



### Extending the Life of Lettuce

I won't ask for a show of hands to see how many of you have ever opened your refrigerator crisper drawer to grab some lettuce and instead grabbed a bag full of green swamp looking goop – but I bet many of you (like myself) have! I recently attended three days of training and one of the classes was on how to extend the life of lettuce, celery, parsley, cilantro and even cabbage. I must admit to being somewhat skeptical when I walked in the door. However, after sitting through the presentation, I am now a believer!

The presenter showed us 2 bags of leaf lettuce that were purchased at the same store, at the same time and the same day. One she put into the crisper drawer in the plastic produce bag from the store. The other, she treated with the method below. It was amazing and astounding – no kidding! The lettuce in the first bag was mostly goop after 4 weeks. The lettuce in the second bag was crisp and green, with only a couple of spots of “lettuce rust” on one or two leaves. How exciting is that?! She also showed celery, parsley and cilantro done in a similar method with the same great results.

Here is the method:

- △ Remove the lettuce from the plastic bag.
- △ Remove rubber band or twist tie from lettuce.
- △ Take off any damaged, decaying or discolored leaves.
- △ Trim off 1/8 inch piece from the bottom end of the head of lettuce.
- △ Fill large bowl or sink with lukewarm water (90 to 100 degrees), and submerge the trimmed head of lettuce.
- △ Let the lettuce soak in the water for about 15 minutes.
- △ Remove the lettuce from the water and quickly dip or rinse the lettuce using clean water.
- △ Allow the lettuce to drain for about 10 – 15 minutes.
- △ Wrap the prepared lettuce in paper towels, being sure to cover all parts of the lettuce and place in a container with a lid or a zippered type plastic bag.
- △ Use the lettuce as needed, being sure to re-wrap before placing back in container or bag. You may need to replace the paper toweling once or twice.
- △ The lettuce will keep for 3 to 4 weeks using this method.

This same method can be used with head lettuce, cabbage, cilantro and parsley. For the cilantro and parsley, cut off about ¼ to ½ inch of the stem before submerging.

Thanks to Kathleen Teegarden of Spokane County for sharing this money saving method of having good healthy greens for a longer period of time.

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