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## Lettuce

**Dr. Leigh Whittinghill**, Assistant Professor of Urban Agriculture

### Planting

- Lettuces should be grown in the spring starting April 1, March 25, or March 15 or in the fall until July 1, July 15, and Aug 1 in Eastern, Central, and Western Kentucky for head lettuce. Leaf lettuce can be grown a little later in the fall.
- Lettuce can be planted in a shadier part of the garden or in the shadow of taller plants. This can actually help prevent bolting, which affects flavor, during the warmest parts of the growing season.
- Plant seeds at a depth of  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch. The use of a seed spoon or dial seed sower will help ensure one seed per hole.
- If planting seeds to start transplants, plant seeds 5 to 7 weeks before planting date.
- Final plant spacing should be 12-18 inches for head lettuce and  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch apart for leaf lettuce.
- Hotbeds, cold frames, or hoop houses can be used to grow during the winter.
- If planting in a container it should be 8 inches deep. With adequate light, container lettuce can be grown indoors year round.
- Stagger planting, or use succession planting, to ensure a harvest throughout the year.



### Care and Harvest

- Head lettuce is ready for harvest about 45-60 days after planting. Leaf lettuce mixes may be ready for harvest about 30 days after planting.
- Harvesting the largest plants first, or every other plant in a row, can increase the harvest from remaining plants



- Many leaf lettuce varieties can be cut and allowed to regrow for up to 4 harvests. Plants will regenerate in about two weeks.
- Lettuce can be harvested using a sharp, serrated knife, like a steak knife.

## Storage and Use

- Lettuce should not be washed before storage. Harvest when dry, store, and wash before use.
- Store in a refrigerator crisper drawer, for about 2 weeks if it is a crisphead variety or for up to 4 weeks for bib and leaf lettuces.
- Head lettuce varieties are great for sandwiches, burgers, wraps and more.
- Leaf lettuce varieties are great for salads.
- Lettuce varieties come in many colors and different flavors. Experiment with varieties and mixes to add new flavors to your salads, sandwiches and more.

## References

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