

Lettuce Seed Harvesting

Growing and Harvesting Lettuce Seed

NDSU Extension – Cavalier County

Tips and Tricks

Lettuce needs warmth in order to bolt to produce seed.

Seeds are mature when the flowering head emerges.

Cross-pollinating, although not often, can occur between lettuce so be sure to isolate different lettuce varieties when growing for seed (at least 10 feet).



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Planting Lettuce

Be sure to follow the planting instructions on either the original seed packets or the seed envelopes checked out from the Cavalier County library.

In-Season Considerations

Lettuce grows best in cool temperatures. There can be early (spring) and later (fall) season growth. Seeds are best grown from early season plants. Can be planted close together for cut and regrowth, or can be planted further apart for one time harvest. Seedlings can be eaten as microgreens which can be eaten alone or used as a topper on salads, sandwiches, etc.

Harvesting Lettuce Seed

- Leave at least one lettuce plant in ground.
- Let the lettuce bolt (or grow a stem).
- When seed heads emerge, the seeds are ready for harvest.
- Hand pick the heads, or bend the whole flowering branch into a bag and shake.
- Separate seeds from fluffy ends by gently rubbing, then place only the seeds into the envelope.
- A suggested minimum return amount is 1/8 teaspoon.

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