

Meet Your Local Farmer!

Trogg's Hollow

Poplar Grove, IL



(spinach from 2015 harvest)

Trogg's Hollow is a local organic farm that is committed to providing real food for their family and their community. They do not use any chemicals on their crops and fertilize with their own compost or organic manure. While not certified, they do only use seeds and plants that are organic. Their farm also believes in being as sustainable as possible. Trogg's Hollow offers shares in a CSA program and sells their produce at various farmers' markets in Northern Illinois.

SPINACH DIP

Ingredients:

4 oz. of cream cheese, beaten until creamy
1 1/2 cups sour cream
1 package (10 oz.) frozen spinach, thawed and dried
1/2 - 3/4 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
1 envelope dry vegetable soup mix
1 tsp. garlic

Instructions:

Mix ingredients and refrigerate for at least two hours. Serve with bread, crackers, or fresh vegetables.

SPINACH CHIPS

Ingredients:

2 large handfuls of spinach
1 tbsp. olive oil
1/2 tbsp. Italian herb seasoning
1/8 tsp. sea salt, or to taste

Instructions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
Massage oil into spinach until all leaves are completely coated.
Add Italian seasoning and salt, combine until evenly dispersed.
Cover a baking sheet with parchment paper. Place leaves on the parchment paper so that they aren't overlapping (this will allow them to cook evenly).
Bake for 9-12 minutes until crispy.



SPINACH

Spinacia oleracea

SPINACH AT A GLANCE:

- Dark green leafy vegetable
- Buttery, nutty flavor
- Vitamins A & C, iron, and calcium
- 7 calories per cup
- Varieties: savoy, hybrid, and smooth leafed

GROWING SPINACH

Where should I grow spinach?

- Ideal climate is cool weather with short days (preferably USDA Hardiness Zones 3-9). Northerners can plant an early spring crop as well as one midsummer to mature before first frost. Spinach grown more south may withstand the first frost.

How do I plant spinach?

- Spinach prefers a relatively neutral (pH 7.0) soil so you may need to add lime to your soil. Plant the seeds 1-2" apart with rows 8-14" apart. Cover seeds with ½" of soil.

How do I care for spinach?

- When the seed sprouts, thin the plants so that they are 3-5" apart or so the neighboring plants barely overlap leaves. Spinach is also a heavy feeder so don't be afraid to fertilize. Water regularly, but make sure your garden drains well.

How do I harvest spinach?

- Spinach should be ready about 6 weeks after planting to start harvesting. Remove a few leaves at a time from each plant leaving central rosette intact. Warm days may cause spinach to bolt so watch your plants carefully.

TIPS FOR YOUR BEST SPINACH!

- ✓ Plant early - as soon as soil can be cultivated in the spring!
- ✓ Spinach loves full sun, but keep your plants cool!
- ✓ Rotate your crop every season!

BEWARE OF PESTS AND DISEASE!

- Aphids, lice, and caterpillars love spinach leaves. You can deal with them by using citrus-rind spray or plucking the larvae off by hand.
- White rust, blue mold (downy mold), and the soil borne disease fusarium wilt are common with spinach as well. Pluck leaves infected with rust or mold or remove the plant all together. Rotate crops to avoid fusarium wilt.

HISTORY OF SPINACH:

Originating in Persia (modern day Iran), this leafy plant was first introduced in Europe around 1000 AD. It was introduced by the Arabs to southern Europe and was first eaten in England around 14th century.

FOOD MATTERS

What is a food system?

- A food system describes how food travels from the field to the fork. It is dependent on social, economic, and natural environments.

Why organic?

- Generally organic means that the produce is grown without pesticides and is better for the environment and also the consumer. The NOP (USDA's National Organic Program) has specific regulations for what is certified organic or not. However, there are many small farms that are truly organic but may not be certified.

Why sustainable?

- Sustainable agriculture is agriculture that fills the demand for food, but also enhances environmental quality and the economic and social quality of farmers and the local community.

Why local?

- Not only does eating locally support local farmers and the local economy, but it also can be better for the consumer! The shorter time from farm to table means fresher produce. Local also promotes community particularly with CSA (community supported agriculture) shares.