



Using, Storing and Preserving Kale



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Kale belongs to the Brassica family, which also includes cabbage, collards, broccoli and Brussels sprouts.

It is also known as borecole.

Recommended varieties

Curly, ornamental or dinosaur

Nutritional value

One cup of kale contains 36 calories, 5 grams of fiber, and 15 percent of the recommended daily intake (RDI) of calcium and vitamin B6, 40 percent of magnesium, 180 percent of vitamin A, 200 percent of vitamin C and 1,020 percent of vitamin K. It is also a good source of minerals such as copper, potassium, iron, manganese and phosphorus (American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, May 2010).

Storage and Food Safety

Kale can be eaten raw or steamed to increase tenderness. Leaves vary from dark green to purple to deep red. Look for firm, deeply colored leaves with healthy stems. Small leaves will be more tender and have a milder flavor than large leaves. Store unwashed kale in an airtight plastic bag in your refrigerator's crisper drawer, where it will keep up to five days. Wash leaves thoroughly before using. Kale tends to have dirt and grit on the leaves, so wash in several changes of cool water.

To prevent cross-contamination, keep kale away from raw meat and meat juices.

Wash hands before and after handling fresh produce.

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Kale is not recommended for canning, freezing or drying because of its high water content, which produces a low-quality product.

Ways to Prepare Kale

Add to salads with red pepper, onion and raisins.

Toss chopped kale with cooked whole-grain pasta, pine nuts, feta cheese and olive oil.

Cook chopped kale with garlic and olive oil for 5 minutes; season with salt, pepper and red wine vinegar.

Make kale chips by slicing kale into bite-sized pieces, tossing with olive oil and salt, and baking for 10 to 15 minutes at 350 degrees.

References

Address, Elizabeth and Judy A. Harrison. *So Easy to Preserve*. Bulletin 989, 6th Edition. Cooperative Extension University of Georgia, 2014.

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