CHINESE CABBAGE

This relative of cabbage is sometimes known as celery cabbage, Wong Bok, or Bok Choi. It is an old oriental crop that is popular in oriental and stir-fry cooking.

Varieties

The heading types of Chinese cabbage form heads that may be blocky to elongated in shape, depending on the variety. Elongated types include Rocket and Michili. Medium-shaped heads include Jade Pagoda, while blocky short-headed types include China Pride, Early Hybrid G, and WR60. Non-heading types include Pak Choi varieties and are harvested for their white leaf stalks with bright green leaves.

When to plant

Chinese cabbage is difficult to plant in the spring because of a tendency for transplanted crops to bolt or go to seed. Select small stocky plants and set them in early to mid-April, or direct seed by planting in the garden at the same time. Fall is an excellent season for growing Chinese cabbage in Kansas. Direct seed in early to mid-July, or transplant in early August.

Spacing

Space plants 10-12 inches apart in rows 2-3 feet apart. If you are direct seeding, plant seeds about ½ inch deep.

Care

Like its cabbage family relatives, Chinese cabbage needs a starter fertilizer at transplanting and regular fertilizing every 2-3 weeks during the growing season. Critical periods when water is necessary are during head formation and enlargement.
Harvesting

Heads of Chinese cabbage will be looser than cabbage. Feel through the dense leaves for the head, and cut it when the head has a distinct shape. The tender inner leaves may be used as a salad green. Once seedstalks start to appear, all head development ceases; if bolting occurs, harvest and salvage what you can of the crop.

Common concerns

Cabbage Looper
Imported Cabbage Worm
Aphids

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