



KENTUCKY STATE
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FACT SHEET

Information about the Kentucky State University Cooperative Extension Program



Image
Source: www.edenbro

Upland Cress

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Introduction & Background

- **Scientific Name:** *Barbarea verna*
- **Common Name:** Upland Cress, Land Cress or American Cress
- **Family:** Brassicaceae (Mustard family)
- **Synonyms:** *Barbarea praecox*, *Barbarea arcuata*, *Rorippa verna*.
- A nutrient-rich leafy green with a bold, peppery taste.
- Historically consumed in Europe, it was introduced to North America by early settlers.
- A staple leafy vegetable in various culinary traditions.
- Unlike watercress, upland cress is grown in soil rather than aquatic environments.
- Thrives in cool climates and is commonly cultivated in home gardens and commercial farms.
- Well-suited for traditional farming methods.
- High in essential vitamins and minerals, making it a super food.



Image Source: <https://www.vecteezy.com/>

Germination & Growing Methods

- **Germination:** Seeds typically sprout within 5 to 10 days under optimal conditions, with a preferred temperature range of 10-22°C (50-72°F).
- **Growing Conditions:** Prefers rich, moist, well-drained soil with partial to full sunlight. A soil pH of 6.0-7.0 is ideal.
- **Propagation Methods:** Commonly grown from seeds, upland cress can be directly sown into the soil or started indoors for early planting.
- **Harvesting:** Ready to harvest 4 to 6 weeks after planting. Regular harvesting encourages new growth and prevents bolting.

Advantages for Urban Growers

- Minimal land use
- Faster growth than in soil
- Year-round production
- Reduced pest/disease pressure
- Higher water and nutrient use efficiency



Image Source: www.thenuthouseusa.com

Ideal Hydroponic Systems for Production

- ✓ **Nutrient Film Technique (NFT)**
A thin stream of nutrient solutions flows along channels. It can be ideal for small leafy greens like cress.
- ✓ **Deep Water Culture (DWC)**
Plants float on nutrient-rich water with air stones providing oxygen. It is easy to maintain and productive.
- ✓ **Ebb and Flow (Flood & Drain)**
Growing bed periodically flooded with nutrients. This is suitable for home or community garden settings.
- ✓ **Vertical Towers or Aeroponics**
Use less space while producing high yields. This is great for space-limited urban farms.



Image Source: Upland Cress Production by Urban Ag Members, Richard, Cora, and Dr. Adeyeye at the Ohio State University in 2025.

Health Benefits

- ❖ **Supports Bone Health:** High vitamin K content helps improve bone density and calcium absorption.
- ❖ **Boosts Immunity:** Vitamin C strengthens the immune system and helps prevent infections.
- ❖ **Aids in Digestion:** High fiber and water content support healthy digestion.
- ❖ **Promotes Heart Health:** Helps regulate blood pressure due to its potassium content.
- ❖ **May Reduce Cancer Risk:** Contains glucosinolates, which have been linked to cancer prevention.
- ❖ **May Encourage Weight Loss:** It's rich nutrient profile and low levels of sodium, cholesterol, and fat make it a healthy addition to any diet.

Nutritional Benefits

- ❖ **Vitamins:** High levels of vitamin K, vitamin C, and folate.
- ❖ **Minerals:** Excellent source of calcium, iron, and potassium.
- ❖ **Antioxidants:** Contains beta-carotene, lutein, and flavonoids that promote overall health.
- ❖ **Low in Calories:** Provides only about 15 calories per 100 grams, making it a great addition to a healthy and balanced diet.



Image Source: www.epicurious.com

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