



Have You Heard?

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The Art of Salad Making
Salads have never been more popular than they are today. This is because people are more health and diet conscious. Not only are salads nutritious and tasty, they are economical and easy to prepare.

One of the best things about salads is that you do not have to be a culinary genius to build a really good salad. For that matter, you do not even have to follow a recipe if you have a little imagination and a flair for what things taste delicious together.

With so many greens available at most supermarkets, there is an opportunity to mix new tastes and textures. Leafy greens are rich in vitamin A.

Iceberg lettuce is the most common green salad ingredient, but chickory, spinach, endive, watercress and romaine all can add variety, and new tastes to ordinary salads. When choosing lettuce, choose a light, loose head; it will be sweeter and richer in vitamin A than a heavy, packed one. Also, regardless of what type of greens you use, tear the leaves rather than cut them. Cut greens lose moisture and will wilt quicker. And, the moisture lost from greens will dilute your dressing.

Even though tomatoes cannot be beat as a colorful and nutritious ingredient, think beyond tomatoes to zucchini, carrots, mushrooms, radishes, cauliflower, broccoli,

onions, bean sprouts, and almost any other vegetable which is available. Vegetables not only change the flavor of a salad, they can make a standard salad into a main part of the meal.

Fresh or canned fruits make delicious additions to salads. Fruits add color, crispness and a tartness as well as vitamins and minerals.

The most common use of fruits is in a simple mixed fruit salad, which is a nice accompaniment to light meals. Another approach to using fruits in salads is to use the fruit itself as the container for a salad; a melon or pineapple for chicken or tuna salad.

Because you can prepare a small amount, fruit salads give you the flexibility to experiment with lots of different combinations of fruits with different meats or vegetables. As you consider which fruits go with which vegetables or meats, do not discard novel mixtures. For example, strawberries work well in combination with a chicken salad and mandarin oranges with a spinach salad.

Meats, poultry and seafood are good main ingredients for salads. Combined with rice, potatoes or pasta, they can be utilized in a salad after you have served the meat as a main course the day before.

The best way to top off any salad is to use a salad dressing that

brings out and compliments the flavors of your salad. Be careful not to use an oil that will mask the flavor of your other ingredients. You can use a specialty oil like walnut, olive or sesame to impart a desired flavor; but be sure it is the flavor that you want.

If you use a specialty oil to obtain a special flavor, consider mixing that oil with a bland-tasting oil. Your salad will still have the flavor from the specialty oil, but you will be able to "stretch" the more expensive specialty oil.

If you add lemon juice to the salad dressing, make sure it is freshly squeezed. Vinegar is often used instead of lemon juice and here you have several different types to choose from. Use the one that suits your taste. The standard ration of vinegar to oil is one to three. But, if you are using a strong vinegar, you may want to use less vinegar and more oil. It is a good idea to add a few drops of oil to your greens before you add the salad dressing. This will coat the leaves and help the greens maintain their crispness.

Lemon-Honey Dressing

- 1/4 cup oil
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 1/2 cup fresh lemon juice
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon dry mustard
- 2 teaspoons minced green onion

Combine all ingredients in a pint jar with a tight fitting lid. Shake until well mixed. If the honey is at room temperature it will dissolve faster. Makes one cup dressing.

Raspberry-Yogurt Dressing

- 1/4 cup red-raspberry jelly or jam, seedless preferred
- 1/4 cup burgundy wine or red-wine vinegar
- 1 cup red raspberry yogurt
- 1 cup mayonnaise

In small bowl, combine jelly and wine. Stir to dissolve jelly. Add yogurt and mayonnaise. Stir to blend. Makes 2 cups dressing.

Plant Business Blooms In Delaware

NEWARK, DE — Horticultural and landscape sales and services generate nearly \$93 million a year in Delaware, making the nursery industry third or fourth in the generation of state agricultural income.

Nationally, with an average 9 percent annual jump in cash receipts, the nursery industry is the fastest growing segment of agriculture, according to U.S. Department of Agriculture figures. Greenhouse operations, nurseries, turfgrass farms, garden centers, landscape design firms, installation and maintenance services, golf courses and florist shops are among the many enterprises that make up this segment of agriculture.

What's driving its phenomenal growth?

Two of the biggest factors in Delaware, according to Susan Barton, University of Delaware Cooperative Extension ornamental horticulture specialist, are the increased number of homes being built and the recent influx of large corporations into the state.

"As people buy more expensive homes and land costs rise, they're willing to spend more money improving their investment," Barton explains. "A well-landscaped property will add 15 percent to the value of a house. Compared to other home improvements, you can realize a bigger return from

landscaping than many other investments."

Similarly, creating an attractive landscape around an office building is good for business.

"The strong push for environmental landscaping also appears to be driving the current demand for horticultural crops," Barton says.

In some communities, for example, mowing ordinances have been changed to permit the establishment of wildflower meadows. And developers are sometimes required to install landscape buffers between new construction and established properties.

Public horticultural improvements such as landscaped traffic islands and highway barrier strips also have generated greater interest in the landscape.

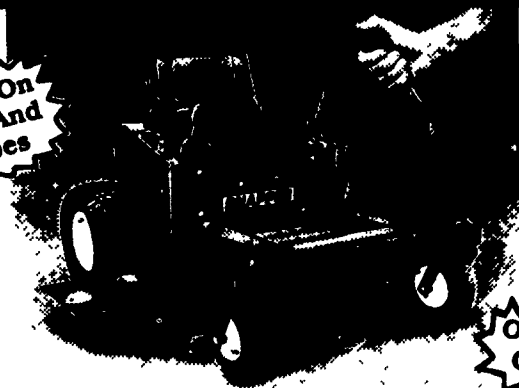
"The growth rate of Delaware's nursery industry is absolutely amazing," Barton says. "In a time of downturned economy, this industry has kept on growing, and opportunities continue to exist within the state for further growth, given the public interest in the environment, integrated pest management and landscape maintenance.

"Delaware is an excellent place to be in horticulture," Barton concludes. "We have a very educated gardening public. And the more they know about a product, the more likely they are to buy it."



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