

CHINESE CABBAGE 中國結球白菜

(HEADING TYPE)

93-1-1

(*Brassica pekinensis*)

(Other names: Celery Cabbage, Siew Choy, Pe-tsai, Beijing Cabbage, Napa, Michihli)

The Chinese cabbage has a large number of varieties with different sizes, leaf shapes, and color. Most of them are cool season crops. If grown in late spring or summer, they may bolt to seeds. Recently some heat resistant varieties or hybrids were released on the market. The Chinese cabbage forms a compact barrel shape with stalked, broadly ribbed leaves. The cabbage comes in two main shapes: long and narrow (12-18 inches in length), and short and stout (less than 12 inches long, more than 5 inches in diameter). Inner leaves are blanched and tender for vegetable use.



HOW TO GROW: Sow seeds thinly and evenly 2-3 feet apart in rows. In the spring time, they may also be started indoors 6 weeks before the last killing frost. Plant seeds at a depth of 1/2 inch. Cover seeds with fine soil or a mixture of garden soil and vermiculite (or peat moss or perlite). Seeds germinate in 3-6 days. When plants are 3 inches tall, thin seedlings to stand or transplant 1-2 feet apart depending upon the variety.

WHEN TO PLANT: Early or heat resistant varieties may be grown in early spring. For early spring planting it is recommended to start seeds indoors and transplant into the garden after the frost is over. The best way to grow fall crops is by sowing seeds in July or early August, about 3 months before the first expected fall frost. Be sure that the plants are ready for harvesting before a heavy frost. Light frost will not hurt them.

CARE AND HARVEST: Since Chinese cabbage is a long growing season crop, side dressing (fertilizing) every two weeks is desirable. Water them if necessary but reduce watering toward the end of the growing season to prevent soft rot disease. To ensure the development of a tight, blanched heart, tie the leaves together loosely with a string at the middle of the head about two months after planting. Harvest by cutting the plants at the base and removing the old outer leaves. The cabbage can be stored in an open cold environment, such as a garage, for two or three months. Do not store in plastic bags.

VARIETIES: There are many open-pollinated (non-hybrid) and F-1 hybrid varieties. Generally, the hybrids are better than the non-hybrids in disease resistance, size uniformity, large head, etc.

A. NON HYBRID:

1. Wong Bok (Napa): Popular variety in the U.S. Deep green leaves provide good head coverage. Head is oval in shape and approximately 10 inches tall, 6-7 inches in diameter, weighing 5-6 pounds. 65 days from transplanting to harvest
2. Michihli or Celery Cabbage: This is a typical American Chinese cabbage which is hardly found in China. The head is about 18 inches tall and 4 inches in diameter. It is crisp and solid but tender and delicious in salad or cooked. Store well for winter use. 70 days from transplanting to harvest.

B. HYBRID:

1. Tropical Pride: Extra early variety, somewhat heat resistant. Can be grown for spring if started indoors. Heads are oval-shaped, weighing 3-4 pounds. 60 days.

2. Winter Giant: Suitable for fall crop. Heads are about 12 inches long and weigh 1 pounds. May bolt in hot weather.
Other hybrid cabbage: Tip Top for spring planting, Early Top, early variety, Spring Triumph for spring planting.

USES: There are many ways to serve Chinese heading cabbage--raw, boiled, steamed, stir fried, or braised. Serve raw in a salad. The heart of the cabbage makes a delicious and unusual cole slaw. It may be steamed over low heat without additional water. It can also be shredded and tossed with ginger, soysauce, sesame oil and a few drops of rice wine. It makes an excellent dish by stir-frying it with pork, beef or shrimp. It may be pickled, producing a product similar to American sauerkraut.

RECIPES :

1. Chinese Cabbage Salad

Ingredients:

- | | | |
|------------|--|-----------------------|
| 1.5 lb | Chinese cabbage, washed and cut into shreds. | |
| 2 tblsp | Salt | |
| 2 tblsp | Corn oil (or other vegetable oil) | |
| 2 pieces | Bunching onion (scallion), chopped | |
| 2 slices | Ginger, minced | |
| seasoning: | 1 tsp | Red pepper, crushed |
| | 2 tsp | Sugar |
| | 2 tsp | Red vinegar |
| | 1 tsp | Sesame oil (optional) |
- } Mix Well

Procedure:

- Place cabbage in a bowl, sprinkle with salt and cover with water. Soak 1 hour, then rinse. Squeeze off excess water and arrange on a platter.
- Heat the oil in a frying pan until hot. Add bunching onion and ginger. Cook for 2 minutes. Then add mixture of seasoning.
- Pour over the cabbage; toss. Then serve.

2. Chinese Cabbage with Cream Sauce

Ingredients:

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| 1 lb | Chinese Cabbage, washed and cut in 2-2 1/2 inches crosswise, then slice in 1/2.inch wide strips. |
| 4 tblsp | Milk |
| 2 tsp | Salt |
| 1 tsp | Sugar |
| 1 tblsp | Cornstarch |
| 1.5 tblsp | Cold water. Mix to paste |
| 1 cup | Chicken Broth (or bouillon cubes) |
| 6 tblsp | Corn oil (or other vegetable oil) |

Procedure:

- Heat 4 tablespoons of corn oil in a frying pan until hot; add all cabbage and stir fry over high heat, about 3 minutes, until cabbage is soft. Then add 1 teaspoon of salt and sugar. Place in strainer and let cabbage drain.
- Heat frying pan and add 1 tablespoon corn oil with the chicken broth. Bring to a boil. Add 1 teaspoon salt and corn starch paste to thicken. Add milk and another tablespoon of oil. Remove half of this sauce and reserve. Add cabbage to remaining sauce, mix well.
- Lay the cabbage on a platter, then pour the reserve sauce on top.

Note: You may add 1/3 cup of shrimp, scallops, or ham cut in small pieces.