

The Bronx Salad

TOOLKIT FOR COMMUNITIES



Toolkit Created for NYC Community Gardeners by
Bronx Health REACH and **Grow to Learn NYC**.



Introduction

The Bronx Salad Toolkit is a resource to encourage local communities to serve more healthy food options throughout the Bronx. The original recipe, included on the final page of this toolkit, is a delicious mixture of flavors representing the culinary diversity of the Bronx and is currently being offered at a number of Bronx restaurants. This toolkit includes an adapted recipe and planting guide for community gardens and houses of worship that would like to grow a version of The Bronx Salad in their own gardens. Each ingredient in The Bronx Salad Toolkit can be grown in a shortened season for a late May or early June spring harvest. Ingredients can also be grown starting in the fall for a late October or early November fall harvest. These crops are low maintenance and quick to germinate, making them easy for any level gardener. Communities are encouraged to include additional ingredients that represent their unique neighborhoods.

Toolkit Contents

The History of The Bronx Salad	4
The Bronx Salad Recipe	4
Preparing The Bronx Salad.....	5
The Bronx Salad: Garden Planting and Harvest Instructions.....	6
Indoor vs. Outdoor Planting.....	9
The Bronx Salad Nutrition Information.....	11
Glossary of Gardening Terms.....	12
Resources.....	14

The History of The Bronx Salad



Launched in The Bronx in 2016, The Bronx Salad is part of the Healthy Restaurant Program, a partnership with the Institute for Family Health's Bronx Health REACH, the South Bronx Overall Economic Development (SoBRO) and the United Business Cooperative (UBC).

The Bronx Salad and its signature dressing have received unanimous praise from over 1,000 Bronxites. Made with simple, fresh ingredients, the dressing includes the famous Bronx Greenmarket Hot Sauce, created by acclaimed Chef King Phojanakong, using peppers grown at more than 40 Bronx greenmarket farms and community gardens.

Many Bronx residents are not eating as healthy as they should. By working with community gardens and local restaurant owners, we aim to improve the health of Bronx residents by providing healthier food.



The Bronx Salad Recipe

Salad ingredients:

- Mixed baby greens (hardy greens like kale, collards, swiss chard, mizuno are recommended)
- Radish-thinly sliced in rounds
- Chives-thinly sliced
- Mexican sour gherkins - whole or sliced
- Sungold cherry tomatoes
- Sunflower sprouts
- Popcorn sprouts

Salad dressing ingredients:

- Cilantro
- Olive oil
- Lime juice or Apple Cider Vinegar
- Honey
- Salt & Pepper
- Bronx Hot Sauce (optional)

Substitutions for the Bronx Salad:

- Instead of mixed baby greens, try Asian greens (like arugula, mustard or tatsoi) or hardy winter greens (like kale, cabbage and collard greens)
- Instead of radish, try harukai (Japanese) turnips, carrots or sliced beets
- Instead of chives, try scallions, cilantro or radish sprouts
- Instead of Mexican sour gherkins, try Kirby or Persian cucumbers
- Instead of Sungold cherry tomatoes, try beefsteak or heirloom tomatoes
- Instead of sunflower or popcorn sprouts, try buckwheat sprouts or pea shoots



Additional ingredients like sun-loving bell peppers, red tomatoes, and red onions can also be added.

Keep experimenting! There are lots of delicious substitutions for The Bronx Salad we haven't thought of! Try different combinations and tell us what works for you! Show us your versions of The Bronx Salad by posting on social media and tagging #TheBronxSalad.

Preparing The Bronx Salad

Materials:

- Knives and cutting boards.
- Scissors
- Whisk
- 2-3 large bowls: 1-2 for washing, 1 for the finished salad
- Dressing bowl or large wet measuring cup
- Zester or grater
- Tasting cups, forks, serving spoons

Process:

Divide into four groups: (1) Washing station: all veggies; (2) Scissor chopping: herbs, chives, greens; (3) Chopping station: gherkins, tomatoes, radishes; (4) Dressing station

Washing Station: Fill a large bowl with water. Take the harvested vegetables (harvesting into a large colander works well!) and rinse each type of vegetable carefully in cold water. As they finish washing, they can bring the washed produce to the prep stations. Special attention should be paid to sprouts and baby greens.

Scissor Station: Using safety scissors or garden scissors, snip cilantro (or other herbs) and chives into small pieces. Set aside in a bowl. If greens are harvested at a larger size than baby greens, they can be cut into smaller bite-size pieces with scissors.



Chopping Station: Cut each gherkin and cherry tomato in half or quarters. Radishes can be sliced or quartered.




Dressing Station: Zest and juice the lime into a bowl or large measuring cup. Add olive oil, salt, pepper, and honey. A good rule of thumb is to build a dressing with 2:1 oil to acid ratio. Whisk the dressing together with the snipped/scissored herbs and chives.



Mix the greens, sprouts, and chopped vegetables in a large bowl with the dressing. If you are harvesting larger greens, students can first 'massage' the dressing into the greens to soften the larger leaves. If they are baby greens this is not a necessary step. Mix the salad and serve in small tasting cups.

The Bronx Salad: Garden Planting and Harvest Instructions

*Seeds can be found in starter seed kit and can be replenished through Grow to Learn, Johnny's Seed Catalog and Urban Garden Center (116th Street NY, NY)

Crop Name	Crop Picture	Days to harvest	Spring Planting Date	Fall Planting Date	Harvest Notes
Baby greens: Kale, Collard Greens, Mizuno Lettuce		21-30 days	Early May	Mid September	Harvest by pinching outer leaves or 'mowing' the greens with a pair of scissors. Greens can be harvested as 'micro' greens after only 10 days, baby greens after 21-30 days, and larger heads of greens after longer periods.
Radish		21-30 days	Early May	Mid September	You can see how big the radish is by brushing aside the top layer of soil to see the top of the root (the radish). Thin seedlings if they are growing too close. You can eat the greens as well!

Chives		60 days	Mid April direct sow outside, or transplant in late April from seedlings	Early September direct sow	Cut chives with scissors - students can 'chop' chives into smaller pieces with safety scissors when prepping the salad.
Mexican Sour Gherkins		50-70 days	Seed indoors in mid to late March, transplant outside in late April/Early May	This crop is not recommended for fall planting	Sour gherkins look like baby watermelons, but taste like lemony cucumbers! These vining plants are fun and pretty, and will fruit all spring and summer long and into later fall.
Sungold Cherry Tomatoes		50-70 days	Seed indoors in mid to late March, transplant outside in late April/Early May	This crop is not recommended for fall planting	Tomatoes can be harvested when they change color from green to yellow (or red if you're growing a red cherry!) Growing cherry tomatoes gives you more fruits throughout the summer, which is a good idea when working with students.

<p>Shoots- Popcorn, Sunflower</p>		<p>10-14 days</p>	<p>Late May or early June</p>	<p>Early to Mid October</p>	<p>Sprouts can be cut with scissors or pinched off with your fingers. For winter projects, keep multiple trays of sprouts going in your classroom year round for weekly harvests!</p>
<p>Cilantro, other herbs</p>		<p>21-30 days</p>	<p>Late April</p>	<p>Early September</p>	<p>Snip with scissors - cilantro can be continuously harvested throughout the season. If it goes to seed, harvest the seeds and dry them- that's coriander!</p>

Indoor vs. Outdoor Planting

Planting indoors is a great way to prepare for the gardening season while it's still cold outside and there is snow on the ground! Read your seed packets carefully to fully understand the care steps and how much time they will need to grow. This information is especially important when growing the ingredients for The Bronx Salad as you want to make all of the ingredients are ready to harvest at the same time.

Outdoor Planting	Indoor Planting
Sunlight	Grow lights, often set on a timer to make sure plants get enough light and warmth to grow, but not too much to burn them.
Heat from the outdoors	Heat from the light/lamp (70-75 F)
Water from rainfall	Watering done by hand
Nutrients from the soil	Manually add compost or nutrient solution to help plants grow.



The Bronx Salad Original Recipe

Created by Chef King, Bronx Health REACH, SoBRO and the United Business Cooperative

Salad Ingredients:

- Red leaf or green leaf lettuce (or kale if preferred)
- Red peppers
- Red onions
- Black beans (low-sodium)
- Corn
- Tomatoes
- Mango
- Cilantro
- Avocado
- Plantain chips

Salad dressing ingredients:

- Apple cider vinegar - 1 teaspoon
- Lime juice - 1 teaspoon
- Orange juice - 1/4 teaspoon
- Olive oil - 1 teaspoon
- Dijon mustard - 1 teaspoon
- Salt & Pepper - 1/4 teaspoon of each
- Honey - 1 teaspoon
- Hot sauce - 1 teaspoon

The Bronx Salad Nutrition Information

- ✓ **Red leaf or green leaf lettuce** (or kale if preferred) - contains a healthy dose of vitamin A which improves eye function.
- ✓ **Red peppers** - have vitamin C and ascorbic acid, which keep the immune system healthy and strong.
- ✓ **Red onions** – contains calcium that is necessary to grow strong bones and teeth.
- ✓ **Black beans (low-sodium)** – made up of mostly protein and fiber that keep a person feeling full and energized. .
- ✓ **Corn** - main source of energy which are carbohydrates. Corn contains the mineral potassium which helps keep muscles moving freely.
- ✓ **Tomatoes** - filled with the super vitamin C that helps fight the toxins that attempt to make the body sick. Tomatoes provide us with Iron which gives oxygen to the whole body.
- ✓ **Mangoes** - good source of vitamins A, C and E. Eat this fruit to maintain strong skin and tissue growth.
- ✓ **Cilantro** - contains vitamin K which promotes healthy bones and speedy healing.
- ✓ **Avocadoes** - loaded with vitamins and the heart healthy fats to combat heart disease and aid digestion.
- ✓ **Plantain chips** - a tasty and healthy snack when consumed in moderation. Plantain chips can support the immune system and keep skin healthy due to the vitamin A and C. Plantains are high in fiber, supporting a healthy metabolism.

Salad dressing ingredients:

- ✓ **Apple cider vinegar** - a great base for salad dressings, apple cider contains acetic acid. The active ingredient in apple cider vinegar can help blood sugar levels stay stable.
- ✓ **Lime juice** - can help the body achieve daily intake of Folic Acid and vitamin C to battle illnesses. Limes also have antibacterial properties.
- ✓ **Orange juice** - contain vitamin C that will increase absorption of Iron. They also contain minerals like phosphorus, magnesium and potassium to help sustain a healthy nervous system.
- ✓ **Olive oil** - this healthy monounsaturated fat protects cells from damage with vitamin E and K. Olive oil supports normal heart functions.
- ✓ **Dijon mustard** - made from mustard seeds, which have minerals such as Selenium to promote good blood flow.
- ✓ **Salt & Pepper** - an essential spice mixture is a staple for good reasons. Salt is a mineral needed by the body to perform tasks like regulating the heartbeat. The Manganese and Iron in pepper make it great for bone and intestinal health.
- ✓ **Honey** - packed with antioxidants that repel and fight the pollutants encountered daily.
- ✓ **Hot sauce** - contains capsicum which gives it the heat that has anti-inflammatory benefits.

Glossary of Gardening Terms

Starting seeds



Planting seeds, usually indoors under grow lights.

Direct seed/Direct sow



Planting a seed directly in the soil outside.

Thin seedlings



Snipping or pulling out some seedlings to allow others the room and resources (moisture, light and nutrients) to grow. Thinning seedlings also allows for more air to circulate around the plants, helping to ward off disease.

Transplant



Taking the seedlings you started indoors and planting them outdoors when they have grown big enough, have been hardened off and outside weather is permitting. Dates and conditions for transplanting outside should be listed on the back of your seed pack.

Hardening off



Slowly letting seedlings acclimate to outdoor weather before transplanting outside, preventing transplant shock. This is usually done by bringing seedlings outdoors for a few hours a day (sometimes protecting them with row cover or heavy duty plastic) and bringing them indoors at night, increasing the number of outside hours until transplanting.

Resources

Bronx Health REACH provides technical assistance and materials to community gardens to promote the consumption of more nutritious foods and beverages and increased physical activity. Bronx Health REACH is a project of the Institute for Family Health. Visit www.bronxhealthreach.org

Build It Green! NYC provides free or low-cost materials for planter boxes or other projects. Visit bignyc.org

Fiskars Project Orange Thumb provides grants, tools, and hands-on garden makeovers. Visit www2.fiskars.com/Community/Project-Orange-Thumb

NYC Department of Parks and Recreation Green Thumb (GT) supports community gardens throughout NYC. It provides monthly workshops covering gardening basics and more advanced farming and community organizing topics. Visit greenthumbnyc.org

Woolly School Gardens can be hung on a wall or a fence to provide garden pockets. Good for small spaces or indoor gardens. Visit woollyschoolgarden.org

Horticulture Society of New York has designed and built gardens for over 50 years. It hosts workshops and provides resources to communities. Visit thehort.org

GrowNYC Garden Program builds and sustains community gardens, urban farms, and rainwater harvesting systems across New York City. Request assistance at your garden or find resources at grownyc.org

New York Restoration Project provides support for projects of various scales including resources, planning, and actual garden build. Submit an application at nyrp.org

New York City Community Garden Coalition works to promote the preservation, creation, and empowerment of community gardens through education, advocacy, and grassroots organizing. Visit nyccgc.org

Bronx Green Up is the community gardening outreach program of The New York Botanical Garden. Bronx Green-Up provides horticulture education, training, and technical assistance to Bronx residents, community gardeners, urban farmers, local schools, and community organizations. nybg.org