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Salad mix is a blend of lettuces and other greens that are cut and packed as loose leaves. The blend is a balance of color, texture, and flavor that can be tailored to your specific market or customer. There are three basic components of salad mix, but the combinations with other ingredients are numberless.

**Baby leaf lettuce (*Lactuca sativa*):** Sow in a 2–4 inch wide band, seeds roughly ½ inch apart, about 60 seeds per foot. Cover very lightly, about ⅛ inch, and firm gently. Mist or sprinkle soil surface as often as needed to prevent soil from drying out until germination. Use precision seeders to plant at an even higher density. Use one of Johnny's mixes or mix seed of different varieties or sow into their own separate rows.

**Salanova® (*Lactuca sativa*):** Sow 1–2 seeds per cell in 128-cell plug trays, ⅛ inch deep, 3–4 weeks before transplanting outdoors. Shade flats on sunny, warm days, if necessary, to keep the soil surface below 75°F/24°C until germination. Two weeks after germination, transplant into 50- or 72-cell plug trays, one seedling per cell. Harden seedlings by reducing water and temperature for 2–4 days before transplanting outdoors. Lettuce plants are hardy to light frost. Cultivate Salanova heads in the same manner as lettuce. Some growers prefer a tighter spacing of 6 inches for Salanova due to their smaller head size, but others prefer an 8-inch spacing.

**Baby leaf *Brassica* greens:** Sow in a 2–4 inch wide band, seeds roughly ½ inch apart, about 60 seeds per foot. Cover very lightly, about ⅛ inch, and firm gently. Mist or sprinkle soil surface as often as needed to prevent soil from drying out until germination. *Brassica* greens, especially mizunas and tatsoi, are common in many mixes. Each variety thrives on having a row of its own to accommodate different sizes and shapes. *Brassic*as are highly susceptible to flea beetles, which perforate the leaves and reduce marketability; cover with a lightweight floating row cover or insect netting at the time of sowing to exclude beetles.

When planting your salad mix varieties or seed mixes, a general rule of thumb for seed required is  $\frac{1}{16}$  ounce in order to harvest 1 pound. One ounce of seed plants 96 square feet and yields 16 pounds of salad mix. This will vary between the different varieties and their corresponding seeds per pound, but it is a general tool for estimating. Growing conditions will also influence the yield.

#### WEED CONTROL:

Fast-growing greens should not need to be weeded prior to harvest, however the plantings can be cultivated to reduce weed competition. A stale-bed technique can also be used to allow weeds to sprout and be removed prior to sowing the crop.

#### HARVEST:

Salad mix produced by growing baby leaf lettuce is ready to be harvested when it is 4–5 inches tall. Typically, *Brassica* greens are ready to be harvested 1 week earlier than lettuce. Salanova is ready to be harvested once the heads are full and

fairly dense. It is likely that your mix will be made up of crops sown at different times.

For harvesting baby leaf lettuce, cut the leaves about ½ inch above the soil line, place in trays, baskets, or totes, and carry out of the sun to a washing and packing area. To harvest large quantities, use a mechanical harvester with a band-saw blade and conveyor belt, or use the Johnny's Greens Harvester.

Some lettuce and *Brassica* varieties are cut-and-come-again; after the first harvest, they will resprout and grow again. This can give you additional product when needed. Keep in mind that the quality of the second cutting will be lower due to the age of the plants and the presence of “stems” from the first cutting, so many growers chose to cut only once. In order to have fresh, top-quality product to harvest every week, new seedlings should be made regularly during the season.

Salanova can be harvested in the same way as any full-sized lettuce head. The advantage is that the heads can be quickly harvested in the field and then processed into salad mix indoors or undercover. To process Salanova for salad mix, the cored types are first harvested as whole heads and then the cores are removed by using the Salanova Cutter or a knife. At this point, the salad mix-sized leaves will fall freely from the core. The incised types can be harvested by mechanical means or with a knife. By cutting just above the core, the individual leaves can be harvested for salad mix.

#### **CUSTOMIZATION:**

Johnny's offers several premixed blends of seeds to help get you started. They vary from different combinations of lettuces to blends of the most popular *Brassica* greens. You can even grow each variety separately to create your own custom blend. At Johnny's, we evaluate each variety for its suitability as a salad mix component and denote that in our catalog with the salad mix symbol (an encircled, bolded S).

Many CSA programs offer the leaves a little larger than the bagged salads seen in stores. At the 5–6 week stage, Asian greens can be sold as a ready-to-cook braising or sauté mix; complement it with a selection of peppers, snow peas, broccoli florets, and summer squash for a complete dinner.

A standard mix can be offered for customers and then be customized as requested. The addition of edible flowers to your mix can add unique interest, color, and flavor. Johnny's offers a premixed collection of edible flowers, or select varieties from our catalog with the edible flower symbol (a spoon and fork) next to the name. Herbs are another great addition to a salad mix; look for the salad mix symbol in the herbs section in our catalog.

#### **Edible flowers:**

- Bachelor's Button
- Calendula
- Dianthus
- Marigold
- Monarda
- Nasturtium
- Salvia
- Scarlet Runner Bean and Hyacinth Bean
- Sunflowers
- Viola

#### **YIELD:**

If utilizing standard production methods, the estimated yield would be 1 pound of salad mix per 6 square feet. Six rows in a bed would yield 1 pound per linear foot. Only 3 or 4 rows in a bed would require closer to 2 feet of bed space to yield 1 pound.

For Salanova, expect a yield of 6–12 ounces per head or more. However, yields can vary greatly depending on the time of year, soil fertility, geographical location, and the size of the head harvested. Typically a grower can expect that the incised types will yield more weight as compared to the cored types.

#### **Herbs:**

- Chervil
- Cumin
- Cutting Celery
- Dill
- Finocchio/Fennel (leaf)
- Salad Burnet
- Saltwort
- Shiso

Standard Items	Days to Maturity	Direct Seed	Transplant	Features	Notes
<b>Lettuce:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Baby Leaf</li> <li>Salanova®</li> </ul>	Baby: 28–30 days Salanova: 53–55 days	Baby	Salanova	Color Texture Loft Weight	Typically makes up the bulk of a salad mix.
<b>Greens:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asian</li> <li><i>Brassica</i></li> <li>Arugula</li> </ul>	Baby: 21 days	X	X	Color Texture Loft Mild to spicy flavor	Cover with row cover to prevent flea beetle damage.
<b>Specialty Greens</b>	Full Size: 30–85 days	X	X	Texture	Plants are grown to full size and then leaves or plant tips are used in mixes.
<b>Spinach</b>	Baby: 23–30 days	X	X	Weight	Baby leaf spinach can be harvested multiple times.
<b>Kale</b>	Baby: 25–35 days Full Size: 50–60 days	Baby	Full Size	Flavor Weight Texture Loft Color	Cover with row cover to prevent flea beetle damage.
<b>Swiss Chard</b>	Baby: 25–30 days Full Size: 50–60 days	Baby Full Size	Full Size	Flavor Color Weight	Moderately harvested stands of baby leaf can be grown to full size.

Specialty items	Days to Maturity	Direct Seed	Transplant	Features	Notes
<b>Pea pods/Tendrils</b>	Shoots: 10 days Tendrils: 50 days Snow Pea Pods: 57 days	X		Flavor Color Texture	Garnish peas can be grown with or without support.
<b>Micros, Sprouts, Shoots</b>	Sprouts: 5–7 days Shoots: 7–12 days Fast Micros: 10–15 days Slow Micros: 16–25 days	X		Flavor Color Texture	Seed in trays. Some "top-heavy" varieties such as beets should be bottom watered after germination.

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