10 Leafy Vegetables

About Community in Bloom

Community in Bloom (CIB) is a programme that was launched by the National Parks Board (NParks) in 2005. It aims to nurture a gardening culture among Singaporeans by encouraging and facilitating community gardening efforts.

It is also an opportunity to build community bonds and strengthen social resilience

in our City in Nature.

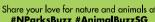












For more information, visit our website at www.nparks.gov.sg/cib or email us at CommunityInBloom@nparks.gov.sg

For more information on plants in Singapore, visit NParks Flora & Fauna Web at www.nparks.gov.sg/florafaunaweb

For more gardening resources and tips, visit go.gov.sg/gardening-resources

To learn more about our City in Nature, scan the QR code or visit www.nparks.gov.sg/about-us/city-in-nature

MANAGE DAMAGAADA (O) A CAMAS DAMAGAADA



This brochure features
10 of the most commonly
cultivated 'leafy vegetables'
in Singapore. This term
generally refers to the
leaves or roots of food
crops, such as Kailan, Kale,
Lettuce and Sweet Potato.

There are numerous
varieties of leafy vegetables
that can be grown in
Singapore. We hope that
this brochure will
encourage you to try
growing these edibles on
your own or in your
community garden!

Why Grow Leafy Vegetables?

Leafy vegetables can often be harvested in a short time period. From seed to harvest, the edibles in this brochure take only three weeks to three and a half months to grow!

Growing edibles as a community

means you can reap the

following benefits:

- Harvest food when it is fresh and as needed
- Meet people and make friends who have a similar passion for gardening
 - Have fun and keep fit

Differences Between Fruits and Vegetables

We often refer to the raw, plant-produced whole foods that we eat as fruits and vegetables, with savoury produce like edible leaves and roots commonly called 'vegetables', and sweet produce usually called 'fruit'. However, in botanical terms, a fruit is actually the mature ovary of a seed plant, usually developed from a flower. So foods like gourds, tomatoes, chillis and beans, which we might normally call vegetables, are technically fruit. Here are some general differences between fruits and vegetables:

 Generally sweet, but sometimes tart or sour

Taste and Culinary Uses

 Often enjoyed as a dessert or snack

Vegetable

Fruit

- Not sweet or very subtly sweet
- Commonly eaten as part of a prepared dish or main meal

Presence of Seeds

Fruit – Yes

Vegetable - No

Nutrition

Fruit

- Low in fat and calories
- High in fibre
- Often high in natural sugars

Vegetable

- Low in fat and calories
- High in fibre
- Starchy vegetables tend to be high in natural sugars

Caixin

Scientific Name

Brassica rapa (Parachinensis Group)

Plant Characteristics

Caixin is a herbaceous annual. It takes three to five days to germinate, and 30 to 40 days to be ready for harvest.

Cultivation and Plant Care

This plant grows best in well-draining soil. It requires full sun and moderate watering. It can be propagated by seeds but the seeds should be dried for at least a week before sowing.

Culinary Uses

The leaves are eaten raw, stir-fried, lightly boiled or steamed. The mild flavour of the crunchy stems and soft leaves make them a good match for many different foods.

Ceylon Spinach

Scientific Name Basella alba

Plant Characteristics

Ceylon Spinach is a creeper. It takes about seven days to germinate, and 42 to 56 days to be ready for harvest.



Cultivation and Plant Care

This plant grows best in well-draining soil. It requires full sun and moderate watering. It can be propagated by seeds and stem cuttings, and requires a trellis to climb on.

Culinary Uses

The tips of the leaves and stems are eaten raw or cooked. They have a pleasant mild flavour, and a sticky quality which also make them an excellent thickening agent in soups.

Chinese Mustard

Scientific Name

Brassica juncea

Plant Characteristics

Chinese Mustard is a herbaceous annual. It takes three to five days to germinate, and about 40 days to be ready for harvest.



Cultivation and Plant Care

This plant grows best in well-draining soil. It requires full sun and moderate watering. It can be propagated by seeds.

Culinary Uses

The entire plant can be eaten, from its flower to its roots and seeds. The leaves are eaten raw in salads or cooked. Oil extracted from the seeds is used as mustard flavouring. The seeds are also used in curries and pickles.

Chinese Spinach

Scientific Name

Amaranthus tricolor

Plant Characteristics

Also commonly known as Bayam, Chinese Spinach is grown throughout Southeast Asia. It is a



herbaceous annual, and the bright red colour of its leaves is from antioxidants called betalains. It takes three to five days to germinate, and about 21 days to be ready for harvest.

Cultivation and Plant Care

This plant grows best in well-draining soil. It requires full sun and moderate watering. It can be propagated by seeds or stem cuttings.

Culinary Uses

The leaves are eaten raw in salads or steamed. Yellow and green dyes can be extracted from this plant.

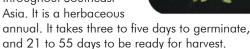
Kailan

Scientific Name

Brassica oleracea (Alboglabra Group)

Plant Characteristics

Kailan is grown throughout Southeast Asia. It is a herbaceous



Cultivation and Plant Care

This plant grows best in well-draining soil. It requires full sun and moderate watering. It can be propagated by seeds.

Culinary Uses

Kailan and Broccoli are different varieties of the same species, and their flavours are very similar. However, most people find Kailan to be slightly more bitter. The leaves and stems are boiled, steamed or stir-fried.

Kale

Scientific Name

Brassica oleracea (Acephala Group)

Plant Characteristics

Kale is a herbaceous annual. There are many varieties of Kale – the

leaves can be curly or smooth, and come in a range of colours, including purple, blue-green and even white. Do note that some varieties are ornamental, with tough and indigestible leaves. This plant takes three to five days to germinate, and about 35 days to be ready for harvest.

Cultivation and Plant Care

This plant grows best in well-draining soil. It requires full sun and moderate watering. It can be propagated by seeds.

Culinary Uses

The leaves are eaten raw in salads, added to juices or baked into crisps.

Kang Kong

Scientific Name Ipomoea aquatica

Plant Characteristics

A member of the Morning Glory family, Kang Kong is a creeper. It is in the same genus as Sweet

Potato. Kang Kong takes about three days to germinate, and about 21 days to be ready for harvest.

Cultivation and Plant Care

This plant grows best in well-draining soil. It requires full sun and moderate watering. It can be propagated by seeds or stem cuttings.

Culinary Uses

The leaves and stems are eaten raw, blanched or stir-fried.

Lettuce

Scientific Name

Lactuca sativa

Plant Characteristics

Lettuce belongs to the same family as the Sunflower and Daisy, and its flowers actually look

similar to those of Daisy. It is a herbaceous annual. Lettuce takes about four days to germinate, and about 56 days to be ready for harvest.

Cultivation and Plant Care

This plant grows best in well-draining soil. It requires full sun and moderate watering. It can be propagated by seeds.

Control of the Contro

Culinary Uses

The leaves are eaten raw in salads and sandwiches, boiled in soup or blanched

Sweet Potato

Scientific Name

Ipomoea batatas

Plant Characteristics

Sweet Potato is a creeper. It can have tubers in different colours, namely orange, white, yellow, red or purple. This plant takes

six to 15 days to germinate, and about 120 days to be ready for harvest.

Cultivation and Plant Care

Sweet Potato grows best in well-draining soil. It requires full sun and moderate watering. It can be propagated by seeds, tubers or stem cuttings. This plant competes poorly with weeds, so beds planted with Sweet Potato should be weeded regularly and fertilised periodically for a better harvest.

Culinary Uses

The leaves are blanched, boiled in soup or stirfried with chilli paste. The tubers can be boiled, made into flour, or made into cream for desserts.

Xiao Bai Cai

Scientific Name

Brassica rapa (Chinensis Group)

Plant Characteristics

Also known as Bok Chov. Xiao Bai Cai is a herbaceous annual. There

are two common varieties of this plant – one with green stems and another with white stems. It takes about three days to germinate, and 40 to 45 days to be ready for harvest.

Cultivation and Plant Care

Xiao Bai Cai grows best in well-draining soil. It requires full sun and moderate watering. It can be propagated by seeds or stem cuttings.

Culinary Uses

The green-stemmed variety has a milder flavour, more tender leaves and less juicy stems than the white-stemmed variety. The leaves are eaten boiled, blanched, or stir-fried.



