

## Extension

### May 2015 Newsletter

For back issues visit the  
Family Matters Web site  
At [www.ext.colostate.edu/  
Pubs/fammatrs/fmmenu.  
html](http://www.ext.colostate.edu/Pubs/fammatrs/fmmenu.html)

For more information  
contact  
the CSU Extension office  
nearest you, or visit our  
Web site at:  
**[www.ext.colostate.edu](http://www.ext.colostate.edu)**

Articles in Family Matters  
are copyrighted, but may  
be reproduced in full  
without modification if  
credit is given to Family  
Matters, Family and  
Consumer Sciences,  
Colorado State University  
Extension  
For all other requests  
contact the author.

Extension programs are  
available to all without  
discrimination.  
Colorado State University,  
U.S. Department of  
Agriculture and Colorado  
counties cooperating.

### Growing Your Own Salad

*Glenda Wentworth, Family & Consumer Science Extension Agent, Eagle County*

Growing your own salad greens can provide a source of fresh, flavorful leafy vegetables. Salad greens are generally easy to grow, and include a variety of leaf lettuce, Swiss chard, spinach, and kale.

You may live in an apartment or small residence where a traditional garden may not be possible. Consider a container garden. Container gardens are suitable for vegetables and herbs and are ideal for small spaces.

Container gardening is perfect for beginner gardeners. They are portable and can be placed around a balcony, deck or patio. Look around your home, just about any container can be used. However, make sure the container has never held chemicals or toxic materials. In addition, the container should not be glazed on the inside of the pot as it often contains lead. The size of the container will depend on the plants. A good size for a container should be at least 18 inches across and 6 – 12 inches deep. For plants like tomatoes consider a bigger container.

Container gardening requires more frequent watering because the plants can dry out quickly. The potting soil should be a good quality mixture, formulated for the climate you live in. A local greenhouse or garden center can help you choose an appropriate potting soil and fertilizer. Apply fertilizer in half-strength when the plants are about 4 inches tall.

Growing your own salad greens can be very satisfying. Salad greens, especially the deep colorful greens are an excellent source of nutrients, such as vitamin A, vitamin C, and fiber. Salad greens can be grown from seeds, as they grow quickly. They also can be planted much closer together than other vegetables. A few hours before planting seeds, moisten the potting soil, but don't soak it through. Spread the seeds apart about ½ inch, and then sprinkle about ¼ inch of potting soil on top of them. It is a good idea to keep the soil moist but not saturated. You might have to water your container garden daily.

Harvesting can begin in just a few weeks. Cut only what you need and leave the other plants to grow. After the greens reach a height of 4 – 6 inches, use a pair of scissors to cut the plants, leaving about an inch to resume growth. After a few cuttings, the lettuce may start to get tall or elongated. This is a sign the plant is bolting. When this happens, the lettuce tends to be bitter, so it is best to remove any plants that bolt.

After you pick the salad greens, refrigerate them at 35°F to 40°F. Wash thoroughly under running water right before using them.

Reference: Bunning, M., Stonaker, F., and Card A. (March 2010). Growing Container Salad Greens. *Colorado State University Extension*, Fact Sheet No. 9.378.



## Let's Talk – Why Garden?

Gardening may increase children's interest in fruits and vegetables. Giving children the opportunity to grow their own little garden can help foster healthy habits. They learn about where their food comes from and how to build a healthy plate at mealtime. When kids grow and prepare vegetables, they are also more likely to taste them. Gardening can be a great way for your family to enjoy the outdoors and be physically active, while growing vegetables and fresh herbs.

### What Do You Think?

Please click on the link below to take a short survey of the Family Matters Newsletter.

**<http://studentvoice.com/colostate/familymattersnewsletteren2015>**

If you receive a printed copy of this newsletter, a printed copy of the evaluation should be attached. If not, please call Sheila Gains at 303-730-1920 to request a return postage paid printed copy of the evaluation. Thank you!

## Recipe for Health: Easy Greek Salad

### Ingredients

- 6 romaine lettuces leaves (torn into 1 1/2 inch pieces)
- 1 cucumber (medium, peeled and sliced)
- 1 tomato (medium, chopped)
- 1/2 cup red onion (sliced)
- 1/3 cup feta cheese (crumbled)
- 2 tablespoons olive oil (extra-virgin)
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon oregano (dried)

### Instructions

1. Combine lettuce, cucumber, tomato, onion and cheese in large serving bowl. Whisk together oil, lemon juice, and oregano in small bowl.
2. Pour dressing over lettuce mixture; toss until coated. Serve immediately.

Makes: 6 servings

Total Cost: \$2.61

Serving Cost: \$0.43



<http://www.whatscooking.fns.usda.gov/recipes/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap/easy-greek-salad>

*Helping families increase physical activity and enjoy healthy foods...*