

Radishes in the Classroom

To the Root of it:
Learning goes underground

Fibrous, Tap or Tuber?

There are many different types of root systems in plants, but only a few that we eat regularly. Root vegetables like radishes and carrots are taproots, with one main root that stores food for the plant. Other edible plants such as spinach have thin, wispy fibrous root systems. Potatoes are tubers, large plant organs designed to store nutrients that can be a part of a plant's stem or root.

See those roots!

Create a root viewing box by drilling holes into the bottom of a transparent tupperware container and filling it with soil. Planting fast-growing seeds (such as radishes or lettuce) near the edges. Cover the sides of the container with black paper or cloth to prevent the seeds from being exposed to direct sunlight. Place in a sunny window and water the seeds according to seed packet directions. By the time your seeds have begun to sprout you should be able to see roots developing along the side of the container when you pull back the paper or cloth.

Did You Know?

- The scientific name for radishes is *Raphanus sativus*.
- Radishes come from the mustard family (*Brassicaceae*) which includes other edible plants such as cauliflower, broccoli, turnip, cabbage and horseradish.

Interested in volunteering with farm to school activities? Sign up for our volunteer newsletter at: www.groundworkcenter.org/farmtoschoolvolunteer



May Harvest of the Month

Radishes



groundwork
CENTER FOR RESILIENT COMMUNITIES



FARM to
SCHOOL
NORTHWEST MICHIGAN



MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

Extension

Quick Pickled Radishes Recipe

Prep time: 10 min
Fridge time: 30 minutes
Estimated Cost: \$2-3
Use as a condiment or snack.

Pickling is a great way to preserve vegetables and create delicious toppings for tacos, burgers, and salads in the process. Use this basic pickling recipe with whatever fresh vegetables you have on hand.

Ingredients:

15 medium-size radishes (about two bunches)
2/3 cup white or apple cider vinegar
1/2 cup sugar
2 tsp salt

Directions:

Clean radishes under cool, running water. Remove tops (you can save these to use as you would any slightly bitter green) and ends. Cut radishes into 1/8" to 1/4" slices.

In a medium bowl, stir together vinegar, sugar, and salt. Add radishes, stir to combine. Cover and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes before serving, up to overnight.

If sealed and stored properly, quick-pickled radishes will keep for up to 10 days in the fridge.

Radish Buyer's Tip

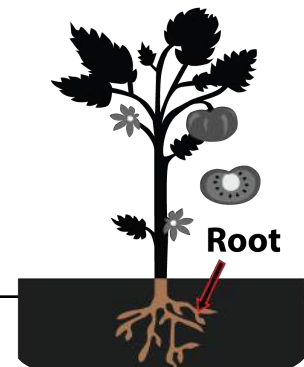
Look for radishes with vibrant greens still attached- a clear sign of freshness. Remove them as soon as you get home, leaving a short bit of the stem attached. Radishes should have smooth, unblemished skins and feel heavy for their size.



Fun Facts About Radishes

Plant Parts

- Radishes are a root vegetable, which means the part of the plant we eat grows underground!
- Radish leaves are also edible- try using them in sautés or stir fries, you'd be surprised how delicious they can be!



Origins



- The radish is one of the oldest cultivated plant foods. Radishes likely originated in the Mediterranean, and archeological evidence has shown they were first cultivated before 2000 B.C.
- Radishes are a great plant to try growing at home. Most varieties take just 30 days from seed to harvest.

Shapes, Sizes and Colors



- Radishes come in many shapes, sizes and colors. While most radishes have white flesh, some varieties (such as Watermelon radishes, at left) have beautifully colored flesh in addition to their bright exteriors!
- Many seed companies sell "Easter Egg" radish seeds, which are a mix of radishes that will grow to be pink, purple, red, or white in color.

Looking for local radishes?

Visit localdifference.org to search for local food, farms, and retailers.