



Purslane weed-A source of nutrition

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Purslane (*Portulaca oleracea* L.) is a common weed in turfgrass areas as well as in field crops. Many varieties of purslane under many names grow in a wide range of different climates and regions. Purslane has wide acceptability as a potherb in Central Europe, Asia and the Mediterranean region.

Purslane is important component of green salad and also used for cooking as well as a pickle. Its medicinal value is evident from its use for treatment of burns, headache and diseases related to the intestine, liver, stomach, cough, shortness of breath and arthritis. Its use as an anti-inflammatory and diuretic treatment makes it important in herbal medicine. Purslane has also been used in the treatment of osteoporosis and psoriasis.

Purslane is a very good source of alpha-linolenic acid.

Alpha-linolenic is an omega-

3 fatty acid which plays an important role in human growth and development and in preventing diseases. Purslane has been shown to contain five times higher omega-3 fatty acids than spinach. Omega-3 fatty acids belong to a group of polyunsaturated fatty acids essential for human growth, development, prevention of numerous cardiovascular diseases and maintenance of a healthy immune system. Our bodies do not synthesise omega-3 fatty acids. Therefore, omega-3 fatty acids must be consumed from a dietary source.

Growing conditions: Purslane finds many growing conditions suitable, as long as the area it is planted in has a two-month growing period. It tolerates a wide variety of light, from full sun to full shadow, as well as broad temperature ranges are (above 70°F and thrives even when it gets above 100°F) and soil types. Its succulent characteristics make purslane drought resistant.

Sowing: Purslane mostly grows around the Mediterranean ocean and loves heat to truly develop wellgrow in high intensity of light. Although it grows naturally in the wild, one can also sow it in the vegetable patch. Sow preferably in spring or summer in a full sun spot.



– Sowing time from March to September.

– Wait for the soil to have warmed up well to sow (wait for May in the colder climate regions).

– Sow in rows (every 20 cm) in light and well-draining soil.

– Water at the beginning to ensure that the ground stays damp.

– Thin when the sprouts have formed a few leaves, keeping only the most vigorous sprout.

– Pinch the stems when plants have reached a size of more or less 10 cm.

Harvesting: Purslane re-seeds spontaneously and a single plant can be harvested upto 3 times during the year. You can start to harvest purslane more or less 2 months after sowing, or a bit later depending on the growing conditions and the climate. Harvest the purslane stems by collecting the stem, but don't cut too short to enable regrowth. Better to harvest young purslane stems, since the leaves are more delicious. The younger the purslane leaves, the more they melt in your mouth.

Storage: Purslane is a plant that doesn't keep fresh for very long duration and since it doesn't hold well to freezing. But it can easily be kept for 2 or 3 days in the refrigerator, in the vegetable compartment, wrapped in paper tissue and it is possible to pickle purslane in jars with vinegar and thus, keep it for several months.