

I Like Broccoli!

GARDENING SEASON

July to October

CHOOSING TIPS

Select stems of broccoli 8" to 10" in length with heads 3" to 6" across. Look for bunches with dark green heads.

Do not choose broccoli with:

- * Open or spread out heads
- * Moldy or mushy heads
- * Yellow coloring of heads
- * Soft or limp stems

STORAGE

Broccoli is best when eaten soon after picking but can be stored up to 7 days in the refrigerator. Can be frozen - contact your county Extension office for information.

PREPARATION

Wash thoroughly in cold water. Snap or cut off end of stem. The heads and stems may be cut into small pieces or florets, or left whole.

Broccoli may be used raw in salads, plain as a snack, or with dips. It may be boiled or microwaved.

To Boil:

Add broccoli to ¼ cup boiling water. Cook uncovered about 10 minutes, just until tender but still crisp.

To microwave:

Add 1 tablespoon of water and microwave for about 4 minutes just until tender.



KEY NUTRIENTS

- * Vitamin A for vision, healthy skin, and resistance to infection.
- * Vitamin C for healthy gums, skin and blood.
- * Potassium to maintain normal blood pressure.
- * Iron for healthy blood.
- * Calcium for strong bones.



RECIPES

Italian Broccoli with Tomatoes

- ◆ 2 cups fresh broccoli florets
- ◆ 2 tablespoons water
- ◆ ¼ teaspoon oregano
- ◆ Dash of pepper
- ◆ 1 medium tomato, cut into wedges
- ◆ ¼ cup shredded mozzarella cheese

Put broccoli and water in 1 quart dish. Cover and microwave at high 3 to 5 minutes. Drain. Stir in seasonings and tomatoes. Microwave at high 1 to 2 minutes. Sprinkle with cheese. Microwave 1 minute. Serves 3; 50 Cal; 2 g fat.

Broccoli with Cheese Sauce

- ◆ 1 pound fresh broccoli
- ◆ 4 ounces mild cheese, sliced
- ◆ ¼ cup milk
- ◆ Salt to taste
- ◆ 1 drop red pepper sauce (optional)

Prepare and cook broccoli as directed under "preparation" section of this page. Heat remaining ingredients over medium heat, stirring frequently, until cheese is melted and mixture is smooth, 6 to 8 minutes. Pour cheese sauce over broccoli. Serves 3; 175 Cal; 12 g fat.

Growing Broccoli in Wisconsin

Broccoli is one of many vegetables belonging to the mustard family grown in Wisconsin for fresh markets and home use. This broad group of plants which includes broccoli,



cauliflower, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, kale, collards and kohlrabi are known as cole crops. Broccoli is believed to be the first cole crop to evolve from wild cabbage. The head consists of functional flower buds. When we eat broccoli, we are eating the flower buds and petioles.

Planting Broccoli and Cole Crops

- Initiate seeds in a greenhouse in mid-March
- Ten days prior to transplanting, move plants to a cold frame to harden them off
- Hardened plants will be able to withstand temperatures as low as 28°F
- Transplant in the garden around mid-May
- Mid- to late-season cole crops can be direct seeded into the garden
- Temperatures below 40°F will cause chilling injury and initiate flowers
- Select a sunny location
- Seeding depth: 1/4 inches deep
- Transplant depth: Place crown at soil surface
- Space between rows: 18 to 36 inches
- Space between plants: 12 to 24 inches

Soil and Fertility

- Sandy, clay, muck, or loamy soils are acceptable

Soil and Fertility continued...

- Follow soil test recommendations
- Ideal pH is 6.0 to 6.8 or 5.6 on muck soils

Under optimum soil test levels apply...

- 3.0 oz of nitrogen per 100 sq ft
- 0.4 oz of phosphate per 100 sq ft
- 0.75 oz of potassium per 100 sq ft

Broccoli needs relatively high amounts of boron and molybdenum. Boron deficiency causes brown hearts and hollow stems.

Selecting Broccoli Varieties

Broccoli varieties grown in Wisconsin typically are of the calabrese or Italian green type. Most varieties available today are F1 hybrids that produce one large head early with two or three harvests later. Romanesco forms have spiral-shaped, chartreuse colored heads.

Handling Your Broccoli and Cole Crops

Cole crops retain their fresh taste if they are hydro cooled and kept under high humidity. Hydro cool by submerging the crop in a cool water bath for a few minutes immediately after harvest. Dry the crop on screen tables, then pack into waxed cardboard boxes. Maintain humidity by lining the box with a clean, damp cloth.

Harvest broccoli heads when they are firm and individual florets have not yet begun to open. Heads should be 4 to 6 inches in diameter with 4 inches of stem remaining. Sprouting broccoli should be cut just below the floret to encourage growth. Broccoli needs to be cooled rapidly after harvest to prevent deterioration. Broccoli will keep in top condition for 4 to 5 days.