

How to grow Lettuce

Lettuce is a cool weather vegetable.

- Lettuce, of course, needs sun to grow, but light midday shade can extend the harvest season. When it gets too warm, it will cause your lettuce to "bolt" (mature and form flowers and seeds). You can plant it so that a taller plant can shade it in the hottest part of the day.
- Prepare the garden bed by using a garden fork or tiller to loosen the soil to a depth of 12 to 15 inches, then mix in a 2- to 4-inch layer of compost or well-aged manure.
- Set out transplants spaced according to the individual plant instructions
- Mulch plants in early summer with a 1-2 inch layer of straw, dried grass, or pine needles will help to keep the soil cool, control weeds, and keep the soil moist during dry weather.
- Water plants during the summer if rainfall is less than 1 inch per week. Better yet, use drip irrigation or a soaker hose to maintain even moisture
- Harvesting- If you have limited number of leaf lettuce plants, pull the outer leaves for use, leaving the plant to continue producing leaves. This way, leaf lettuce can be harvested over a long period of time.

Insects and diseases are rare in home lettuce plantings. However, watch for leafminers, whiteflies, and slugs.

This growing guide is provided by the WSU Extension Master Gardeners of Cowlitz County.

Please call our FREE Plant and Insect Clinic 360-577-3014 Ext. 8 to help you with any questions you may have with your garden. You may also submit questions and images on our website: cowlitzcomg.com/plant-and-insect-clinic

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