

Broccoli

HARVEST OF THE MONTH

EAT MORE ALASKA GROWN BROCCOLI

Broccoli is one of the many descendants of wild cabbage that comes to us from the eastern Mediterranean and Asia. In much of Alaska, broccoli grows very well outdoors because it likes cool and moist summers. In the grocery stores, you'll often see the broccoli florets for sale, but remember that the whole plant is edible!

WHY EAT MORE BROCCOLI?

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size: ½ cup fresh broccoli, chopped (44g)	
Calories 15	Calories from Fat 0
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% Daily Value	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 21mg	1%
Total Carbohydrate 3g	1%
Dietary Fiber 1g	4%
Sugars 1g	
Protein 1g	
Vitamin A 5%	Calcium 2%
Vitamin C 65%	Iron 2%

A half cup of broccoli provides:

- A great source of Vitamin C. Vitamin C supports the body's immune system and prevents cell damage while producing collagen, which makes healthy cartilage.
- An excellent source of folate. Folate helps make healthy red blood cells, and may help protect against heart disease.
- A source of dietary fiber.

HOW MUCH DO WE NEED?

There's a reason parents have been telling children to eat their broccoli for generations; it's one of the healthiest vegetables! Broccoli and its relatives in the cruciferous vegetables (like cabbage and cauliflower) are loaded with vitamin C, fiber, and antioxidants. It's a versatile vegetable that works well in many dishes, from salads to soups.

In Alaska, most varieties take two to three months to mature, but they're all worth the wait. Alaska broccoli tends to be much larger than what can be found in the grocery store.

To gain the benefits of Alaska Grown broccoli, you and your family need to eat a half cup of chopped broccoli. Remember, in addition to the broccoli crown, the leaves, stems, and the flowers of the plant are also edible. Broccoli is nutritious as long as you don't cover it in high-calorie sauces or salt.

HOW TO CHOOSE, STORE AND PREPARE BROCCOLI

Choose: When choosing broccoli crowns, pick ones that are the classic dark green color, with the florets (the small green buds) in compact clusters. Choose crowns with firm stems and stalks. For broccoli greens, choose firm leaves with no yellowing or brown spots.

Store: Store broccoli dry in the refrigerator for up to five days. To store for longer, blanch broccoli chopped into one-inch pieces, and keep in the freezer in a large Ziploc bag.

Prepare: Use cold running water to wash the crowns thoroughly. Some people recommend soaking the crowns in cold water for five minutes before rinsing to get dirt out of the floret clusters.

Plant and Grow Broccoli

Broccoli prefers a cool and moist summer, which makes it perfect for Alaska gardens. Plant seeds 1 to 2 inches apart, or transplant 16 to 24 inches apart in a sunny part of the garden. To get fresh broccoli throughout the summer, make sure to stagger your planting across a couple of weeks so everything doesn't mature all at once.

Seasoned & Steamed Broccoli Recipe

- Take a broccoli crown and cut into pieces with long stems.
- Mix $\frac{1}{4}$ cup water, 1 tbsp. olive oil, 1 clove garlic, $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. red pepper flakes, and salt and pepper in a sauce pan, then bring to a boil over high heat.
- Add broccoli and cover to steam. After 3 minutes, turn off the heat and let sit for another couple minutes.

Choose Locally Grown

Broccoli takes about two months to mature after the last frost, so you might start seeing it in the local farmers market in July. There are multiple varieties that do well in Alaska, including:

- Packman
- Blue Wind
- Arcadia
- Coronado Crown

Learning Activity

Broccoli is a member of the Brassica family. A lot of popular vegetables (including broccoli, kale, cabbage, cauliflower, kohlrabi, and brussels sprouts) are all descendants of the wild mustard plant.

Using pictures or the actual vegetables, compare broccoli to these other vegetables. How do they all look similar? How do they look different?