

# Spring Series: Growing Lettuce

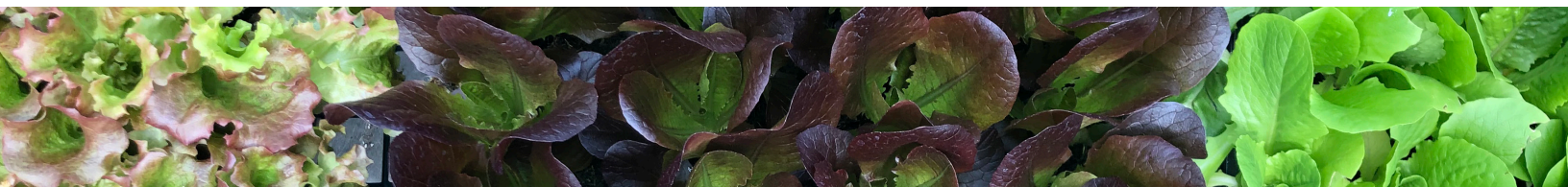
Ever wanted to grow your own food? Don't know where to start? Growing lettuce is the perfect introduction for growing your own produce. There is a huge variety of lettuces and each one can be a great addition to your dinner plate.

## Wondering how to get lettuce started? There are three things you need:

1. Sow near the soil surface. Or, better yet, buy lettuces from The Farm at Green Village that have already been started and get them going in your at home pots.
2. Make sure your soil is ideally between 60-70° F, but not above 80°F. Sowing in the Spring is the perfect time as the sun is warming, but the air temperature keeps the soil from overheating.
3. Grow under some afternoon shade. Letting your lettuce sit in the summer sun will cause it to go bitter, keep it tasty by keeping it in the shade.

## General Sowing Tips:

- Sow Outside - 2-4 weeks before average last frost (soil must be at least 40°F)
- Start Inside - 4-6 weeks before average last frost date, or alternatively start inside if summer has already started
- If it's already summer, start indoors and outdoors use a shade cloth to cool soil



## **Know your lettuces! There are five primary types:**

- Butterhead - aka Boston or Bibb Lettuce, is soft with light textured leaves
- Crisphead - aka Iceberg or Head Lettuce, leaves are crisp and form a tight head
- Leaf - Leaves can be green, red, or a mixture of both, heads are open rather than tight
- Romaine - An upright, medium to dark green, red, or mixture of both, with a very crisp heart
- Summer Crisp - aka Batavia or French Crisp, crisp and sweet, open, loose leaves that develop into a denser bunch or a head

## **Final Tips**

Now that you have figured out where to start or plant your lettuce and what variety you want to plant, now is the time to decide how many you are going to plant. How much lettuce would you go through in a week? When sowing lettuce, sow 3 times the amount that you think you will go through in a week. That way when you have a craving for your homegrown lettuce you always have some on hand!