

## Garden Cress



*Lepidium sativum*

Garden cress also called broadleaf cress—and other cresses: curly cress and watercress—are quick growing cool-weather vegetables. Sow cress in the garden early in spring. Cress is quick growing from seed; it will be ready for harvest 15 to 20 days after sowing. Sow successive crops until mid-summer. Sow cress again in early autumn for autumn and winter harvest.

Cresses grow easily from seed and also can be propagated from stem-pieces or cuttings. Cress will sprout on water-soaked paper towels or cotton.

Plant cress in shade or semi shade. Grow garden cress and curly cress in moist but well-drained sandy loam. Cress prefers a soil pH of 6.0 to 6.8. Sow successive crops every 10 to 14 days. Pinch back cress to keep it manageable.

Cut or pinch out cress tips as needed, cut-and-come-again. Begin cutting plants when they reach 3 to 4 inches tall. Plants cut back to ½ inch will quickly regrow.

Cress is most tender at the early seed-leaf stage; harvest cress well before it matures. Sprouts can also be used fresh.

Cress will keep in the refrigerator up to one week.

