



LETTUCE GROWING GUIDE

Lettuce, a cool season vegetable, is one of the easiest to grow and the fastest to mature—an ideal combination! Plant some in the spring for mid-summer harvests, and again mid-summer for fall yields. This is a great way to have fresh lettuce for months.

WHEN TO SOW	SUN / PART SHADE	SEED SPACING	ROW SPACING	PLANTING DEPTH	SPACING AFTER THINNING	DAYS TO GERMINATE	DAYS TO MATURITY
When soil can be worked	Sun/Part Shade	4-5 seeds per foot	10-18 inches	¼ inch	12-15 inches	7	52

Types of Lettuces

Lettuce comes in two basic types: the compact, spherical “head” lettuce you may be familiar with from the grocery store, and the many looser-leaved types. We offer many varieties, including Bibb and Butter Lettuce, which are tasty and look lovely; standard Head Lettuce; Gourmet Lettuce Mix; Loose-Leaf Lettuce, including a beautiful red variety; Mesclun Mixes; and purple, red and green varieties of Romaine.

Soil and Fertilizing

It is best to have your soil tested before planting, so you know what nutrients and pH adjustments may be needed. For a thorough test, consult your local extension office. All lettuce varieties require loose, fertile, loamy soil with a pH of 6 or above. Mulching helps conserve moisture and block weeds.

Planting

Lettuce is easy to direct sow, and it can grow in many different variations of sun and shade, including full sun, part shade, and in the shadow of taller plants.

Plant seeds when the soil can be worked, which is about 4-6 weeks before the last frost. Minimum soil temperature is 35° Fahrenheit. For continuous harvests, sow additional seeds every few weeks through mid-summer.

You can also sow seeds in flats and transplant seedlings 4-5 weeks later. To do so, sow 4 seeds per inch. Transplant the young plants 12-15 inches apart, with the rows spaced 10-18 inches apart.

Watering

Water your lettuce regularly to keep the soil moist, but not waterlogged. This is especially important during the first few weeks of growth. Shade is important for summer germination.

Harvesting / Storing

Your lettuce is ready to harvest when the plants reach about 5-6 inches high. You can harvest plants in their entirety, or take individual leaves from the outside of the plant. Store your lettuce in the refrigerator

Special Notes

- When lettuce is exposed to very high heat, bolting (flower production) can result, and this affects flavor. Choose heat-resistant varieties like our Buttercrunch to reduce bolting in summer.
- Lettuce can tolerate light frost, but not hard freezes.
- Always use some type of organic weed control, as lettuce doesn't compete well with weeds.

For soil testing or other questions specific to your growing climate, please contact your local county extension agent.

Visit <http://www.almanac.com/content/cooperative-extension-services> to find the office nearest you.

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