

HARVEST OF THE MONTH

BROCCOLI

APRIL

Broccoli belongs to the Cruciferae family, which also includes cauliflower, cabbage, bok choy and Brussels sprouts. The vegetable family name comes from the shape of the flowers, whose four petals resemble a cross.



STORAGE



- To achieve maximum shelf life, store at 32°F with 95% relative humidity. These conditions will help broccoli last for up to four weeks.
- Broccoli stored at 39-41°F will have an approximate shelf life of 5 days.
- Do not store broccoli in dry storage.
- To store, mist the broccoli heads, wrap loosely in damp paper towels and refrigerate. Use within 2 to 3 days.
- Do not store broccoli in a sealed plastic bag.
- Raw broccoli needs air and a perforated plastic bag is recommended.
- Cooked broccoli should be covered and refrigerated. Use within 3 days.



BENEFITS

Broccoli is a great source of vitamin K, vitamin C and folate. It is also a very good source of dietary fiber, pantothenic acid, vitamin B6, manganese, phosphorus, vitamin A and potassium.

Talking to Students about Vitamin K

Vitamin K is necessary for the synthesis of proteins involved in blood clotting and for regulating blood calcium levels.



SELECTION

- Although readily available year-round, the prime time for fresh broccoli is October through April.
- When selecting broccoli, look for lively green leaves and firm, thin stalks.
- Thick stalks will be woody and indicate aging.



PREPARATION

- Broccoli can be eaten raw, but blanching it quickly in boiling water can give it a more crisp-tender texture and enhance its flavor.
- Broccoli can also be boiled, steamed, sautéed or roasted.



TASTING TIP

Avoid forcing children to try new foods.



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