

Microgreen: An Emerging Trend in Food & Nutrition Segment

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ARTICLE ID: 062

Introduction

Microgreens is a new and emerging trend in food & nutrition segment in the world. They are tiny young vegetable greens that are approximately 1–3 inches (2.5–7.5 cm) tall and harvested just after the first cotyledon leaves have developed. Harvesting has to done just 7 to 14 days after germination, at seedling stage without their roots. They fall somewhere between a sprout and baby green.

Micro greens are getting popular across the world because of their very high nutritional contents. Despite their small size, they pack a nutritional punch, often containing higher nutrient levels than mature vegetable greens. This makes them a good addition to any diet. These aromatic greens, also known as micro herbs or vegetable confetti, are rich in flavour, add a welcome splash of colour to a variety of dishes& good garnishing salads, soups, plates and sandwiches.

Different Types of Microgreens

Microgreens can be grown from many different types of seeds.

- **Brassicaceae family:** Cauliflower, broccoli, cabbage, watercress, radish
- **Apiaceae family:** Dill, carrot, fennel and celery
- **Amaryllidaceae family:** Onion, leek
- **Amaranthaceae family:** Amaranth, Swiss chard, beetroot& spinach

Microgreens Are Nutritious

Microgreens contains a wider variety of polyphenols and other antioxidants than their mature counterparts, which provides health benefits like reducing blood sugar level and lower heart disease risk. Several studies, including a study by USDA, found that vitamins, minerals, antioxidant levels measured in micro greens are up to 40 times higher than those recorded for mature plant counterparts. They are not only having a rich flavour & colour but also packed with nutrients. Most varieties of the microgreens tend to be rich in potassium, iron, zinc,

magnesium and copper minerals. They vary in taste, which can range from neutral to spicy, slightly sour or even bitter, depending on the variety. Generally speaking, their flavour is considered strong and concentrated. They can be incorporated into a variety of dishes, including sandwiches, wraps and salads.

Microgreens may also be blended into smoothies or juiced. Wheatgrass juice is a popular example of a juiced microgreen. Another option is to use them as garnishes on pizzas, soups, omelettes, curries and other warm dishes.

BENEFITS OF MICROGREENS

HIGH IN NUTRIENTS

Contain 4–40 times more nutrients by weight than their fully-grown counterparts. (Source: NCBI)

CONTAIN POLYPHENOLS

Prevent the buildup of harmful free radicals

Associated with a reduced risk of heart disease, cancer & Alzheimer's disease (Source: NCBI)

Contain wider variety of polyphenols than their mature vegetable counterparts (Source: NCBI)

IMPROVE HEART HEALTH

Animal studies have shown microgreens may help reduce heart disease risk factors, such as weight, bad LDL cholesterol & triglycerides (Source: FASEB)

REDUCE CHRONIC DISEASE RISK

Veggie consumption is associated with lower risk of certain cancers, inflammation, heart disease, diabetes & obesity (Source: NCBI)

EASY AND CONVENIENT

Fast, convenient & easy to grow
 Don't need to invest in a full garden or even have a backyard to grow them
 Just need water, soil, seeds & a window with a little sunlight
 Ready to harvest and enjoy just 7–14 days after germination

GROWN YEAR-ROUND

Because microgreens can be grown indoors, there's no need to wait for warm weather to roll around in order to break out the gardening gloves



Microgreen farming

Microgreen farming is already popular and established business in metro cities but in recent two years it is getting popular in small cities also. They are very convenient to grow, as they can be grown in a variety of locations, including outdoors, in greenhouses and even on your windowsill. On commercial scale microgreens are often grown indoor&hydroponically on soilless media (Mostly on cocopit& vermicompost).

Microgreens are a popular choice for urban farmers and novice growers alike. This is because they can be produced quickly, are cost-effective and can be grown year-round.



Peoples nowadays are becoming more aware about their food habits and a large population of the peoples are preferring natural nutrition over synthetic supplements. Microgreens can be good option for getting more natural nutrition in less amount of food quantity. In terms of business, it can be a good option as microgreens can be easily cultivated within a small area and grower can also get a good amount of return from it.