



International Union of Soil Sciences

The Chard (*Beta vulgaris var cicla*)

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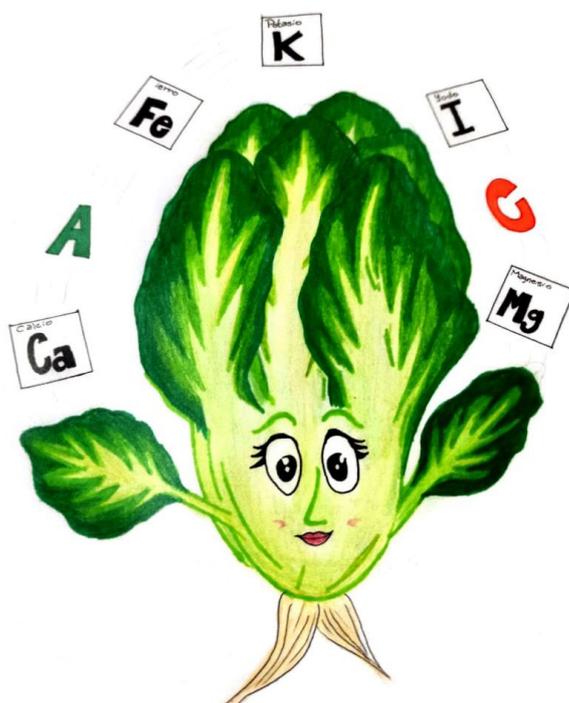
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The Chard

(*Beta vulgaris var cicla*)

Did you know that there is a vegetable just like you like to have your hair cut, likes to have its leaves well-trimmed?

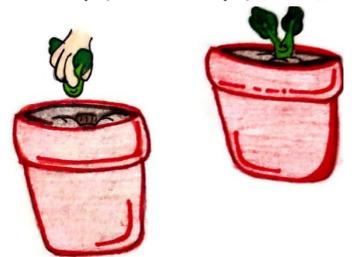


it is called *Beta vulgaris var cicla*, but we know it as Chard.

It is a plant that is usually eaten boiled and has a high content of fiber and minerals such as calcium, iron, potassium, iodine, magnesium, and vitamins A and C, making it very nutritious.

For having a chard plant, it is necessary to place 2 or 3 seeds at a depth between 3 to 5 centimeters and add enough water, but as soon as they are born, you should only leave one plant and eliminate the others because the Chard likes to be alone and not to share its space.

If it does not have enough space, the plant may become sad and not grow well.





When its leaves start to grow, it likes to have enough water without the soil becoming waterlogged. It prefers to grow in a place with enough sunlight but not too hot because it dehydrates with ease. The most favorable temperature for its proper development is between 18 to 22°C (64 to 68°F).

Between 60 to 70 days after the seedlings emerge, the chard will present leaves about 20 cm long, being the moment when it likes to have its first leaves cut.



Only the large leaves should be cut, leaving a little of the white part that looks like a stem, but actually, it is a structure called *petiole* that is part of the leaf, and that in the chard becomes very wide.

From this *petiole*, the following chard leaves will continue to grow.

On each occasion, only the large leaves should be cut off and all the small ones kept, which will continue to grow until they reach a length of about 20 cm again, which is about 15 to 20 days later.

That is the moment when its leaves should be cut again, taking care, once again, to keep the small ones. It is as if the chard is going to the hairdresser, and we keep its leaves trimmed each time.



Chard can have up to 7 leaf cuttings, but if more are formed, more cuttings can be made, although this causes the plant to become old, and the root grows so much that it no longer fits in the pot.



That is why it is good to keep the plant young, to give you soft and better-tasting leaves.

Do not forget to cook the leaves well. You can eat them combined with other vegetables such as onions, tomatoes or potatoes.



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