



Winter Vegetable Gardening Tips from Joyce Gemmell

Kale and Collards *Brassica family*

Kale has been virtually ignored by Southern California gardeners because of its cold tolerance and heat sensitivity. Actually, collards grow better for us. Kale is a super green containing twice the daily recommended allowance of Vitamin A and almost as much Vitamin C as peppers. Kale is also low in oxalic acid so its calcium can be utilized by the body. Kale isn't only cold tolerant; it prefers temperatures between 40 and 60 - 65 degrees and becomes tough and bitter at 75 degrees. Cold actually makes it super sweet. It is hardy and easy to grow in this area where January temperatures are sometimes in the 70s.



Direct seeding the first of October will produce a crop during the colder winter months. It will take about 90 days to get plants large enough to harvest; thinnings can be eaten too. There are three categories: Dwarf Siberian and Chinese (also called Chinese broccoli)

Collards are not much different from kale. They differ in appearance and collards grow larger than kale, to 3 feet tall and 2 feet wide, with large smooth leaves. Collards don't have the super resistance from freezing, although they will survive down to 15 degrees F. Collards are a non-heading cabbage and have a cabbage flavor.

Start seed 4 weeks before transplant date (Oct.1st) for a fall and winter green or Feb. to March for a spring crop. Harvest like Kale, cutting tender leaves - not the biggest -leaving the center to produce more. Tear out the midrib which is tough and should be discarded. Young leaves have a sweet flavor and older leaves are often bitter.



Most seed catalogs carry a few varieties of both kale and collards

Nutritional Information...

Collards

Nutritional value per 100 g (3.5 oz)

Energy	151 kJ (36 kcal)
Carbohydrates	7.1 g
Fat	0.4 g
Protein	3 g
Vitamin A equiv.	575 µg (64%)
Folate (Vit. B9)	76 µg (19%)
Vitamin C	26 mg (43%)
Vitamin K	623 µg (593%)
Calcium	210 mg (21%)

Percentages are relative to US recommendations for adults.

Source: Wikipedia : USDA Nutrient database



