

MIZUNA



- In terms of acreage, Mizuna has a relatively small role in Yuma County winter produce production. However, Mizuna is a large player in the world of Spring Mix salads. Elegant, deep green and saw-toothed leaves that have a mild yet tangy flavor, this tender green leaf lettuce generally mixed with other lettuces to enhance the appearance, flavor, and nutritional value of a mixed baby leaf salad, typically called, Spring Mix. Spring Mix blend contains a varying mixture of the following: green romaine, red romaine, tango, lollo rossa, green oak, red oak, mizuna, arugula, frillice, red chard, radicchio, frisee, curly endive, and spinach.
- Mizuna leaves can be also added to soups and stir-fry, normally added at the end of cooking.
- Mizuna is a Japanese mustard green with dandelion-like jagged edge green leaves with a mild, sweet somewhat earthy flavor. It has been cultivated in Japan since ancient times, but most likely originated in China.
- Mizuna's leaves are glossy in appearance and are dark-green faced with striking silvery white. Mizuna grows in a rosette of green which resembles that of young lace-leaf maples.
- Mizuna has been cultivated for so many centuries in Japan that in the rest of Asia, the vegetable is regarded as Japanese. Another Japanese name for mizuna is kyona-greens from Kyoto, the ancient capital of the empire. Mizuna translates from the Japanese as water or juicy vegetable.
- In cooking, as with nearly every leafy green, it's wise to pull the leaves from the stalks and ribs and cook each separately. Mizuna can be adapted to most any cooked dish requiring mustard greens or cabbage recipe. Some recipes call for Mizuna being stuffed into ravioli and speckled through cream sauces.
- Spring Mix is high in Vitamins A and C and is also high in iron which helps the blood and muscles supply our bodies with essential oxygen and is a particularly important mineral for growing children and active adults.
- Spring Mix, also called Mesclun, is a classic green salad mix originating in the South of France. It consists of a mixture of very young leaves and shoots of wild and cultivated plants, including a mixture of small, young salad greens, herbs and edible flowers. The greens are a mixture of textures and sweet, spicy and bitter flavors. Among the greens commonly found in the mixture are arugula, dandelion, frisée, mizuna, mâche, radicchio, oak leaf, endive and sorrel.
- When selecting Spring Mix, look for small greens that have fresh-looking, crisp leaves. When wrapped in plastic and stored in the vegetable drawer of the refrigerator, the greens will stay fresh for about a week.
- Salads are not a new food of the world, but salads have become so popular that today they are served most anytime. Complementary textures and tastes are created when a variety of flavors of fresh greens are combined. A meal in itself, a salad can be deliciously dressed to create a very elegant main entree.

- Versatile salads may be served as a main course, as an appetizer or as a palate refresher between dinner and dessert. Popular in the United States, lettuces rank a close second to potatoes, five times the amount consumed at the turn of the century. Improved shipping and storage methods that protect the freshness of produce is definitely a major factor in the increased popularity of greens.
- Spring mix blends may vary. Varying in taste and texture, spring mix offers a pleasant and palatable balance of flavors and textures. About half of the greens and lettuces in a Spring Mix are sweet and mild while others have a slightly bitter edge.
- Spring Mix is a dieter's delight, and offers lots of healthy eating without an abundance of calories. Dark-colored greens offer the most nutrition.
- Spring Mix containing Mizuna is a versatile mix and makes a terrific salad or an attractive bed for fresh or grilled fruit and vegetables and can be used as garnish to dress up most anything.
- In Italy and France, salads are served after the main course as a refreshment for the diner's taste buds and eyes. In the United States, salads are served before the main entree. Lettuce greens are especially popular in European and Asian cuisine.
- Spring mix first originated in Nice in southern France. From France, it spread to the west coast by way of Berkeley, California. Alice Waters, a self-proclaimed salad warrior, opened a restaurant called "Chez Panisse", where she grew the salad mixes on her property. One of her goals was to teach the value of produce to her customers. It was in the 1980's that salad mixes became exceptionally popular and the demand has continually escalated. These greens and lettuces thrive in the deserts of Southern California and Arizona during our wonderful winters.

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