



HERBS

What is It?

- Herbs are the leaves and flowers of plants and are used for flavor, fragrance, or medicine.
- The difference between an herb or spice is the part of the plant used. For example, the green leaves of the plant *Coriandrum sativum* are the herb cilantro. When using the seeds of the same plant, it is the spice coriander.
- There are two types of herbs: perennial herbs and annual herbs. Perennial herbs, like rosemary and thyme live for more than one season and come back every spring. Annual herbs, like cilantro, die at the end of the harvest season and need to be planted by seed each year, though many annual herbs develop an abundant supply of seeds, which fall to the ground and regrow on their own the following year.
- Certain herbs, like basil, lemon balm, chives, dill, and thyme can help to ward off pests in the garden with their aromas.
- Basil was used in part of the process to preserve mummies in ancient Egypt.



Parsley, credit: WSDA

Grow It

Herbs are a great and easy addition to any Washington garden, as they can be grown in beds, containers, and even indoors. Most thrive with at least six hours of direct sunlight and well-drained soil, but specific requirements will differ. Many hardy herbs can be planted several weeks before the last frost, while tender herbs should be planted outdoors only once the danger of frost has passed. Most herbs grown in the ground need little to no fertilizer.

Take note of whether herbs are perennials or annuals. A perennial is a plant that lives for many years, whereas an annual plant only lives one year. The local climate can impact whether a plant is a perennial or annual. For example, many varieties of rosemary do not do well outdoors in cold winters. They may act like perennials in the western side of the state where winters are milder, growing to several feet tall over many years. But in higher elevation areas on the eastern side of the state, less cold-hardy varieties of rosemary may die in the winter.





Make It

Recipe: Melon Mint Salad
Yield: 6 servings

Ingredients	Directions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 1/2 teaspoon honey• 1 1/2 teaspoon lemon juice• 1 pound watermelon, cubed• 1 pound honeydew, cubed• 1 pound cantaloupe, cubed• 2 tablespoon fresh mint leaves, chiffonade or minced	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. In a small bowl, combine honey and lemon juice. Stir well and set aside.2. Add melon cubes to a large bowl. Pour honey and lemon mixture over melon and mix lightly to combine.3. Sprinkle mint over melon mixture and mix lightly to combine.4. Cover and refrigerate until ready to use or serve immediately.

This recipe was adapted from [John C. Stalker Institute](#).



Thyme, credit: WSDA



Make It

Recipe: Nut Free Basil Spinach Pesto
Yield: 6 servings

Ingredients	Directions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 1/2 cups fresh spinach, packed• 3/4 cup fresh basil leaves, packed• 1 garlic clove, peeled• 1 Tablespoon lemon juice• 2 Tablespoons parmesan cheese, grated• 1/4 teaspoon salt• 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper• 3 Tablespoons olive oil	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Place spinach, basil, garlic, lemon juice, parmesan, salt, and pepper in a blender or food processor.2. Slowly pulse the blender or food processor while pouring in the olive oil.3. Blend for 30 seconds or until smooth. Scrape sides of blender or food processor as needed.4. Pesto can be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 5 days or serve immediately with pasta, sandwiches, wraps, meats, pizza, etc.

This recipe was adapted from [Montana Harvest of the Month](#).



Sage, credit: WSDA



Make It

Recipe: Cowboy Salad
Yield: 6 servings

Ingredients	Directions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 15-ounce cans black-eyed peas or black beans, drained and rinsed (try a mix or other types) • 1 1/2 cups corn (canned, drained, and rinsed or cooked from fresh or frozen) (See notes) • 1 bunch cilantro, chopped • 1 bunch green onions (about 5 green onions), chopped • 3 medium tomatoes, diced • 1 avocado, chopped (optional) • 1 Tablespoon vegetable oil • 2 Tablespoons vinegar or lime juice • 1/2 teaspoon salt • 1/2 teaspoon black pepper 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In a large bowl, combine beans, corn, cilantro, green onions, tomatoes, and avocado (if using). 2. In a small bowl, mix together oil, vinegar, salt, and pepper. 3. Pour oil mixture over vegetables and toss lightly. 4. Refrigerate leftovers within two hours.

Notes

- Use as a filling for tacos, burritos or wraps, on a burger, over a baked potato, or as a snack with Baked Tortilla Chips.
- Try adding other vegetables such as sweet or hot peppers, cucumber, or zucchini. You can also add other seasonings, such as cumin or smoked paprika.

This recipe was adapted from Oregon Food Hero.

Eat It

- Herbs are typically added to foods in small quantities to add flavor, they do not add much nutritional value to the dish; however, herbs can make nutritious foods like roasted vegetables or fresh salads more flavorful and appealing.

Read It

- Mother Goose's Herbal Tales: Nature's Little Helpers, by Jessy Masson and Erin Bailey
- Sage Advice for Garden Herbs, by Amy Avant
- The Spice Box, by Meera Sriram
- The Wondrous World of Herbs: A Kids' Guide to Herbal Wisdom: An Herbal Reference Guide for Budding Botanists, by Cynthia Schreiber
- The Cook's Herb Garden, by Jeff Cox

Play It

Enjoy the coloring activity on the next page from Oregon Food Hero!

Find It

- Washington herbs may be available in grocery stores. Check the product label or shelf tag to see where they were grown. Herbs are commonly found at Washington state's many farmers markets, farm stands, and other local markets during most of the year, depending on the type of herb.
- Find a farmers market near you here: [Find a Farmers Market - Washington Farmers Market](#). Many farmers markets and vendors accept WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program, WIC Fruit and Vegetable Benefit, and SNAP Market Match.
- Find local farms that sell hardy greens here: [Washington Farms | Local Farm Finder | Washington Food](#).



Name _____

..... Herbs and Spices



I like herbs and spices because

_____.

