



# Salad tips

## 1 KEEPING SALAD FRESH

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Growers work hard to harvest and pack leafy salads as quickly as possible to maintain their freshness. Here are some tips on how to keep salad crisp and fresh at home.

## 2 GENTLY DOES IT

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Lettuce leaves bruise easily, so from the time you select them from the shelf, to when you come to store and prepare them, treat them gently. Try not to squash them in the trolley or the fridge. Some experts even suggest tearing salad leaves rather than cutting them with a knife.

## 3 TO WASH OR NOT TO WASH?

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Most ready-prepared salads have been thoroughly and carefully washed before they are packed, so there is no need to wash them - just open the bag and serve – always check the packaging though.

Wholehead lettuces like iceberg and romaine can be rinsed in cold water before eating. Bagged salads that are sold unwashed can also be gently rinsed. For the best results only wash salad leaves just before you use them and either use a salad spinner, or gently pat dry using kitchen roll or a clean tea-towel.

## 4 LOOKING AFTER LETTUCE

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To make the most of wholehead lettuce, cut the wholehead in half and using a small knife cut a V in the core so you waste as little of the edible leaves as possible.

Fresh lettuce will keep in the salad drawer of your fridge for several days. To help keep it as fresh as possible keep either whole or cut heads of lettuces like romaine, cos and iceberg wrapped in clingfilm or in an airtight polythene bag or container.

If you have used part of a ready prepared bag, simply secure the top of the bag to help prevent air getting in with a clip or clothes peg. If the lettuce does discolour where the surface has been cut, then it doesn't mean it is not edible. If it is still within its use by date simply trim off the discoloured areas and enjoy.

Avoid storing lettuce with fruit that produce the natural ripening agent ethylene, such as apples, pears and bananas as this can reduce the storage time of the lettuce.

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## 5 DRESSING

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Last is best - you can prepare your leafy salad leaves and your dressing ahead of time but for the best results don't add the dressing until the last minute – then just lightly toss the leaves in the dressing and serve.

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