

In this modern world, most people have little to no access to real gardens and even if one did, who has the time? Or the green thumb? Well, sprouts are one answer to that problem!

Reasons for Sprouting

Cost Effective—One tablespoon of seeds will fill a quart jar with several ounces of sprouts; a 4-ounce package will yield several pounds.

Toxin-free—If you start with organic seeds or grains, sprouts are as pure as Nature intended food to be.

Simple & Quick—Just 3 to 7 days to a bountiful, nutrition-packed harvest; when properly stored in your refrigerator, they will stay fresh for days- even weeks if rinsed properly; they will grow nearly anywhere indoors, in any season; they require very little space and travel well; and they are the ideal vegetables for campers, boaters and RV'ers.

Tasty—Fresh flavor can be enjoyed numerous ways from salads to sandwiches, stir-fried or steamed, or even baked into breads.

High Nutrition—All sprouts are “pre-digested”, rich in vitamins, minerals, trace elements, enzymes, phytonutrients and fiber which many believe rival various algae in value; when exposed to light, several also become rich in chlorophyll; and all sprouting neutralizes *phytates* and allow full absorption of minerals.

Low Calories—One cup of alfalfa sprouts contains only 16 calories of quick energy while supplying several essential fatty acids as the seed oils change.

Detoxification Aid—Chlorophyll helps cleanse and oxygenate the blood; enzymes aid in the digestion and assimilation of nutrients, and contribute to the body's life force; and fiber aids elimination.

Types & Uses of Sprouts

We all know we can use virtually any sprouts raw in salads or in roll-ups for the most nutrition or tossed into a stir-fry, but here are some other ideas from the International Sprout Growers Association (ISGA):

Alfalfa - significant dietary source of *phytoestrogens* connected with prevention of menopausal symptoms, osteoporosis, cancer & heart disease.

Use: eggs, fruit salads

Broccoli—especially high in *sulforaphane*, a tumor inhibitor and also helpful in cardiovascular disease; they have a mildly peppery flavor. Use: juiced salads

Clover—most significant dietary source of *isoflavones*, powerful anti-tumor compounds, of any sprouts, plus helpful for menopausal symptoms.

Use: eggs, fruit salads, slaws, smoothies

Lentil—slightly peppery flavor, they contain 26% protein. Use: grind into spreads/dips, juiced salads, potato salad, replaces chopped celery, rice dishes, soups/stews

Mung bean—good source of protein & Vit C. Use: especially great in Asian stir-fry

Radish—very high in Vitamins A & C plus calcium. Use: too delicate to cook but great to spice up spreads/dips.

Sunflower— a crisp, nutty taste that is a rich source of lecithin & Vit D. Use: juiced salads, rice dishes

Other popular seeds to sprout include adzuki bean seeds, almond, amaranth, barley, buckwheat, cabbage, chia, cress, fenugreek, millet, mustard, oats, pumpkin, quinoa, rye, sesame, triticale and wheat; this latter is used frequently as a raw, juiced grass to inhibit cancer.

How to Sprout

Begin with hulled seeds (I am using this generic term for all sprout-able seeds, legumes, and grain) and soak overnight in water. Then drain off any loose inner hulls which can rot and put the soaked seed in the sprouting environment - jars, cloth, or commercial sprouter - for about 1 day. If you use a jar, make sure it has a plastic screened lid and prop it up at a 45° angle. Seed, especially the very small ones, can also be placed between damp cotton washcloths, on flat-bottomed bowls or saucers; be aware that most paper towels are chlorine bleached. Commercial sprouters tend to be quite inexpensive and contain full directions which are basically:

- 1) Rinse often.
- 2) Keep them moist, not wet.

- 3) Keep them at room temperature.
- 4) Give them plenty of room to breathe.
- 5) Don't put too many in any one container.
- 6) Keep them covered - no light.

Tray Greens

Sprouts are excellent, but for highest nutrient/life force content (including Vit D), plant sprouts in soil in natural sunlight or full spectrum grow lights to grow into greens to snip for salads (even in lieu of lettuces) or juice. You can use cafeteria trays, non-aluminum baking trays, or the plastic trays used by plant nurseries for growing seedlings. For soil, most people use commercial soil or soil/peat mixes. But for optimal nutrition add some **HumiZyme** to the soil or even some **Izmine** from your opened capsules or horse stock.

To actually grow greens, keep your chosen seeds (sunflower seeds, wheat, and mixed greens are some big favorites although you can use any) in the sprouting environment for 2 days, or until the roots just start to emerge from the hulls. Then transfer the seeds to a soil-filled flat, spreading them evenly on top of soil; do not cover with soil. Water the flat, cover with an empty flat, leave for 2 days, then uncover seedlings and expose to sunlight or grow-lights. Water daily; the greens will generally be ready in 4 more days.

To harvest, “mow” the greens in the tray with scissors when the grasses or lettuces are about 3-4” tall; sunflower seeds need to be harvested before the 2nd set of leaves emerges, as they get very bitter and unpalatable after that.

Sprouted Breads

While wheat breads are thought of as a staple, most such breads have been proven undigestible as witnessed by the increasing incidence of Leaky Gut Syndrome. The traditional way of making breads and utilizing grains was to soak and sprout making the grain available and nutritious. Sprouting organic red winter wheat berries for 3 days (or until sprout is as long as its original berry form) quadruples its Vitamin B-12 content to around 54 milligrams per 100 grams (versus just 1 milligram in white bread); other B vitamins have increased 3 to 12 times; Vitamin E content has tripled; minerals are freed up for easy assimilation since the *phytates* are neutralized; plentiful enzymes have converted starches (including the allergen gluten) to sugars,

proteins to amino acids, and fats into essential fatty acids; and sprouted wheat contains 3 to 4 times more fiber than stone-ground whole wheat.

The following recipe produces bread that is denser, chewier, sweeter and tastier than standard breads:

- 1) Allow 2 cups red wheat sprouts to drain and dry for 3 to 6 hours before grinding (some juicers/ blenders will perform this function); wet sprouts will not grind well and will create too much moisture in the dough. The grinding should produce a smooth paste; lumpy, coarse or chunky dough should be ground a second time.
- 2) Sprinkle with just a bit of NTM Salt and knead the dough with clean, oiled hands folding it in on itself a few times, or simply shape loaves by forming balls of dough about three inches in diameter; the 2 cups of original wheat berries should produce from 2 to 4 loaves.
- 3) Place balls on a flat baking tray such as a cookie sheet dusted with sesame seeds to prevent sticking, and flatten each ball 1.5” high and 4-5” diameter
- 4) Feel free to add whatever dates, raisins, chopped nutmeats, coconut, cinnamon, vanilla, herbs, or even other sprouts for further variety.
- 5) Bake on the center rack of a pre-heated 250 oven for 2.5– 3.5 hours; this will preserve most of the nutrients from heat. Lift the bread from the tray with a spatula about mid-way through to prevent sticking.
- 6) The bread is ready when the top of each loaf is firm to the touch but not hard; loaves should still be moist like brownies when removed from the oven.

Some people prefer to make chapattis by rolling or “slapping” the dough into very thin flat rounds and cooking quickly in a very hot iron skillet (in lieu of a hot stone or mud oven sides!) or more slowly on a grate over a smoky fire—perfect for camping!

F or those who can digest sprouts, it is a good idea to accustom oneself to their “green” flavor. They can make an incredible difference in overall nutrition while they add new tastes to old recipes. Many people have even cured themselves of deadly diseases by pumping up their sprout use; juiced wheat grass has long been used in cases of cancer. So grab your sprouter and seeds of choice and get sprouting! ■