

ANOTHER  
HERB HERBERT  
FACT SHEET

SPECIAL INTEREST HERBS

GOURMET VEGETABLES  
SPINACH  
(Perpetual)

*Beta vulgaris cicla*



DESCRIPTION

Perpetual vegetable slow to seed. Thick, dark green leaves that are slightly serrated. Spinach probably originated in south west Asia or the western Himalayas, and was first cultivated by the Persians, spreading into China from Nepal. It was introduced to Spain by the Arabs, the same spinach is derived from the Arabic. Spinach reached England in the sixteenth century. Modern breeding such as this new F1 hybrid Approach has produced hardier, leafier plants, with resistance to bolting in summer, and reduced amounts of the calcium oxalate which causes bitterness.



ROWTH

Leaves should be picked as often as possible to promote new growth. Dark green thick leaves, good bunching and upright habit makes harvesting easy. Spinach is all year cropping and matures quickly. Maturity 3-5 weeks for young salad greens, 7-10 weeks for mature plants. Spinach can be harvested as required by pulling or cutting off single leaves at ground level. The leaves on the outside are best used first. Spinach produces a quick crop in cool damp weather. In hot dry weather the plants often run to seed before they have made sufficient leaf growth but in warm climates they produce an excellent crop in late winter.



ULTIVATION

Plant in spring and a second planting in summer is advised to stagger the harvest timing. Grow in rich, moist soil with ample manure high in nitrogen content. In dry areas and well drained soil it is useful to plant a shallow trench to make watering easier and more efficient. Water with a soluble fertilizer to increase the crop harvest. In climate that is very hot and wet in summer, spinach grows better in the cooler, drier winter months. In hot gardens summer sows will be better in light shade. Seed should be sown thinly and the plants thinned to 15-25cm/6-10in apart. Young plants are improved by watering of high nitrogen liquid fertilizers during growth and should never be allowed to dry out. Applications of salt at the rate of 30gm/1oz. per sq.m is also beneficial, especially in wet climates. Companion plant to strawberries and lavender.



USES

Used in many dishes. The iron for which spinach is famous is present in a soluble form, so any water left after cooking should be evaporated, combined with butter and mixed back into the cooked leaves.



Don't forget  
Herbs book,  
"Wonderful World  
of Herbs."

Any enquiries can be directed to:

HERB HERBERT P/L PO Box 24 Monbulk Victoria 3793 Australia

E-mail: herb@herbherbert.com

This Herb description is for informal use only; we cannot accept any liability for any harm or illness arising from the misuse of the plant described above

[www.herbherbert.com](http://www.herbherbert.com)