

Harvest of the Month



Network for a Healthy California

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Want to take your **Spinach Rice** up a notch with an international kick?

In some cuisines around the world, pureed spinach is added to coconut rice and seasoned with cumin, turmeric, and ginger. Try serving with a lamb curry or fried plantains.

7500 students in Western Nevada County will sample **Spinach** this November through Sierra Harvest's Farm to School Program!

Spinach



Farmers Kristen and William at FogDog Farm
Photo credit: Roseann Bath

Easy and delicious Spinach Rice

- 1 cup basmati or white rice
- 1 lb Spinach, roughly chopped
- Cooking oil of choice (butter, olive oil, coconut oil)
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 1 lemon, for juice and zest
- Herbs – dill or parsley
- Salt, pepper
- Optional: goat cheese or feta

Cook rice. In a separate pan, heat cooking oil and add chopped garlic. Sauté briefly and then add cooked rice. Roughly chop your fresh, local spinach. Add spinach to rice and stir until wilted. Remove from heat. Squeeze juice of one lemon over the pot of rice and spinach. Add zested lemon skin if desired. Salt and pepper to taste. Top with chopped dill or parsley, goat cheese or feta.

FogDog Farm is a 10 –acre organic farm in Placerville dedicated to creating a vibrant and resilient local foodshed. It was founded in 2016 by Kristen Draz and William Holland after many years of building their agricultural knowledge and skills on small farms. They believe that small farms are an essential part of the health of our community and that good food is a right for all. They work to grow nutrient-dense food year round using low-till, ecological growing practices. In addition to the spinach you're tasting today, they grow a wide variety of vegetables including garlic, salad mix, sweet corn, and cauliflower. Their delicious produce is available at BriarPatch Food Co-op and local restaurants including Three Forks Bakery and Brewery and Heartwood Eatery. Learn more at www.fogdogfarm.com



If your student is eligible for free/reduced school meals you likely qualify for CalFresh, which can help you afford healthy and nutritious food:

www.GetCalFresh.org



Spinach Fun Facts

- The spinach leaves are the most commonly eaten, but the stems are also edible!
- California is the leading producer of fresh market and processed spinach in the United States.
- Processed spinach accounts for about 74% of all spinach grown in California. It is used for canning and freezing, as well as for baby food
- Spinach was the first frozen vegetable to be sold for commercial use.
- When Popeye made his debut on January 17, 1929, spinach became the third most popular children's food after turkey and ice cream. Today, more than 94% of Americans associate spinach with Popeye.



Science and Nutrition

- The scientific name for spinach is *Spinacia S. oleracea*.
- Spinach is a member of the Amaranth family, which means its cousins also include beets, chard, and even quinoa!
- Spinach is an excellent source of vitamins A and K, and a good source of vitamin C and folate.

What is Vitamin K?

Vitamin K is a fat-soluble vitamin. The “K” is from the German word “koagulation.” Coagulation refers to the process of blood clot formation, which means it helps stop cuts and scrapes from bleeding too much and starts the healing process.

In addition, Vitamin K:

- helps build strong bones along with calcium
- helps your body make proteins for your blood, bones, and kidneys
- helps keep blood vessels healthy

History

- Spinach originated in Persia (now Iran) where it was known as aspanakh.
- It made its way to China in the 7th century when the king of Nepal sent it as a gift.
- Spinach arrived in Europe in the 11th century when it was brought to Spain by the Moors (Muslims). In fact, spinach was known as “the Spanish vegetable” in England.
- In the 16th century, spinach became the favorite vegetable of Catherine de Medici of the famous Medici family of the Italian Renaissance. When she left her home in Florence, to marry King Henry II of France, she brought along her own cooks to prepare spinach in the many different ways she liked. Since then, dishes prepared on a bed of spinach are referred to as à la Florentine.
- North Americans began growing spinach in the early 19th century.
- In the 20th century, spinach was popularized by the cartoon character, Popeye, who gained amazing strength whenever he ate a can of spinach.

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