with garlic, oil and sea salt. A blood and kidney cleanser, kohlrabi is good for digestion and for the complexion.

Mustard Greens

With a strong, biting taste, the young, tender leaves add zest to a salad. Try more mature leaves sautéed, steamed, stir-fried and added to soups.

Substitute mustard greens for spinach or kale when the dish could use a kick. These greens pair well with white beans and lentils. Adding fat, salt and a little acid, like lemon juice or vinegar helps to cut the bitterness of this green.

It is a good cleansing food and an excellent tonic for the body.

Napa Cabbage

(Chinese Cabbage, Pe-Tsai)

This Romaine-looking cabbage has crinkly leaves and a mild, delicate flavor. Crispy and juicy, Napa has less sulfur than round-head cabbage. Napa cabbage is commonly used in the spicy lactofermented Korean condiment, kimchi.

For a delicious salad, shred and add grated carrot; serve with a dressing of honey, tamari, sesame oil, freshly ground black pepper and fresh ginger. For a warm dish, stir-fry with tamari and top with toasted sesame seeds. Napa cabbage leaves are perfect for steaming and stuffing with your favorite meat or veggie fillings.

Higher in calcium than round-head varieties, it supplies about 10 % of the RDA.

Like round-head cabbages, Napa is a good source of vitamins A, B and C, folic acid and Potassium.

Rutabaga

This root has a mild, sweet taste and readily absorbs other flavors.

Peel off outer skin and add to soups and stews; toss with oil and roast with other root vegetables; steam and then mash, slice thinly and fry. Make rutabaga fries by tossing stick shaped rutabaga with oil, garlic, rosemary and sea salt and roasting until crisp. Should be avoided by anyone with kidney problems.

Savoy Cabbage

Loose and crinkly, this is the sweetest and mildest of cabbages.

Savoy cabbage has a delicate texture that is great for salads and slaws. Use the leaves for wrapping a savory filling such as ground meats, veggies and grains. Sauté with boiled potatoes, garlic and onions.

Savoy is high in vitamin A (almost enough beta carotene to supply 20% of the RDA).

Cut into quarters, chop and toss with olive oil, salt and pepper and roast until cooked through and golden brown in sections. Add to soups, sautes,

Turnip

Young raw turnips add a tangy flavor to salads and slaws. For a tasty slaw, grate turnips and apples, toss with fresh parsley, olive oil, lemon juice, sea salt and pepper. When cooked, turnips are pleasantly sweet. Steam and mash them with butter, salt and pepper, or roast or sauté them. Turnip greens are best eaten cooked, cut into ribbons and stir-fried. They are delicious paired with pork.

Raw grated turnip is a digestive aid and cleans the teeth.

Tatsoi

These small spoon-shaped leaves are often added to Asian salad mixes. They have a somewhat mustard-like flavor. When cooked, the flavor is mild. Delicious in soups, stir-fried or paired with tofu or fish.

Making Green Smoothies? Choose Organically-grown Kale!

The Environmental Working Group (EWG) annually rates fruits and vegetables based on how contaminated they are with pesticides. Kale and Collard Greens are on the "Dirty Dozen Plus" list because when conventionally grown, traces of especially highly toxic pesticides have been found on the greens.

So especially if you're using kale raw - either in smoothies or massaged kale salads - be sure to choose organic!

**** Note:** Most Brassicas contain high amounts of goitrogens which can interfere with thyroid function. Individuals with low thyroid function should limit their use.



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