

This photo is from the 12<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Treasury Tribal Advisory Committee (TTAC) and was taken in the U.S. treasurer's office. The committee is composed of seven members, with only three shown in the photo. TTAC was established under the Tribal General Welfare Exclusion Act of 2014 and advises the secretary on matters related to the taxation of Indians, among other duties established in the law.

Sharon Edenfield, treasurer of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, was appointed by Oregon Sen. Ron Wyden to serve a second term and also was elected by the committee to serve as TTAC vice-chair. She also co-chairs the General Welfare Exclusion (GWE) subcommittee.

Pictured from left to right are Rodney Butler, chairman of the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation and newly appointed to TTAC; Sharon Edenfield, treasurer of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians and TTAC vice-chairman; Marilyn Malerba, lifetime chief of the Mohegan Tribe and U.S. treasurer; Danny Werfel, commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service; and Ron Allen, chairman of the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe and TTAC chairman.



## Hardy winter greens can provide mineral-rich nourishment in variety of ways

By Nancy Ludwig, MS, RDN, LD, Head Start Consulting Nutritionist

As part of my role as a consultant nutritionist to Siletz Tribal Head Start, I offer information for families. This segment focuses on dark leafy greens to help us through the dark time of year.

In my past studies, I learned from Dr. Rudolph C. Ryser, founding chair, CWIS (Center for World Indigenous Studies) and his wife, Leslie Korn, PhD, MPH, Center for Traditional Medicine. Among many publications, he created the Salish Country Cookbook, Traditional Foods & Medicines from the Pacific Northwest, resulting from many workshops and cultural gatherings.

I acknowledge and honor his life and his passing this year (<https://www.cwis.org/2023/10/in-memoriam-dr-rudolph-c-ryser-founding-chair-cwis/#close-modal>). While the description of Salish Food includes greens, I did not find reference to specific greens.

In our Pacific Northwest climate, collard greens are hardy and resilient. Mine usually grow year-round. If you don't have collard greens already planted, cabbage is another green that is generally inexpensive and abundant at the grocery store because it stores well.

This time period in December leading up to Solstice, the shortest or darkest day of the year, can be difficult for some of us. In today's culture, the focus often becomes about sugar and treats as a way to cope while calling it joy or required holiday traditions. In whatever quantity you and your family choose to embrace these sweet treats, I suggest that greens can be your ally.

While my choice of greens might not technically be a traditional food, my intent is a focus on food sovereignty. It's greens that can be grown and obtained locally to support health without economic hardship.

The best I can tell, collard greens descended from wild cabbages. Many cultures around the world revere them, including Ethiopia, Portugal and Greece, as well as being known as soul food in the southern United States. I understand

that in the horrendous Atlantic slave trade, West African woman sometimes braided the seeds of collards and other crops in their hair and carried them to the Americas on ships with enslaved people.

Collard greens can add mineral-rich nourishment, especially when they can crowd out less nutritious foods. Collard greens are known to exhibit resilience under challenging growing conditions. They bring that resilience to us when we consume them. Collard greens can be incorporated into meals and snacks with a few conscious tips.

Soup can become more nourishing by adding thinly sliced collard or cabbage greens while warming the soup. Many leftover foods can be extended into larger portions or more servings when greens are added as a side or as a base under the entree, much like is common with rice or even pasta.

For example, leftover baked beans can be extended with additional vegetables, such as sauteed onions and peppers or carrots and celery, and served over a bed of collard greens. Barbeque sauce, sliced sausage or canned fish may be a nice complement to the meal. An option for leftover beef stew may be to serve it over a bed of sautéed cabbage.

Your basic tried-and-true kid-friendly meals can be upgraded with opportunities to become familiar with greens. Young growing children often need repetition with foods before they are familiar with or feel safe enough to try them.

It is also helpful for children to see adults embracing these foods. Your efforts to provide leafy greens are not wasted, even if they are not consumed in the beginning. Furthermore, as you begin to grow these greens, children will gain appreciation through participation with these foods.

Collard greens are easy to grow and it isn't too early to think about when and where to plant them. You will need a bed of soil or a spot of ground with some sun. Container gardening can work, but I find that collard greens establish better for long-term growth in direct soil, so I choose to grow other plants in pots.

Plant seeds in early spring and/or mid- to late summer. If you miss early spring for seeds, you can plant starts. For families with SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program), you can use your double up vegetable bucks for edible food starts at the farmers market.

As your plants grow, you encourage growth when you harvest the larger individual leaves from the bottom of the plant stalk. Harvesting on a regular basis is a good practice as you encourage growth and are more likely to consume them often.

After frost, the leaves usually become sweeter and continue to grow, allowing time for extended harvest. During the cool season, the plants grow more slowly (kind of like they are living in the refrigerator). If they winter-over, they often sprout and flower in the spring before going to seed.

You can extend your season even further by harvesting the sprouts, which look and taste like miniature broccoli. They are in the same family as broccoli and can be stir fried, roasted on a pan with a light coating of oil, or consumed just like broccoli.

In this stage, they are referred to as raab (or rabe) – the springtime buds, leaves and flowers of over-wintered brassicas, including collards, kale, Brussels sprouts, cabbage and mustard greens. When the plants flower, the small yellow blossoms can be harvested and eaten on salads.

When you harvest the parts that are preparing to make seeds, you delay the end of the plant cycle, allowing longer harvest. When seeds are produced, it is time to honor the full cycle and allow the plant to fully mature the seeds.

I save seeds for replanting. Some of the seeds I replant while harvesting them by dropping them directly onto the ground. Mother Nature takes care of the timing for germination and new growth, as long as water is supplied during the growing season. I collect additional seeds and store in jars to plant later or share with others.

If you buy collard greens, it is a good idea to be aware of soil or growing practices. As a caution, it is important to note that collard greens (oddly referred to as

conventionally grown) are found on the Environmental Working Group's dirty dozen list as they are often found to contain higher amounts of pesticides. This is one of the reasons I encourage growing your own. In order to avoid high levels of pesticides, it is recommended to wash greens thoroughly with clean water and to buy certified organic greens when possible.

Cooking tips: If you remove the firm stalk from the leaf before slicing and cooking the greens, the flavor will be less strong and more enjoyable. When I cook greens, I place them in a stove-top cooking pot with approximately 1 inch of water. I bring the water to a boil, stir the shrinking greens and reduce heat to a simmer until I like the texture.

Before serving, I drain the remaining cooking water into a jar to freeze for soup later. I find that adding raw apple cider vinegar, lemon juice with butter or oil and salt improves the flavor.

Collard greens can be eaten raw and might be more palatable if young or tender leaves are massaged with oil or avocado before using in salad. Collard greens also make nice wraps in place of tortillas or rolled with filling, like a burrito, and heated in the oven.

### Recipe links from Food Revolution Network

Slow Cooker Collards with Rainbow Veggies – <https://foodrevolution.org/recipes/slow-cooked-collards-with-rainbow-veggies/>

Collard Walnut Pesto – <https://foodrevolution.org/recipes/collard-walnut-pesto/>

Lentil Quinoa Collard Wraps – <https://foodrevolution.org/recipes/lentil-quinoa-collard-wraps/>

Please know that Siletz Tribal Head Start offers nutritional support at no cost to Head Start families. This usually occurs over the telephone. If you have nutrition concerns about your Head Start child or want to discuss family nutrition concerns, please contact your teacher or the director and ask to speak to the nutritionist. We want to support your children and families.