



CELERY TALKING POINTS

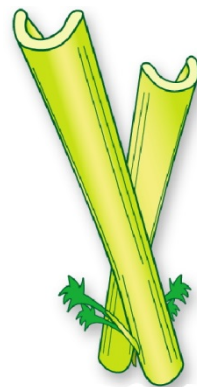
2.

History about celery

- Our word "celery" comes from the French celeri, which is derived from the ancient Greek word. The old Roman names, as well as those in many modern languages, are derived from the same root word and sound remarkably similar. This indicates a rather recent wide distribution and use of celery.
- The oldest record of the word celeri is in a 9th-century poem written in France or Italy, giving the medicinal uses (instead of food uses) and merits of the plant.
- In France in 1623 use of celery as food was first recorded. For about a hundred years thereafter, its food use was confined to flavorings. In France and Italy, by the middle of the 17th century, the little stalks and leaves were sometimes eaten with an oil dressing.
- In the late 17th and early 18th centuries, in Italy, France, and England, were seen the first evidences of improvement of the wild type. Gardeners also found that much of the too-strong flavor could be eliminated, making the stalks better for salad use, by growing the plants in late summer and fall, then keeping them into the winter.
- By the mid-18th century in Sweden, the wealthier families were enjoying the wintertime luxury of celery that had been stored in cellars. From that time on, its use as we know it today spread rapidly.
- We do not know what group of European colonists brought it to America, or when, but four cultivated varieties were listed here in 1806.

3.& 4. How does celery grow? What season do we pick celery?

- Celery is challenging because it needs a long time to grow - up to 130 or 140 days of mostly cool weather - and it's quite demanding when it comes to water and fertilizer.
- If your soil stays moist and has plenty of organic matter in it, you're in good shape for growing celery. Shut off the water supply even for a short time, however, and you're in trouble.
- The roots of celery plants are limited, usually stretching just six to eight inches away from the plant and only two to three inches deep, so the top part of the soil not only has to have enough moisture, it must also contain all the nutrients the plants need.
- Celery plants don't like hot weather at all. The crop will thrive only where the winters are mild, or where the summers are relatively cool, or where there's a long, cool growing period in the fall.
- Because celery takes such a long time to grow, in most parts of the country it's best to start the seeds in plant boxes or flats indoors to get a jump on the season. Celery seeds are slow to germinate, so soak them overnight to speed up the process. Plant them indoors 10 to 12 weeks before the last frost. When the plants are two inches tall, transplant them to individual peat pots or to another, deeper, flat with new potting soil. If you use flats, put the plants at least two inches apart.
- Transplant celery to the garden as early as a week or two before the last frost date. Plants should be four to six inches high when you set them out. Be



sure to harden plants off first for a week to 10 days to get them used to spring weather. If the weather turns cold after you set your celery out (night temperatures consistently under 55°F for about two weeks), the plants may go to seed prematurely. But because of the need for a long growing season, it's often worth the gamble to set at least some plants out early.

5. Why should we eat Celery?

- Celery is high in nutrients and low in calories.
- Celery is an excellent source vitamin K, which helps heal cuts and supports the immune system!
- Celery is a good source of folate for healthy blood.
- Celery is a good source of vitamin A for healthy eyes.
- Celery is also known to promote relaxation and sleep and act as a digestive aid.
- Celery is low in Saturated Fat, and very low in Cholesterol. It is also a good source of Riboflavin, Vitamin B6, Pantothenic Acid, Calcium, Magnesium and Phosphorus, and a very good source of Dietary Fiber, Vitamin C, Potassium and Manganese.

6. How do you pick good Celery?

- Choose celery that is crisp and snaps easily when pulled apart.
- Celery should be relatively compact and not have stalks that are falling out from the bundle.
- The leaves should be pale to bright green in color and without yellow or brown patches.
- To store celery, place it in a sealed container or plastic bag and store it in the refrigerator.

Helping Your Child Eat Healthy

- Bake, steam, microwave or stir-fry celery.
- Add celery to soups and salads.
- Dip raw or lightly cooked celery in low-fat vegetable dressing.
- Help your child find a healthy recipe with celery. Then cook it together.
- Ask each family member to pick a fruit or vegetable to plant in the garden.
- Remind your child to eat breakfast every day to help stay focused in school.

Resources

<http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/archives/parsons/publications/vegetabletravelers/celery.html>
<http://www.foodreference.com/html/celery-history.html>
https://www.garden.org/foodguide/browse/veggie/lettuce_planting/439
<http://nutritiondata.self.com/facts/vegetables-and-vegetable-products/2396/2#ixzz2wdFWoYAa>
<http://www.webmd.com/vitamins-supplements/ingredientmono-882-CELERY.aspx?activeIngredientId=882&activeIngredientName=CELERY>