

HARVEST OF THE MONTH

RED LEAF LETTUCE

FEBRUARY

Red leaf lettuce has a mild, crispy texture and is often used in salads. Its color is either red or reddish-purple. This vegetable comes in several varieties, including New Red Fire lettuce, Red Sails lettuce, Redina lettuce, Galactic lettuce and Benito lettuce.

STORAGE

- Store lettuce ideally as close to 32 °F as possible with a relative humidity of 98-100% and some air circulation. Lettuce stored at refrigeration temperatures closer to 41 °F and below has an approximate shelf life of 5 days.
- Store, hold and serve lettuce at 41 °F degrees or below at all times. Do not allow direct contact with ice at any time during storing, handling or serving.
- Do not freeze lettuce. Do not store lettuce in dry storage areas.
- Store lettuce in air tight containers for maximum shelf life.
- Store lettuce away from ethylene gas producing items such as apples, grapes and berries because lettuce is extremely sensitive to ethylene and will develop russet spotting and soft rot within 24 hours.
- Use lettuce as soon as possible because it is a very perishable product. Avoid using leafy greens with visible signs of decay or damage. Remove unusable portions or discard entire head.



+ BENEFITS

Red leaf lettuce is low in sodium and calories, and generally healthier to eat than green lettuce, providing a lot of vitamin A, vitamin K and potassium.

Talking to Students about Vitamin A

Vitamin A has many functions, the most notable being its role in maintaining good vision.

✓ SELECTION

- When selecting red leaf lettuce for meal preparation, choose a head that has vibrant colors, no black or brown spots, and healthy-looking leaves.

PREPARATION

- Chop off the red leaf lettuce stalk's flat end and throw the end away. Remove and discard the outer two leaves and any damaged or wilted leaves. Just prior to serving, wash lettuce under cold running water. Do not immerse or allow to soak in water. Place clean leaves on a layer of paper towels to dry. USDA recommends not washing lettuce that has been labeled pre-washed.

🍴 TASTING TIP

Be a good role model by eating new foods with children.



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TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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