

Vegetable of the Month Sprouts

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Photos courtesy of Cook's Thesaurus

Sprouts are commonly seen at salad bars and supermarkets and each kind has its own unique flavor. Sprouts have a long history and have been used for medicinal purposes in Ancient China.

So what exactly classifies as a sprout? By definition it is a vegetable seed that just begins growing. Sprouts grow from the seeds of vegetables, grains, and various beans. They are the first edible shoots.

Sprouts like other vegetables can vary in texture and taste. There are some that can add some spice to your meals like radish and onion sprouts. There are also some hardy sprouts like Mung bean sprouts that withstand cooking. While others delicate like alfalfa that is used in salads and sandwiches.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size (50g)
Servings Per Container

Amount Per Serving

Calories 15 **Calories from Fat 0**

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 0g **0%**

Saturated Fat 0g **0%**

Cholesterol 0mg **0%**

Sodium 0mg **0%**

Total Carbohydrate 2g **1%**

Dietary Fiber 1g **4%**

Sugars 0g

Protein 2g

Vitamin A 2% • Vitamin C 8%

Calcium 2% • Iron 30%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Saturated Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Calories per gram:

Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4

Alfalfa Sprouts

Each sprout variety differs in shape, taste, and texture. While not all are available at your local supermarket, try going to a farmer's market to find other varieties.

Bean Sprouts

Are commonly associated with the Mung beans, they have small light yellow leaves and a silvery white shoot. These sprouts produce a subtle nutty flavor and lots of crunch when added to stir-fries, soups, and salads.

Green-Leaf Sprouts

Are typically germinated vegetable and grain seeds and are recognized by two tiny green leaves at the tip of a slender 1/2-inch to 3-inch shoot. These sprouts are often used in salads and sandwiches.

Alfalfa Sprouts

Are one of the most common sprouts on the market. Their threadlike shoots, with green tops provide a subtle nutty flavor. A great addition to salads and sandwiches.

Radish Sprouts

Are known as the "hot," sprouts that evokes the zippy taste of radishes.

Sunflower Sprouts

Are from sunflower seeds, similar to alfalfa sprouts, with a mild, sweet flavor, adding crunch to any dish.

Pumpkin Sprouts

Are hulled seeds that produce a sprout that can be eaten raw or lightly toasted. Excellent when added to salads, soups and bread.

Wheat Sprouts

Cook quickly and are often used in recipes requesting for whole grains.

Lentil Sprouts

Are not as 'spicy' as the Radish sprout, but lentil sprouts do have a peppery flavor. They are often used in soups, stews and casseroles.

Selection and storage

Sprouts are fresh when their roots are moist, white, and the sprout itself is crisp. Avoid musty-smelling, dark, or slimy-looking sprouts.

Sprouts are highly perishable and should be eaten as soon as possible, but there are some ways to extend their shelf life. Most sprouts can be kept in a plastic bag in the crisper of the refrigerator for up to 3 days. Delicate sprouts like alfalfa should be refrigerated in the original ventilated plastic container. Rinsing daily under cold water may extend their life. Lastly, Mung bean sprouts can be frozen if for future cooking.

Sprouts and food safety

In recent times sprouts have been under much scrutiny because of their association with outbreaks of Salmonella and E.coli O157:H7. It is therefore recommended that high risk people such as children, the elderly, and people with weak immune systems avoid eating sprouts.

Sprouts are still an excellent way to increase your vegetable intake. Just take some precautions when choosing to eat your sprouts:

- Buy only fresh looking sprouts from a reputable store
- Keep sprouts refrigerated and use promptly
- Wash the sprouts thoroughly with water to remove any dirt

For more information on sprouts and food safety please visit:

<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5101a3.htm>

<http://www.cce.cornell.edu/food/fsarchives/010202/rawsprouts.html>

<http://www.ext.colostate.edu/pubs/columnnn/n020506.html>

Make Sprouts Part of Your 5 to 9 A Day Plan



- Hardier sprouts like Mung bean and lentil sprouts tolerate heat and are often used in stir-fry dishes, soups, and stews
- Fresh sprouts make a great addition to salads, sandwiches, wraps, and as a garnish
- Add a variety of different sprouts to your favorite coleslaw
- Try Mung bean or lentil sprouts in your potato salad for a different texture
- Include cabbage, Mung bean, or lentil sprouts in all your vegetable and fruit smoothies or blended juices for a tasty treat
- Sprouts like Mung bean and radish, are an excellent addition when mixed with soft cheeses for a delicious dip
- Looking for a new sandwich spreads? Try pureeing lentil or radish sprouts with a teaspoon of fat free cream cheese
- Liven up your omelet or scrambled eggs with alfalfa, clover, or radish sprouts
- Many rice dishes taste great with a combination of fenugreek, lentil, or Mung bean sprouts
- Serve sprouts as side dishes! Try sautéing your favorite sprouts with onions, adding sprouts to baked beans, or pureeing sprouts with your favorite peas or beans

Recipes

Sprout Curry

Makes 6 servings

Each serving equals one 5 A Day serving

Source: Produce for Better Health /International Sprout Growers Assoc.

1 tsp olive oil

1 large onion, finely chopped

1 Tbsp fresh Thyme

1 Tbsp fresh Basil

1 Tbsp curry powder

2 Tbsp water

4 cups total assorted sprouts: adzuki, Mung bean, lentil, pea, lima bean, garbanzo bean, plus a tiny bit of radish sprouts for zip

Heat oil in a deep pot and sauté onion with seasonings. Add 2 Tbsp of water and stir in sprouts. Turn heat up to high and cook for 5 minutes. Serve alongside grilled chicken and rice or add to your favorite sandwich.

Nutritional analysis per serving: Calories 85, Protein 6g, Fat 1g, Percent Calories From Fat 13%, Cholesterol 0mg, Carbohydrates 16g, Fiber 3g, Sodium 10mg

Sprout Salad Pocket

Makes 4 servings

Each serving equals one 5 A Day serving

Source: Produce for Better Health/International Sprout Growers Association

4 medium pocket breads

8 tsp fat-free mayonnaise

1 cucumber, thinly sliced

1 medium tomato, sliced

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup alfalfa sprouts

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup radish sprouts

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup lentil sprouts

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup pea sprouts

Spread both insides of halved pocket bread with mayonnaise. Arrange layers of vegetables on both sides and stuff the middle with mixed sprouts.

Nutritional analysis per serving: Calories 209, Protein 7g, Fat 2g, Percent Calories From Fat 8%, Cholesterol 1mg, Carbohydrates 42g, Fiber 4g, Sodium 380mg

Eat-it-all Beach Salad

Makes 1 serving

Each serving equals one 5 A Day serving

Source: Produce for Better Health/International Sprout Growers Association

- 1 green pepper
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sprouts
- 1 small tomato
- 2 Tbsp non-fat lemon yogurt
- 1 tsp wheat germ
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup cucumber, diced
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup small summer squash, diced



Slice top off pepper and save top. Clean out membrane and seeds from inside. Combine sprouts, tomato, cucumber and summer squash. Mix wheat germ with yogurt and toss with salad mixture. Pack into green pepper. Replace top and chill.

Nutritional analysis per serving: Calories 128, Protein 7g, Fat 1g, Percent Calories From Fat 8%, Cholesterol 0mg, Carbohydrates 27g, Fiber 1g, Sodium 43mg

Sprouts and Spinach Salad

Makes 4 servings

Each serving equals one 5 A Day serving

Source: International Sprout Growers Association



- 1 cup Buckwheat sprouts
- 1 cup Alfalfa sprouts
- 2 cups of spinach, washed and torn in bite size pieces
- $\frac{1}{2}$ small red onion, thinly sliced
- 1 cup of sliced fresh mushrooms
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of croutons
- 4 Tbsp lemon juice, fresh

Toss together and serve with lemon juice.

Nutritional analysis per serving: Calories 184, Protein 11g, Fat 6g, Percent Calories From Fat 29%, Cholesterol 0mg, Carbohydrates 25g, Fiber 2g, Sodium 347mg

Asian Cole Slaw

Makes 8 servings

Each serving equals one 5 A Day serving

Source: Frieda's, Inc.

3 cups Napa Cabbage, sliced
1½ cups carrot, shredded
1 cup fresh bean sprouts, cut up
Half of 15-oz. can bamboo shoots, drained
2 tbsp sesame oil or salad oil
1 tbsp sesame seeds
1 tsp sugar
1/8 tsp salt
1/8 tsp pepper

In a large bowl, toss together Napa cabbage, shredded carrot, bean sprouts, and bamboo shoots till well mixed.

For dressing, in a shaker jar, combine remaining ingredients. Shake well; pour over salad, and toss well.

Note: For a delicious Chinese Chicken Salad, add 3 cups cooked, shredded chicken breast to salad.

Nutritional analysis per serving: Calories 148, Protein 22g, Fat 4g, Percent Calories From Fat 25%, Cholesterol 49mg, Carbohydrates 5g, Fiber 1g, Sodium 99mg

Sprout Omelet

Makes 2 servings

Each serving equals one 5 A Day serving

Source: International Sprout Growers Association

1 cup Mung bean sprouts

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup bell pepper, diced

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup green onion, diced

$\frac{2}{3}$ cup mushrooms, sliced

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup water chestnuts, diced

1 cup egg substitute

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup skim milk

2 tsp vegetable oil

In an omelet pan, sauté vegetables and bean sprouts in oil for 3 - 5 minutes. Remove vegetables and place on a warm plate. Whip together the egg substitute milk. Pour egg mixture into the omelet pan and cook on both sides. Place vegetables in center and fold omelet over.

If using Alfalfa sprouts, sauté the vegetable 1 to 3 minutes before adding the alfalfa sprouts so that they cook for only 2 minutes. Cooking alfalfa sprouts changes their taste in an interesting way.

Nutritional analysis per serving: Calories 166, Protein 16g, Fat 5g, Percent Calories From Fat 26%, Cholesterol 0mg, Carbohydrates 16g, Fiber 3g, Sodium 277mg