

Brussel sprouts nutrition facts

See the table below for in depth analysis of nutrients:

Brussel sprouts (*Brassica oleracea Gemmifera Group*), fresh, Nutrition value per 100 g.

(Source: USDA National Nutrient data base)

Principle	Nutrient Value	Percentage of RDA
Energy	43 Kcal	2%
Carbohydrates	8.95 g	7%
Protein	3.38 g	6%
Total Fat	0.30 g	1%
Cholesterol	0 mg	0%
Dietary Fiber	3.80 g	10%
Vitamins		
Folates	61 µg	15%
Niacin	0.745 mg	4.5%
Pantothenic acid	0.309 mg	6%
Pyridoxine	0.219 mg	17%
Riboflavin	0.90 mg	7%
Thiamin	0.139 mg	13%
Vitamin A	754 IU	25%
Vitamin C	85 mg	142%
Vitamin K	177 µg	147%
Electrolytes		
Sodium	25 mg	1.5%
Potassium	389 mg	8%

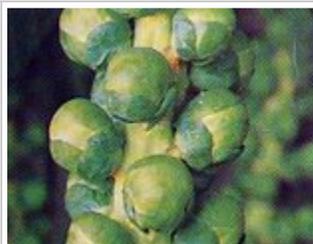
Minerals		
Calcium	42 mg	4%
Copper	0.70 mg	8%
Iron	1.40 mg	17.5%
Magnesium	23 mg	6%
Manganese	0.337 mg	15%
Phosphorus	69 mg	10%
Selenium	1.6 µg	3%
Zinc	0.42 mg	4%
Phyto-nutrients		
Carotene-a	6 µg	--
Carotene-β	450 µg	--
Crypto-xanthin-β	0 µg	--
Lutein-zeaxanthin	1590 µg	--

Brussel sprouts are small, leafy green buds resembling like miniature cabbages in appearance. They nonetheless are exceptionally rich sources of protein, dietary fiber, vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants. In fact, a renewed interest among the scientific community is emerging about health benefits of Brussels sprouts have to offer.

Botanically, the sprouts belong to the same Brassica family of vegetables which also includes [cabbage](#), [collard greens](#), [broccoli](#), and [kale](#). Scientific name: **Brassica oleracea (Gemifera Group)**.



Brussel sprouts. Close-up view.
Note that Brussels heads resembling miniature cabbages.



Sprouts growing all along the stalk.

Brussels sprouts are winter crops flourishing well under cool weather and light frosting conditions.

Well-grown plant reaches about 90 cm in height. The sprouts develop all along the stalk, starting from the base and moving upward. Each sprout, in general, features similarity in appearance and structure to [cabbage](#), but only very small in size, measuring about 1-1.5 inches in diameter. In structure, each sprout head consists of clusters of stiff leaves superimposed in compact layers, giving it a round or globular shape as in cabbages.

In order to get uniform sprouts, the tip of the stalk is trimmed as soon as sprouts at the bottom begin to develop. These developing buds should be protected from direct sunlight since exposing them to hot weather would lead to loose, less-compact buds. Sprouts are one of the most popular vegetables in the United States, and Mediterranean Europe.

Health benefits of Brussel sprouts

- Brussel sprouts are one of the low-glycemic nutritious vegetables that should be considered in weight reduction programs. 100 grams of Brussel sprouts provide just 45 calories, nonetheless, they contain 3.38 g of protein, 3.80 g of dietary fiber (10% of RDA) and zero cholesterol.
- In fact, Brussels sprouts are a storehouse of several flavonoid anti-oxidants such as *thiocyanates*, *indoles*, *lutein*, *zea-xanthin*, *sulforaphane* and *isothiocyanates*. Together, these phytochemicals offer protection from prostate, colon, and endometrial cancers.
- **Di-indolyl-methane** (DIM), a metabolite of *indole-3-carbinol*, is found to be an effective immune modulator, anti-bacterial and anti-viral agent through its action of potentiating "Interferon-gamma" receptors.
- Additionally, Brussel sprouts contain a glucoside, **sinigrin**. Early laboratory studies suggest that sinigrin helps protect from colon cancers by destroying pre-cancerous cells.
- Brussel sprouts are excellent sources of **vitamin C**; 100 g sprouts provide about 85 mg or 142% of RDA. Together with other antioxidant vitamins such as vitamin A and E, it helps protect the human body by trapping harmful free radicals.
- **Zea-xanthin**, an important dietary carotenoid found in sprouts, is selectively absorbed into the retinal macula-lutea in the eyes where it is thought to provide anti-oxidant and protective light-filtering functions from UV rays. Thus, it helps prevent retinal damage, "age-related macular degeneration related macular degeneration disease" (ARMD), in the elderly.
- Brussel sprouts are a good source of another anti-oxidant vitamin, vitamin-A; providing about 754 IU per 100 g (25% of RDA). Vitamin-A is required for maintaining healthy mucosa and skin, and is essential for eye health. Foods rich in this vitamin have been found to offer protection against lung and oral cavity cancers.
- It is one of the excellent vegetable sources for **vitamin-K**; 100 g provides about 177 µg or about 147% of RDA. Vitamin K has potential role bone health by promoting osteotropic (bone formation and strengthening) activity. Adequate vitamin-K levels in the diet help limiting neuronal damage in the brain and thereby, preventing or at least delaying the onset of **Alzheimer's disease**.
- Further, the sprouts are notably good in many B-complex groups of vitamins such as niacin, vitamin B-6 (pyridoxine), thiamin, pantothenic acid, etc., that are essential for substrate metabolism inside the human body.
- They are also rich source of minerals like copper, calcium, potassium, iron, manganese, and phosphorus. 100 g fresh sprouts provide 25 mg (1.5% of RDA) sodium and 389 mg (8% of RDA) potassium. Potassium is an important component of cell and body fluids that helps controlling heart rate and blood pressure by countering effects of sodium. Manganese is

used by the body as a co-factor for the antioxidant enzyme, *superoxide dismutase*. **Iron** is required for cellular oxidation and red blood cell formation.

Brussels sprouts are incredibly nutritious vegetables that offers protection from vitamin-A deficiency, bone loss, iron-deficiency anemia, and believed to protect from cardiovascular diseases and colon and prostate cancers.

Selection and storage

Brussel sprouts are cool season vegetables. In general, sprouts are harvested when their lower buds reach maturity and achieve about an inch in diameter. Fresh sprouts should feature firm, compact, and dark green heads. Avoid sprouts that featuring loose leaf, yellowish and light in hand.

Fresh sprouts keep well inside the refrigerator for up to a day or two. Remove any damaged or discolored outer leaves and store fresh unwashed sprouts in plastic bags/zip pouches in the vegetable container inside the refrigerator.

Preparation and serving methods

Before cooking, remove discolored and loose outer leaves and trim the stem end. Wash in clean water, and then, soak for a few minutes in salt water to remove any dirt particles and insect's eggs.

Fresh sprouts exhibit delicate flavor, however, overcooking results in the release of *allyl isothiocyanates* imparting sulfurous odor (pungent smell) to cooked recipes. It is, therefore, sprouts should generally blanch in boiling water for just about 5 minutes, cooled and then added to the recipes.

Here are some serving tips:



Roasted Brussel sprouts with greens and stuffed omelette.
Photo courtesy: [vkanaya](#).

- Sprouts can be cooked by boiling, microwaving or steaming.
- Roasted and salted sprouts are one of the favorite snacks across Europe.
- Blanched sprouts are braised/ mixed with other vegetables like [carrot](#), [green beans](#), or mushrooms.
- The sprouts are used as favorite add on in chicken casseroles.

Safety profile

Being a Brassica family vegetable, Brussel sprouts too may contain goitrogens, which may cause swelling of thyroid gland and should be avoided in individuals with thyroid dysfunction. However, they may be used liberally among healthy persons. ([Medical disclaimer](#)).

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Further reading and Resources:

1. [USDA National Nutrient Database](#).
2. Stanford School of Medicine Cancer information Page- [Nutrition to Reduce Cancer Risk](#).
3. University of Illinois Extension