



# SPROUTS

## HEALTH BENEFITS

### Easy to Digest

The sprouting process pre-digests the nutrients in the seeds, making them easier to metabolize and assimilate into the body. Proteins are converted into free amino acids and peptones. Carbohydrates are broken down into simple sugars. Enzymes are also activated to help with digestion.

### High in Nutrients

Sprouts are nutritious, especially high in vitamin E, and known for their cleansing ability due to their high water content.

### Rich in Cancer-Fighting Substances

Sprouts are rich in nitrilosides, substances that break down into chemicals that selectively destroy only cancer cells.

### Rarely Cause Allergic Reactions

The sprouted form of wheat and other seeds rarely causes an allergic reaction the way that the whole forms do.

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## GROWING YOUR OWN

Almost any seed, grain or bean can be sprouted; just make sure the ones you choose are intended to be eaten (Some planting seeds are treated with fungicides. Organically grown seeds are ideal). Use whole seeds, with the hull still intact.

Try seeds: alfalfa, broccoli, clover, fenugreek or sunflower; grains: buckwheat, wheat berries, quinoa or rye; and beans: aduki, garbanzo, green peas, lentils, mung, pintos, or soybeans. You can also try some sprouted together, as long as their sprouting times are about the same.

If you don't have a sprouting jar or basket, you can use any quart-sized glass jar to grow your own sprouts. Happy sprouting!

### To sprout your own, follow these easy steps:

- 1 Rinse the seeds thoroughly and place them in a clean quart-sized glass jar. Fill the jar  $\frac{3}{4}$  full with tepid water. Cover the mouth of the jar with cheesecloth and secure with a heavy rubber band or use a sprouting screen. Soak, refrigerated, overnight.
- 2 In the morning, drain the seeds well and rinse with fresh water. Drain well once again, and place the jar lying on its side in a dark area.
- 3 Rinse and drain the seeds twice a day, returning the jar to the dark place after each rinsing. Although sprouting times vary, most will be ready in two to three days. Sprouts need sunlight to produce chlorophyll and turn green, so place them in indirect sunlight on the last growing day.
- 4 Drain the sprouts well and rinse every two to three days. Store in the refrigerator for up to a week.

## SERVING SUGGESTIONS

Smaller sprouts need not be washed before using. Any that seem wilted may be revived by soaking for 10 minutes in ice water. Pat them dry with paper towels before using. Rinse mung beans in a bowl of water, stirring them gently with your hand. Discard the seed casings that float to the top.

Sprouts are excellent in stir-fries, salads and sandwiches. Try adding sprouts to slaws and grated salads, as well as green salads. Toss sprouts into soups just before serving or sprinkle over casseroles after baking. Small sprouts, such as alfalfa and radish, go well with dressings that contain ginger and sesame. Mung bean sprouts are especially tasty with a zesty soy sauce-based dressing. Try a simple stir-fry using mung bean sprouts, summer squash, green onions, soy sauce and ginger.

Sprouted beans are best when cooked. Lightly steam, sauté, stir-fry or add to casseroles, veggie burgers or a nutloaf. Cooked sprouts also make good spreads, such as sprouted hummus or a pinto bean dip.



# SPROUTS

## GLOSSARY

### Azuki Bean

These beans form fine, grass-like sprouts, with a sweet nutty taste and texture. Add them to stir-fries or eat them raw in sandwiches or with Chinese-style marinated vegetables.

### Alfalfa

One of the most common varieties, these sprouts resemble white threads with tiny green tops and have a mild, nutty flavor. They are a favorite in salads and sandwiches. Note: People with autoimmune diseases, particularly rheumatoid arthritis and lupus, have noted aggravations when eating alfalfa sprouts.

### Almonds

Sprouted almonds have a crunchy texture and are easy to digest. They contain a significantly reduced fat content, enhanced flavor and texture and increased alkalinity. Sprouted almonds are an excellent source of protein, vitamins and minerals.

### Barley

This sprouted grain is particularly high in vitamin C and B complex. It contains several key amino acids. Barley sprouts are best when less than one inch long.

### Buckwheat

Buckwheat sprouts must be started with the outer hull still intact. These sprouts are good on their own, in salads, juices, and soups.

### Broccoli

This crunchy and slightly spicy small sprout is loaded with a concentrated form of sulphoraphane, a chemical that protects against carcinogens.

### Fenugreek

Combine these strong, tangy sprouts with other sprouts. They are ready when one inch long. Cooking them longer than 3 or 4 minutes will make these sprouts bitter. Great in salads, fenugreek sprouts are a powerful liver and kidney cleanser and an excellent source of phosphorus and iron.

### Garbanzo Bean

Also known as chickpeas, these beans are one of the easiest to sprout. Their flavor can be creamy, nutty, and even meaty in a variety of recipes. Good for burgers, dips and even desserts.

### Lentils

(Red, Green & French Green)  
Peppery and crisp, lentil sprouts are better when longer than ½-inch. These sprouts are particularly good for burgers, salads and in a nutloaf.

### Mung Bean

Commonly called "Bean Sprouts," these big, thick, white sprouts are excellent in stir-fries, soups and salads. Mung bean sprouts are rather bland in flavor, with a crunchy texture.

### Quinoa

The ancient "mother grain" has a delicate, slightly nutty flavor. High in protein and anti-inflammatory nutrients, this gluten-free grain goes well in salads, stir-fries, baked goods and breakfast cereals.

### Soybean

Soybean sprouts are a rich source of protein and are stronger in flavor than mung beans. Best when under one inch long, sprouted soybeans should be cooked before being eaten. Good in salads, burgers and casseroles.

### Sunflower

Sunflower sprouts have a nutty flavor and quite a crunch. Sunflower sprouts add great flavor and texture to sandwiches and salads.

### Wheat Berries

These sprouts are sweetest when the sprouts are no longer than the grain. Considered the most delicious by some sprout connoisseurs, these sprouts will quickly turn into wheatgrass.

### Mixed Packets

Ready to try your hand at sprouting? You'll find a wide assortment of seeds, grains and beans in the Co-op Bulk Department. Pre-packaged mixes are available too. Look for 3-Part Salad (alfalfa, radish and broccoli); 5-Part Salad (alfalfa, radish, mung, lentil and broccoli); Bean Salad (adzuki, lentil, mung and radish); Crunchy Lentil (blue French, red and green), and Protein Powerhouse (adzuki, garbanzo, mung and green pea). Happy sprouting!

## SELECTION

Select sprouts that are moist and crisp, without any evidence of sliminess, mold or a sour smell.

The shorter the sprout, the younger it is and more tender it will be.

## STORAGE

Refrigerate sprouts in a growing container or loosely packed in plastic bags. Bagged sprouts will last three days. Boxed sprouts will keep four or five days. Snip the sprouts as needed. Remove any sprouts from the container that have become slimy or discolored.

### Sources:

*The Complete Vegetarian Cuisine* by Rose Elliot, *The Wellness Encyclopedia* by the UCB Wellness Letter Editors and *Whole Foods Companion* by Dianne Onstad.