



Connecting New Jersey Farms to Local Schools

Collard Greens are the featured item in our Garden State on Your Plate tastings!

Our Collard Greens Tasting begins with a small piece of raw collard green, which the students season with ginger-infused salt and a squeeze of lemon. They then taste a collard green slaw dressed with a warm vinaigrette. Students are asked to pay attention to how the vinaigrette changes the flavor and texture of collard greens.

Collard Green Stems are tough, but they are edible and will soften with cooking. The stems take longer to cook than the leaves, so it is best to cut them into small pieces and cook them first, adding the leaves later.

Collard Green Leaves are sturdy, filling, and nutritious. They are also easy to grow and prepare. Remove the greens from the stem and slice the greens into ribbons. Cook them by braising, steaming, or sautéing until tender. Or slice the greens fine and toss, raw, with vinaigrette. Add some shredded carrots or green cabbage, and finely chopped apple to make a tasty slaw.



The Entire Collard Green Leaf can be used to make a Collard Green Wrap! Cut off the bottom end of the stem where it meets the leafy green. Place the leaf on a cutting board with the darker green side face down. Shave off the thick part of the stem with a vegetable peeler until the stem is about the same thickness as the leaf. You can steam the leaf lightly if you want it to be very soft or just use it raw. Pile on your favorite vegetable, meat, grain, and dairy fillings, tuck in the sides, and roll the leaf to make a healthful, delicious wrap!

See Garden State on Your Plate photos on Facebook at www.facebook.com/psgcoop.org

Collard Green Coleslaw

Serves 8 • Recipe adapted from *Vegetarian Times*

When you pour hot dressing over the greens, they wilt slightly, making them softer and easier to chew than raw greens. Allow time to chill the salad to let the flavors develop and combine. Serve as a side dish, or use to top a barbecue sandwich.

- 1/2 lb. collard greens, (8 leaves)
- 3 medium carrots, grated (2 cups)
- 1 medium red bell pepper, diced (1 cup)
- 1/2 cup rice or cider vinegar
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1/4 cup canola oil
- 1 tsp. powdered mustard
- 1 tsp. celery seed
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 1 medium crisp apple, diced

1. Wash collard greens well and strip the leaves off of the tough stems. Spin or shake leaves to dry and then stack on a cutting board. Cut the leaves into narrow strips, then rough chop the strips into pieces. Place greens in a large heat-proof bowl and toss in carrots and red pepper.
2. In a small saucepan, combine vinegar, sugar, oil, mustard, celery seed, salt, and pepper. Whisk it all together as you bring the mixture to a boil. When the sugar has dissolved, remove from heat, and pour over the salad. Toss well until vegetables are coated with dressing. Toss in apples and season with salt and pepper. Cover bowl, and place in refrigerator for at least 4 hours.

Ingredients that Go Well with Collard Greens

black beans • butter • cardamom • carrots • chili peppers • citrus cloves • coconut • cornbread • cumin • garlic • ginger • hazelnuts leeks • lemon • lentils • mustard • olive oil • olives • onions peanuts • potatoes • raisins • rice • scallions • sesame • shallots smoked paprika • squash • sweet potatoes • tomatoes • vinegar

Words that Describe the Flavor, Color, and Texture of Collard Greens

acidic • assertive • blue-green • bitter broccoli-like • chewy • deep green • earthy fibrous • hearty • hot • mild • pungent • savoyed smooth • sweet • tough • vegetal • velvety

GARDEN STATE ON YOUR PLATE COLLARD GREENS FACTS

Collard greens are a member of the cabbage family. Unlike the tight head of a typical cabbage, collards have large, dark green leaves that grow in a loose bouquet.

The leaves of the most commonly grown varieties of collard greens are smooth with slightly ruffled edges. The leaves grow on an upright stalk that can reach several feet tall.

Collard greens are available year round, but they are sweeter and tastier when grown in cold months after the first frost.

The name collards is believed to have derived from the word *colewort*, which is a 14th century English word for cabbage.

Collards and black-eyed peas are traditional New Year's Day dishes that are thought to bring good fortune in the coming year.

Collards have more fiber, calcium, niacin, and vitamin B5 than other cultivated leafy greens. They are also higher in protein, iron, magnesium, phosphorus, zinc, folate, and vitamin K than almost all other greens.

Collards are so beloved in the American South that they are celebrated in poetry, songs, literature, and festivals. Collards are even the official state vegetable of South Carolina!

The Greeks and Romans grew collards in their gardens over 2,000 years ago. Today, collards are eaten around the world in different ways by different cultures.

Collard greens are a cultivar (cultivated variety) of the species *Brassica oleracea* and are closely related to Brussels sprouts, broccoli, cauliflower, kale, kohlrabi, and cabbage.

The collards at the local grocery store and farmers market typically have flat, green leaves. But there are many different varieties of collards, including blue-stem collards, purple collards, yellow-green collards, and variegated collards. And collards can have smooth leaves, dull leaves, shiny leaves, or crinkly leaves.



Garden State on Your Plate is a series of four school-wide produce tasting in each of the Princeton elementary schools. The emphasis is on a New Jersey produce item, the different ways it can be prepared, and how the flavor can be altered by the chef and the students. Children learn about farming and cooking, and gain flavor power—the ability to personalize their item using salt and citrus. In support of the tastings, children will learn about each farm item through a variety of classroom- and garden-based lessons.



Founded in 2006, Princeton School Gardens Cooperative fosters garden- and food-based education in the classroom, cafeteria and community • PSGCOOP.ORG