



FOR LEAF LOVERS

Lettuce

Lettuce is often inexpensive and easy to find.

There are many options for lettuce grown in Florida. The most popular varieties include escarole, endive, romaine, curly parsley and Chinese cabbage. Eating plenty of fruits and vegetables may help reduce the risk of many diseases, including heart disease, high blood pressure and some cancers.

Did you know?

- The darker the lettuce leaves are, the higher the nutrient content is.
- The spine and ribs of lettuce provide dietary fiber, while vitamins and minerals are located in the leaf portion.
- One cup of shredded romaine lettuce has less than ten calories!
- The months with the highest production of Florida lettuces are January and February.

Shopping, Preparing and Storing

- Keep unwashed lettuces in a perforated plastic bag in the refrigerator crisper for up to three days.
- When making salads ahead of time, put a damp paper towel over the salad to help keep it fresh.
- Always wash lettuce before eating to avoid consuming any contaminants.

Cooking Tips

- Lettuce flavors well with vinaigrette, pecans, cheese, citrus, thyme, basil, dill and sage.
- A salad spinner is a great tool to keep rinsed lettuce from becoming soggy.
- Wait until the last minute to add dressing or vinaigrette to salads.

FLORIDA TOMATO, LETTUCE AND AVOCADO SANDWICHES

- 1 large tomato, sliced
- 1 avocado, peeled and sliced
- 4 slices Swiss cheese
- 4 large lettuce leaves
- 2 tablespoons low-fat mayonnaise
- 8 slices whole-grain bread, toasted

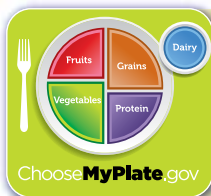


1. Spread a thin layer of mayonnaise on the eight slices of bread.
2. Layer four of the slices with one lettuce leaf, one slice of tomato, one slice of avocado and one slice of cheese. Top with the remaining bread slices.
3. Cut sandwiches in half diagonally. Serve.



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Lettuce is grown throughout Florida and is available in November through May.



FRUITS

Make most of your choices whole or cut fruit instead of juice.

VEGETABLES

Eat a variety every day. Fresh, canned or frozen.

GRAINS

Make at least half of your grains whole grains.

DAIRY

For adults and children 2 years and older, drink 1 percent low-fat or fat-free milk.

PROTEIN

Choose lean meat, poultry without the skin, seafood, beans and peas, eggs, processed soy or nuts.