

CALL IT CAULIFLOWER

GARDENING SEASON

July to September

CHOOSING TIPS

Select creamy-white, compact florets with bright green, fresh and firm leaves. Leaves that extend through the florets are okay.

Do not choose cauliflower:

- ⚙ With light-brown coloring
- ⚙ With small, dark spots on the florets
- ⚙ Spreading florets

STORAGE

Cauliflower should be kept, unwashed, in a perforated plastic bag in the refrigerator. The whole head will keep for up to 5 days, and the separated florets for up to 2 days.

PREPARATION

Cauliflower can be used raw in salads, as part of a vegetable platter with a vegetable dip. Cauliflower can also be used in soups.

To steam:

Steam the whole head of cauliflower for 12 to 15 minutes over water in a large saucepan. Florets can be steamed in 3 to 5 minutes.

KEY NUTRIENTS

- ⚙ Folate to help prevent birth defects and reduce the risk of heart disease.
- ⚙ Vitamin C for healthy gums, skin and blood.



RECIPES

Baked Cauliflower

- 1 large cauliflower
- 1 onion, diced
- 2 tablespoons parsley, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 16 ounces stewed tomatoes
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese (optional)



Break the cauliflower into small florets. Combine everything in a casserole dish. Cover and bake at 350°F for about 40 minutes, or until tender. Serves 8; 125 Cal; 1g fat.

Cauliflower in Yogurt-Cumin Sauce

- 3/4 pound fresh peas, shelled and washed
- 2 cups water
- 4 cups small cauliflower florets
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 cup plain low-fat yogurt
- 3 tablespoons fresh cilantro, chopped
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 dash of white pepper

Bring water to a boil in a large saucepan; add peas and cauliflower. Cover and cook for 7 minutes or until crisp-tender. Drain well and place in a bowl. Add salt and toss well. Combine yogurt and the next 4 ingredients; stir well. Pour over cauliflower mixture and toss gently. Refrigerate any leftovers. Serves 6; 80 Cal; <1 g fat.



Growing Cauliflower in Wisconsin

Cauliflower is one of many vegetables belonging to the mustard family grown in Wisconsin for fresh markets and home use. This broad group of plants which includes broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage,

Brussels sprouts, kale, collards and kohlrabi are known as cole crops.

Cauliflower is of unknown origin. The head consists of functional flower buds as does broccoli. Cauliflower is very sensitive to temperature with cool (68° to 78° F), humid conditions ideal. Hot weather results in poor curd quality. Tie cauliflower leaves together to blanch curds as soon as you see curd development.



Planting Cauliflower and Cole Crops

- Initiate seeds in a greenhouse in mid-March
- Ten days prior to transplanting, move plants to a cold frame to harden them off
- Transplant in the garden around mid-May
- Mid- to late-season cole crops can be direct seeded into the garden
- Select a sunny location
- Seeding depth: 1/4 inches deep
- Transplant depth: Place crown at soil surface
- Space between rows: 18 to 36 inches
- Space between plants: 12 to 24 inches

Soil and Fertility

- Sandy, clay, muck, or loamy soils are acceptable
- Follow soil test recommendations
- Ideal pH is 6.0 to 6.8 or 5.6 on muck soils

Soil and Fertility continued...

Under optimum soil test levels apply...

3.75 oz of nitrogen per 100 sq ft

0.75 oz of phosphate per 100 sq ft

1.9 oz of potassium per 100 sq ft

Cauliflower needs relatively high amounts of boron and molybdenum. Boron deficiency causes browning of leaf tips and spots on the curd. Spots can enlarge to cover the entire head and the core can take on a water soaked appearance.

Selecting Cauliflower Varieties

Snowball types are the most common cauliflower varieties today. Cauliflower varieties selected for early season harvest mature in 50 to 55 days from the time of transplant while late season varieties mature in 75 to 80 days. Broccoflower is cauliflower with a green pigmented head. Purple cauliflower is greenish when cooked.

Handling Your Cauliflower and Cole Crops

Cole crops retain their fresh taste if they are hydro cooled and kept under high humidity. Hydro cool by submerging the crop in a cool water bath for a few minutes immediately after harvest. Dry the crop on screen tables, then pack into waxed cardboard boxes. Maintain humidity by lining the box with a clean, damp cloth.

Hand harvest with a knife when the curds are still compact and surrounded by leaves. Retain wrapper leaves to hold the head intact. Black specks on the head indicate rough handling. Cauliflower will keep in top condition for 4 to 5 days.



Prepared by Nick Schneider, Clark County Crops and Soils Agent. April 2005. For more information contact your local Extension Office to obtain these references: *Growing Broccoli, Cauliflower, Cabbage, and Other Cole Crops in Wisconsin*. Publication A3684.

Commercial Vegetable Production in Wisconsin. Publication A3422.