

Cabbage

By Borbála Vízkelety

Scientific Name: *Brassica oleracea*

Irish: Cabáiste



When you buy cabbage it is important to choose fresh and healthy heads. If you peel the leaves one by one, the centre stays fresh and crispy for

Cabbage is a leafy plant, grown as a vegetable crop for its dense-leaved, multi-layered head. It is close relative of cauliflower, broccoli and Brussels sprouts and all of these, including many wild flowers, belong to the huge Cabbage family.

Round or oval in shape, a cabbage head can be any size from 0.5 kg to 4 kg, though the world record in 2012 was 62.71 kg! There are many varieties of cabbage, with at least a hundred different types grown throughout the world. Leaves can be green, purple or white and either smooth-leaved or crinkle-leaved and the heads loose or firm.

Cabbage is one of the oldest vegetable in existence and it first appeared in Europe around 4000 years ago in the Mediterranean region. The plant has become extremely adaptable to different climate zones, what results in the variety of colours, textures and shapes within the family.

Cabbage is good for you!

Cabbage is a healthy food to eat. It is a great source of vitamins and minerals, particularly vitamin C, calcium and iron. It contains no fat at all, is low in calories and high in fibre. Plants of the big cabbage family have properties that have many other health benefits in your diet.



Cooking Cabbage

Cabbage can be prepared several ways: steamed, boiled, braised, stuffed, stir-fried, eaten raw for salad or as a snack are all great ways eating this healthy vegetable. They can also be fermented and pickled for dishes like sauerkraut or kimchi.



Cabbage consumption varies widely around the world. Bacon and cabbage is a very traditional meal in Ireland. Russia has the highest annual per capita consumption at 20 kg, followed by Belgium, the Netherlands and Spain. In some countries it is used as a side dish, while others have traditional dishes that feature cabbage as a main ingredient.

Growing Cabbage

There are so many varieties of cabbage that it is possible to grow varieties that can be picked all year round. For example, Spring cabbage can be picked in the spring and Winter cabbage can be picked in the winter. Cabbage is a hardy plant and is easy enough to grow. It likes fertile ground. Some of the biggest pests for cabbage are caterpillars, slugs and birds.

