



EDIBLE PLANTS FOR YOUR SURVIVAL

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1

Top 10 Wild Edibles

Since you never know when you may be caught high and dry in the wilderness with little or nothing in the way of survival gear or emergency food, this article aims to arm you with some extra knowledge about common wild edibles.

We'll go over 10 of the most common wild edibles, what nutrition they contain and how to prepare them or which part(s) to eat.



1.1 Dandelions

Renowned as a weed and the bane of many a lawn-owner's existence, the common dandelion is actually one of the best wild edibles you could ever hope for.

Not only does dandelion grow practically everywhere, you also need practically no training to recognize it (especially when it is in flower) and it is absolutely loaded with nutrients.

The nutrients in dandelion include minerals and vitamins such as beta carotene, iron and calcium. Dandelion is also loaded with potassium, biotin, magnesium, phosphorous and zinc, as well as vitamins B1, B2, B5, B6, B12, C, E and vitamin D.

Both the green leaves and the yellow flowers are edible, though most people prefer to just eat the leaves; dandelion greens can be eaten in salads or boiled like spinach or added to soups.

They tend to be a more bitter green, so if you want to ease the bitterness try boiling them for a while with 2 – 3 changes of water.



1.2 Pine Trees

Pine trees might not seem like an obvious source of food, but they are actually a pretty nice, versatile food source.

Use pine needles to steep a zesty, refreshing tea that will also replenish your vitamin C levels – pine needle tea had 3 – 5 times as much vitamin C as orange juice.

Pine nuts are also edible, highly nutritious and packed with protein; you can eat them raw, roasted, tossed into a salad or ground up into nut butter.

During spring and summer the new, soft green growth of pine needles is edible, too. In a truly tight spot, you can eat the inner bark of a pine tree as well.

The inner bark is a good source of sugars and several different vitamins, and you can eat it raw or make it a little more palatable by boiling it. The inner bark can also be dried out and pulverized into flour.



1.3 Clover

Another plant known more as a weed and a pest in the garden than as a potential food source, you'd be surprised how tasty clover can actually be.

White and red clover are both edible, and can be chewed on and eaten raw, tossed in salads, or boiled in soups, stews or a tea.

Clover flowers are especially useful for making tea, with a naturally light sweet flavor. Many traditional recipes for hot teas and tonics include clover, as well.



1.4 Black Walnut

Walnuts are one of the easier wild nuts to identify, just look for the giant green ball, sometimes as large as a fist, hanging from the branches or turning gradually brown / black on the ground in autumn.

Black walnuts have a rough outer husk that will be green on the tree and then will turn black during autumn as the nuts sit on the ground; beneath the husk you'll find the inner chamber that you break open to get the nut.

Rich in healthy fats as well as protein, black walnuts also contain magnesium, phosphorous, manganese and copper.

The intrepid survivalist is in luck with black walnuts, too, because most animals don't like chewing through the tough, bitter outer husk that protects the nut. That means you can find black walnuts still lying on the ground well into fall and winter.



1.5 Hazelnuts (Filberts)

Although these are a seasonal wild edible, hazelnuts are a fantastic, bountiful source of food when you can find them.

Packed with calories, healthy fats and protein, hazelnuts are also a good source of vitamin E, manganese, thiamine and copper.

Look for hazelnuts in the fall when they ripen within their little green husks. Hazelnuts generally grow in dense clusters, and you'll know they are perfectly ripe when they practically fall out of their green husks.



1.6 Wild Asparagus

Quite similar to the kind you buy in store, wild asparagus has a much thinner stalk than its domesticated cousin, but it is equally edible and packed with nutrients.

Whether you eat it raw or boil it, you can prepare wild asparagus exactly as you would the normal variety and it's full of vitamin C, potassium, thiamine and vitamin B6.



1.7 Cattails

While they aren't the tastiest food ever, cattails provide a surprising source of emergency survival food in a pinch, and they beat eating beetles.

Younger cattail is softer and quite edible, but you can also eat the rootstalk of the plant (wash it very thoroughly) either raw or boiled. The leaves can also be boiled and eaten, and you can eat the inner portions of the stalk raw or boiled to soften them.

In spring and early summer, when the female spike on the cattail is still young and developing you can break it off and eat it raw like corn on the cob.



1.8 Rose Hips

While rose hips were once a staple in many folk remedies, and a popular item for making tea, jams and preserves, many people overlook this great wild edible.

Sweet and tangy, these juicy red fruits grow in the summer and fall on wild roses after the petals have fallen from the flowers.

There are many ways to eat rose hips, including steeped raw, steeped as a tea, in fruit salad and preserved as a jam. You can also make a light, sweet syrup from the juice of rose hips and they are a great source of calcium, vitamin C, vitamin E, vitamin K, vitamin A and manganese.

You can also use rose hips to make what is called rose water. Boil the rose hips in water and then strain the fruit out; when the rose water is cool you can drink it and apply it topically as a tonic.

Rose water has natural antiseptic and anti-inflammatory properties, so it's a great remedy to have on hand and it's easy to make, too.



1.9 Raspberries, Blackberries & Boysenberries

For anyone with a sweet tooth and those who love their fruits, you're in luck because in most areas wild raspberries, blackberries and even boysenberries tend to thrive.

You can find these easily identified plants in forests, meadows, along country roads and practically everywhere in between, but be careful not to eat berries from plants treated with herbicides or pesticides.

While it might not need saying, you can collect these berries from mid-summer on through fall. Eat them raw, on cereal, in jams, dry them, bake them in pies or make juice of them, there are tons of things you can do with these sweet, tart berries.

They're also loaded with vitamin C, vitamin K and healthy sugars, so enjoy.



1.10 Mushrooms

In reality, this should probably be another list in and of itself, since there are many, many types of wild mushrooms that are edible, but mushrooms in general are worthy of note.

Whether you eat them raw, sauté them, grill them, boil them, make gravy of them or add them to soup or to eggs, wild mushrooms can add flavor and quite a bit of nutritional content to your meal.

When it comes to identifying mushrooms, however, you must be absolutely certain as there is no room for doubt; many edible mushrooms have poisonous relatives who look very similar and death by mushroom poisoning is a slow and painful process, so be careful.

For those who know what they are doing, though, the forest offers a bounty of edible mushrooms, including: oyster mushrooms, chanterelles (an orange, trumpet-shaped mushroom), portabella mushrooms, lobster mushrooms, edible boletus (known more commonly as porcino mushrooms) and many more.

Hopefully you've enjoyed this short guide to some of the wild edibles available in a survival situation. Remember to exercise extreme caution whenever you consume wild edibles, and don't consume a food unless you are absolutely certain of your identification.



2

4 Edible Plants to Grow Indoors

If you truly want to be prepared for a real SHTF scenario, you will need to learn how to depend on others less and less for basic necessities such as food. Some of us still rely on companies to provide us with our food.

However, you could learn useful skills that would reduce this dependency such as growing your own food. Don't worry about not having an open space for a garden. There are many plants which will thrive indoors.

Indoor gardening comes with several benefits. First, you don't have to worry about where your next meal is coming from. Furthermore, it is more cost effective. Last but not least, locally grown vegetables taste better and are better for the environment. The best part is that there are plenty of fruits and vegetables which will grow inside just as they would in a lush garden. All they need is a little space and access to the sun.

2.1 General Advice

Before going into the various plants you could grow indoors, here are a few general tips which apply to all cases.

First of all, some consideration should go to *the pots* you use. In order to thrive, indoor plants will require well-draining soil. This gives you two options. You could use pots that have holes at the bottom, this will allow the water to drain out. However, if you do this, you should also place a drainage container under the pot, otherwise the water will end up on your floor.

The other option would be to pile up stones at the bottom of the pot. This is done before adding the soil. In this case, the water will drain through the stones, but this is a good option mostly for bigger pots.

Once you have the pots sorted, you should focus on *the soil*. You will want rich and fertile soil for your plants to grow big. This also gives you two options: either buy the soil or make your own.

Either way, you should know that different plants will require different kinds of soil. There is a standard potting mix, though, which will provide good results with all plants.

Lastly, you will want to create the best *environment* for your plants. This would mean warm and sunny. However, that is not always possible.

Maybe you live in an area with bad weather or maybe your windows do not have access to the sun.

In this situation, you can use grow lights. These can recreate the necessary light and temperature and make sure your fruits and vegetables have optimal conditions to grow.



2.2 What To Grow Indoors

If you do decide to use homegrown food as a main source of sustenance, it is important to diversify your plants for several reasons.

For starters, you will not want to eat the same thing over and over again. It will get boring and can also deplete you of valuable nutrients that the food is lacking.

More importantly, though, crops will live and reproduce at different times of the year. If you have only one kind of plant, you are covered for one part of the year and left completely exposed for the rest.

In this regard, crops are often grouped into three categories: annuals, biennials and perennials. Annuals have the shortest lifespan. It only takes them one summer to grow and reproduce. Biennials will use the entire summer to grow, last over the winter and then use the next season to flower. Lastly, there are perennials which can last for many years. They will flower and produce seeds once a year when they are in season.

Speaking of seeds, it is important to know that you should not consume all of the plants you grow. In order to keep this process going, you will need to collect seeds from your best plants and use them for the next growing season.

2.2.1. Carrots



Carrots are a good choice for indoor gardening because they provide you with a lot of nutrients such as vitamins A, B6, C, potassium, niacin etc.

You will need to use a pot at least a foot and a half in length and width. The soil you use should be rich in humus for better results.

The seeds are placed an inch apart in rows six inches apart. Add a thin layer of soil on top and remember to water them frequently to keep the soil moist. It takes about two weeks for the seeds to germinate. The carrots can be harvested once they reach about an inch or slightly less across the top.

If you want to collect the seeds, this will be a two-year process since carrots are biennials. At the end of the second season, the seeds should be mature. You can tell this if they are brown and have detached from the umbels. You will have to cut the seed stalks yourself. The seeds will not fall to the ground as they have little hooks to keep them attached to the plant.

2.2.2. Tomatoes



Tomatoes are good for you because they contain vitamins and a powerful antioxidant called lycopene.

If you are using smaller pots, you will need to limit one plant per pot. Standard potting mix will work great for tomatoes.

Plant the seeds about a quarter inch deep. Give them plenty of sun and water, but don't keep the soil too soggy. Occasionally, you should rotate the pot so that all of the plant is getting sun. The seeds should germinate in 5 to 10 days. After a few weeks, you can add an organic fertilizer to encourage growth.

The indoor tomatoes will not grow as large as outdoor ones, but they are still as juicy. They are ready to harvest when they are firm and red, but have a bit of give when you squeeze them.

Those you want for seeds you should let ripen a bit more. The seeds can then be removed, but dry them before storing.

2.2.3. Oranges



Oranges are some of the best fruits around due to their high antioxidant and vitamin C content.

In order to grow them inside, you will need to use dwarf orange trees. Even so, they will still need a lot of space combined with rich soil and plenty of sun. Try to use a large pot for these.

The roots can grow really long and can even begin to grow back on themselves. If this happens, the orange tree will need to be repotted in a larger pot.

As soon as the fruit turns orange in color, it is ready for harvesting. Leave the ones for seeds a bit longer, then collect the seeds, dry them and store them.

2.2.4. Scallions



Scallions are a good choice for indoor gardening because they are very easy to plant.

You don't even need seeds. You can take a bunch of scallions wrapped together and place it in a glass with an inch of water.

Change the water daily and it will not be long until new green shoots appear. When this happens, place the scallions in a small pot.

When harvesting, be sure to leave an inch or two of the scallions in the dirt.