

# Dandelion Greens

Ted Kaczynski

Editor: this article is suitable for publication in April or early May.

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Most people know that dandelion greens are edible, but many who have tried this vegetable have been badly disappointed because they have gathered it too late in the season, when the leaves are tough and bitter.

To be worth eating, dandelion greens must be gathered very young. Some people may find all the dandelions they want in their lawns; other than that, a good place to get them is along the edge of logging roads soon after the snow is off. You'll have to go on foot and look sharp, because at that time the leaves are small and often rather dark-colored, so that it's easy to miss them.

Bring with you a hand weeder, garden trowel, sharpened bar of iron, or some similar cosh. At the top of the dandelion root, which is generally an inch or two below the surface of the ground, there grows a head, or cluster of leaves. The tastiest part of the dandelion is the white base of this head.

Push your tool into the soil a couple of inches from the plant and lever up, so as to break off the top of the root and bring the whole head in one piece.

When you get home with your dandelions wash them thoroughly, pull off [text unreadable]

[text unreadable] than any home garden vegetable. Still, few people today will gather dandelions for purely [text unreadable] reasons. If you measure the monetary value of the vegetable against the time you spend gathering and preparing it, you'll find that you are working for very [text unreadable].

But in spring most of us like to be out in the sun and air. Gathering dandelion greens is a form of outdoor recreation that costs nothing – and if it knocks a dollar or two off your grocery bill, so much the better.

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To be worth eating, dandelion greens must be gathered very young. Some people may find all the dandelions they want in their lawns; other than that, a good place to get them is along the edges of logging roads soon after the snow is off. You'll have to go on foot and look sharp, because at that time the leaves are small and often rather dark-colored, so that it's easy to miss them.

Bring with you a hen's beeder, garden trowel, sharpened bar of iron, or some similar tool. At the top of the dandelion root, which is generally an inch or two below the surface of the ground, there grows a head, or cluster of leaves. The tastiest part of the dandelion is the white base of this head.

Push your tool into the soil a couple of inches from the plant and lever up, so as to break off the top of the root and bring up the whole head in one piece.

When you get home with your dandelions wash them

thoroughly, wash off the dirt from the leaves of the dandelion leaves, and use all of it -- very little of the top, leaving just enough to keep the roots in the soil. Boil the leaves for ten minutes or so, season with salt and oil, and they are ready to eat. Dandelion is the first food to eat to break the fast.

This wild food is really the richest in the season than any home garden vegetable. Still, few people today will gather dandelions for purely economic reasons. If you measure the monetary value of the vegetable against the time you spend gathering and preparing it, you'll find that you are working for very low wages.

Out in Spring most of us like to be out in the sun and air. Gathering dandelion greens is a form of outdoor recreation that costs nothing -- and if it knocks a dollar or two off your grocery bill, so much the better.

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