



## Microgreens



Microgreens are a tasty addition to a salad, in a taco or sandwich, or anywhere you might use other greens. They are edible seedlings, produced from the seeds of vegetables or herbs, planted and grown in soil.

Start the seeds in a shallow tray of potting soil, on a windowsill, like you would start any seedlings, except you don't have to worry about spacing because you don't have to thin them out later like you would a normal crop

of seedlings. Once the seedlings grow one to two inches tall, including the stem and leaves, they are cut just above the soil surface. They should be grown in high light conditions with low humidity and good air circulation. Microgreens that are grown in the brightest light with plenty of space and good ventilation have more color and better flavor. Most varieties require 7-14 days growing time, some, especially the herbs, can take longer. After the first leaves are fully expanded, the microgreens are ready for harvest. Clip the seedlings just above the soil line and enjoy.

The bonuses of growing microgreens are many: a shorter growing time, takes up less room (can be done on your windowsill), and a lot less work than a full size garden. This is also a good use of seedlings that you have to thin out if you are growing plants to maturity. The con of growing microgreens is, because you are eating the whole plant, you only get the one crop from a tray of microgreens. I like to take one or two plants out of a tray and let them grow to maturity and go to seed. This is the most cost efficient way to continue your seed supply.

Commonly grown varieties of microgreens include amaranth, arugula, beets, basil, cabbage, celery, cilantro, fennel, kale, mustard, parsley, radishes, and lettuces. Keep in mind the herbs usually take longer to germinate and may require longer growing time. Most microgreens have a flavor much like that of the grown plant. Some people confuse microgreens and sprouts, but they are not the same thing. Sprouts are simply germinated seeds, and are never actually planted.

Submitted by: Tammy Cripe, UC Master Gardener of Glenn County