Did You Know?

Parsley, *Petroselinum crispum* spp.

- Parsley is an easily grown biennial which grows 12-15 inches high in sun to partial sun and moist well-drained soil.
- There are three main types of parsley grown in the United States:
  - *Petroselinum crispum* var. crispum – Curled-leaf parsley has bright green curly leaves and is the type most frequently used as a garnish.
  - *Petroselinum crispum* var. neapolitanum – Flat-leafed or Italian parsley has a flat leaf and is typically a darker green that the curly variety. It is generally preferred for cooking due to a stronger flavor, though both varieties can be used in cooking.
  - *Petroselinum crispum* var. tuberosum – Turnip-rooted variety is grown for its large root and is eaten as a vegetable.
- The many cultivars of both curled and flat-leafed parsley, each with characteristics that affect flavor, leaf shape and size, are available for home gardeners and commercially.
- Parsley is an attractive and edible addition to garden borders and container gardens.
- The sprig of parsley that is served as a garnish on the dinner plate is both attractive and can be eaten to freshen the diner’s breath at the end of the meal as well as to aid digestion.
- Parsley is added to brighten the overall flavor as well as to heighten the flavors of the other ingredients in the dish.
- Parsley adds nutritional value to dishes as it is rich in iron, calcium and vitamin K, as well as vitamins A, B12, C and folic acid. Flavonoids and antioxidants also add to parsley’s nutritional and healing value.
- According to medieval folklore, parsley cured baldness.
- Infusing parsley in bathwater for both cleansing and soothing the skin has been done for centuries. Infused parsley water also makes a good hair tonic, condition and can be added to lotion. Look for parsley, listed by its botanical name, in the list of ingredients in skin care products.
- Medicinal uses for parsley leaves have included tonics for digestion, tea for improving circulation, and antiseptic poultices for applying to wounds, bites and stings.

It is the policy of The Herb Society of America, Inc. not to advise or recommend herbs for medicinal or health use. This information is intended for educational purposes only and should not be considered as a recommendation or an endorsement of any particular medical or health treatment. Please consult a health care provider before pursuing any herbal treatments.