



If you've ever tried wheatgrass or if you had a Chia Pet as a kid back in the 70's or 80's, you have already had experience with microgreens! These are a few fairly common examples of microgreens that have been in the mainstream for decades. What you may not know is that there are so many different varieties of these tiny little plants and their flavors, textures and uses span far beyond what comes to mind for most people!

Microgreens are the first leaves of mature greens and vegetables. These leaves are part of the cotyledon ('kaa-tuh-**lee**-dn') stage and emerge first during germination. The cotyledon(s) provides every plant with its' initial energy source through the process of photosynthesis. Once the tiny leaves have developed strong roots, they can be harvested and enjoyed!

Each variety of microgreen has its own unique flavor and texture. They are usually intense and aromatic with tender, flavorful stems. The whole plant can be used in many different ways, such as mixed into a stir-fry, blended into smoothies, added to salads for color and crunch or simply munching on a handful out of the refrigerator! Microgreens of all varieties have also been used in the culinary world by chefs for years to garnish dishes.

Microgreens are not only delicious and aesthetically pleasing, they are also nutrient powerhouses! They are a great source of antioxidants and depending on the variety, can contain anywhere from 4 to 40 times as much nutritional value as their mature counterparts. Each variety has a unique micronutrient makeup, but most tend to be rich

in potassium, iron, copper and magnesium. Here at Sunrise Micro Farm, we grow broccoli, swiss chard, radish, pea and sunflower microgreens.

Broccoli is a customer favorite because of its likeness in flavor to the mature vegetable, but one of the really unique things about its tiny cruciferous leaves is that they are rich in Sulforaphane. Sulforaphane is a dietary component of broccoli and is at its peak in broccoli microgreens. This compound has been linked to benefits such as improved cardiovascular health and digestion, but where Sulforaphane has really been proven to shine is in its ability protect DNA and inhibit cancer cell proliferation. If you needed any more reasons, they are also packed with Vitamins A & C, Calcium, Iron and Phosphorus!

In addition to being really good for you, microgreens are good for the environment. If you are looking for more ways to decrease your water consumption, using microgreens can be a really simple addition to your refrigerator that is also great for the environment. Microgreens use anywhere from 150 to 230 times less water than their nutritionally equivalent mature vegetables! We are passionate about sustainability and decreasing our environmental footprint. Growing a water-efficient crop like microgreens is just one of the ways that we put this passion into practice. We love the idea that so many vitamins and minerals are crammed into such a small little package and that we can decrease our water use by adding microgreens to every meal!

