



Because Life Should Be Beautiful™

Cauliflower

In Mark Twain's words "Cauliflower is nothing but cabbage with a college education." The name of this elegant member of the cabbage family comes from the latin cualis (stalk) and floris (flower).

Some varieties may be grown as both fall and spring crops and can produce good heads within 2 months after planting a transplant starting.

Avoid any conditions that may suppress plant growth. Adequate moisture is essential. Good vegetable growth is important for subsequent growth of the cauliflower head. Interference with rapid uniform growth may cause premature development of the head. Such heads are smaller than usual. Cauliflower is the cole crop most sensitive to temperature. Stresses such as cold air or temperatures in the spring, lack of fertility, water stress, insect damage, disease, and using transplants with poor root growth of root bound before transplanting can result in buttoning. (Producing heads on very small plants)

As the heads enlarge, they may become exposed to the sun and discolor. Avoid this by folding the leaves over the heads or by taping the leaves together to protect the developing head from the sun.

Harvest when the heads are of good size usually 5 to 6 inches in diameter and still compact. As the heads become over mature, they tend to segment and spread apart and the surface becomes fuzzy. Refrigerate raw cauliflower, tightly wrapped for 3 - 5 days, cooked 1-3 days. To use, separate the cauliflower head into florets and wash when you are ready to use it.

Cauliflowers are excellent steamed, either whole or in florets. Place in a steamer or colander over a pan of boiling water, cover and steam until just tender and immediately remove from the heat. The florets can be fried in olive oil or butter for a few minutes to give a lightly browned finish.

When cooking a cauliflower whole, start testing it after ten minutes, it should feel tender but still have plenty of "bite" left in it. Cauliflower is a popular vegetable accompaniment, either served with just a little butter, olive oil, or tomato or cheese sauce. It is also good fried with onions and garlic together with a few tomatoes and capers.

Cauliflower is an excellent addition to salads or used for crudites. Either use it raw or blanch it in boiling water for 1 - 2 minutes, then refresh under cold running water. Small cauliflowers and broccoli romanescos are intended to be coked whole, and can be steamed or boiled, covered with a lid, in the minimum of water for 4 - 5 minutes until just tender.

High in vitamin C and fair source of iron.