Lettuce (Lactuca sativa)

Origin

Lettuce is native to the Mediterranean region and Siberia. (Picture left, Romaine; Picture right, Iceberg) The ancient Egyptians were the first to cultivate lettuce into a plant used for its leaves rather than its seeds for oil.

Food Production

Lettuce growth requires low temperatures so it does not flower too quickly. The majority of production uses large amounts of chemicals, but the planting of organically grown lettuce is increasing in the marketplace. Hydroponically grown lettuce uses water and nutrient solutions, rather than soil.

Nutritional Qualities

Lettuce is a good source of fiber, vitamin A, K and potassium. The darker leafy varieties are better for you providing vitamin C, calcium and iron.

Famous Dishes

Lettuce is used in salads of all kinds. The leaves are often used in soups, sandwiches, wraps and stir-fry.