



# HARDY GREENS

## Tell Me about Hardy Greens

Hardy greens such as cabbage, chard, collards, and kale are versatile and available for most of the year. Many hardy greens are even tastier in the winter because plants turn starches into sugars to protect their leaves from freezing.

## Crediting Information

- Cabbage, chard, collards and kale are hardy vegetables that credit toward the Vegetable meal pattern component.
- Child Nutrition Program operators should check the USDA Food Buying guide to correctly credit hardy greens, as creditable volumes vary across programs.
- In School Meals, cabbage contributes to the "Other" vegetable sub-group, while chard, collards, and kale contribute to the "Dark Green" vegetable sub-group.
- Vegetables must be fresh, frozen, canned, or full-strength vegetable juice, referred to as 100% juice, to credit as a vegetable component. Dried vegetables, including beans, peas, and lentils, must be reconstituted to credit toward reimbursable meals. Please confirm crediting requirements for dried vegetables with your specialist.



## Nutrition Facts

- Hardy greens are known for their vibrant colors and nutritional benefits.
- Hardy greens are good sources of calcium and vitamin K, which are both important nutrients that support healthy bones.
- Hardy greens have dietary fiber, which is important for a healthy heart, digestive system, and blood sugar regulation.



Curly green kale, credit: WSDA



## Selection and Storage

- The leaves of hardy greens should be crisp, and heads of cabbage should be firm.
- Look for greens with deeply colored leaves.

## Culinary Tips

- Cabbage, chard, collards, and kale can be eaten raw, steamed, or sautéed.
- Remove the tough center stems from chard, collards, and kale and core from the cabbage before cutting.
- When preparing hardy greens to be eaten raw, add a splash of oil and salt and massage it into the leaves to tenderize them. This works particularly well with collards and kale.
- Thinly sliced hardy greens are easy to add to stir fries, soups, stews, and eggs.



Hardy greens growing, credit: WSDA

## Recipes

- [Lemony Kale Quinoa Soup Washington Recipe for Schools](#)
- [Bean and Cheese Pupusas with Cabbage Slaw Washington Recipe for Schools](#)
- [Easy Chicken and Egg Noodle Soup USDA Recipe for Child Care Centers](#)
- [Winter Greens USDA Recipe for Adults in CACFP](#)

## Sourcing

- [Find Cabbage, Chard, Collards, and Kale](#)



Rainbow chard, credit: WSDA