



Sourcing Lemongrass

Our lemongrass is grown by a co-op of small farmers in Sri Lanka. These farmers are working together to establish a prosperous and sustainable farming community that will enhance the socioeconomic standards of its members. Another tenant of the co-op is that it operates fairly, without racial, gender, and religious discrimination. Since the co-op encompasses different ethnic communities with a variety of microclimates and crops, respecting diversity is very important. Women play an equal role in the organization.

Some of the endeavors of the co-op include learning how to grow new cash crops, drinking water projects to bring potable water to the villages, and the distribution of planting stock and livestock such as goats and cows to members.

Lemongrass is only one of the ten botanicals we purchase from our Well Earth partner in Sri Lanka. But because of their commitment to economic, social and environmental sustainability — as well as the quality of their products — we continuously work with them to identify other crops they might provide.



Lemony Herbal Tea

This lovely, light tea is delicious as a warm after-dinner beverage. It's also refreshing when iced — as is or combined with a fruity juice.

4 cups boiling water **4 tablespoons lemongrass,**
2 tablespoons peppermint leaf **cut and sifted**
2 tablespoons raspberry leaf **honey to taste (optional)**

Pour boiling water over herbs. Steep five minutes. Strain and serve. Sweeten with honey, if you like.

Another option: Combine equal parts brewed tea with equal parts fruit juice (such as apple). Garnish with lemon and serve over ice.

Safety Note: Lemongrass has not been proven safe for consumption during pregnancy.



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herb savvy

Lemongrass

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- » Lemony Herbal Tea
- » Lemongrass Hair Rinse
- » Lemongrass Facial

... and more!



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Q&A

Lemongrass

Can I use dried lemongrass in place of fresh in a cooking recipe?

Yes. Less potent and tougher than the fresh stalks, dried lemongrass leaves don't make a simple one-to-one substitution for fresh lemongrass in most recipes. The dried herb is more readily available, though, and it can be used in many dishes. For soups and stews, tie the dried lemongrass in a muslin cloth or bag for removal after the dish is cooked. Or add to marinades and sauces, then strain out the leaves before serving. Another option is to grind the lemongrass into fine pieces before adding to dishes. As a guideline, use one tablespoon of dried lemongrass herb for every stalk of fresh called for in the recipe.

Are there different types of lemongrass?

Yes, there are two main species. One species of lemongrass, *Cymbopogon flexuosus*, is native to India, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Burma. It's also known as East Indian lemongrass. *Cymbopogon citratus*, or West Indian lemongrass, or fever grass, is native to India and Ceylon. The species are basically interchangeable, although *C. citratus* is preferred for cooking.

When a recipe calls for a nonmetal pot (as so many herbal recipes do), what should I use?

You'll want to try to always use a nonmetal or "non-reactive" pot when making any herbal concoction. A glass pot is perfect, but enamel or stainless steel will also work. The idea is to prevent the metal in the pot from reacting with (and contaminating) the herbs. (Metal pots also typically react with acidic foods.) This is especially important with aluminum and copper pots, which can leach the metals into your herbal preparation.

Since lemongrass is grown and used in so many places around the world, does it have other names?

Yes, lemongrass varieties are also known as herbe de citron (French), hierba de limon (Spanish), sera or bhustrina (Indian), serai (Malaysian), sere or sereh (Indonesian), erba di limone (Italian), bai mak nao (Laos), and takrai (Thai). Even in the U.S. lemongrass goes by other names, such as camel's hay, geraniumgrass, and oil-plant.

Visit www.frontiercoop.com to find more product, sourcing and use information about lemongrass. Also available are photos from our recent sourcing trip to Sri Lanka. To view these photos look on the "sourcing" tab under product information.

Lighten up with Lemongrass

A tall, tufted, perennial grass, lemongrass is sharply bladed but gently aromatic. In all arenas — culinary, body care, household — it's a refreshing herb, green and light, with a hint of ginger. Lemongrass is cultivated in many tropical and subtropical climates around the world, including the warmest areas of the United States. The herb can be used fresh or dried, and the essential oil has been a staple of aromatherapy for centuries.

Lemon Taste without the Pucker

Often used to lighten heavier dishes, lemongrass is popular in Indonesian, Caribbean, Thai, Sri Lankan, Malaysian, Indian, and Vietnamese cooking. The lemony/herbal plant imparts the aroma and zest of lemon without the citrus bite of the fruit. It's enjoyed in teas (especially in Africa and Latin America), soups, stews, marinades, pickles, and curries (often in tandem with coconut milk), and it's an especially delicious accompaniment to poultry, fish and seafood. Lemongrass is even added to some baked goods and desserts. Other seasonings that often share a recipe with lemongrass include garlic, chilies, cilantro, and coriander. The entire grass stalk is edible, but it takes just a small amount to deliver its flavor.

Scent and Sensibility

In body care products, lemongrass is valued for its lemon aroma as well as its normalizing properties. (It's suitable for normal and oily skin, as well as for oily hair.) In India, the leaves are crushed in water and used as a hair wash, and in Africa and India lemongrass is used for washing and perfuming the body. You can use lemongrass in your own herbal concoctions for refreshing and neutralizing herbal baths, facial masks, soaps, and hair rinses.

Lemongrass has been studied for its cleansing properties, and it makes an excellent addition to homemade cleansers and room sprays. It contains citral, which is also a key component of lemon peel. (In China, lemongrass was traditionally used in housecleaning to protect, purify, and maintain a peaceful home.) As an added bonus, while humans enjoy the scent, insects don't. In fact, the closely related plant citronella is used in scented candles to repel insects.



Lemongrass Hair Rinse

This normalizing rinse is especially good for oily hair or overactive oil glands that are causing dandruff. Pour it on as a final rinse after shampooing.

3 cups boiling water
1 tablespoon lemongrass, cut and sifted
1 tablespoon white willow bark, cut and sifted
1 teaspoon nettle leaf, cut and sifted
1 teaspoon peppermint leaf, cut and sifted

Combine herbs in a nonmetal pot. Pour water over the herbs, then simmer for two minutes. Turn off the heat and steep for 15 minutes. Strain and cool.

Lemongrass Facial

The astringent qualities of lemongrass make it a perfect face mask ingredient for normal to oily skin. Don't use it too often though, or it will actually stimulate your oil glands.

2 teaspoons lemongrass, cut and sifted
1 teaspoon sage leaf, rubbed
1 cup water
1 banana, mashed
1 teaspoon green clay powder



In a nonmetal pan, simmer the herbs in the water for 15 minutes. Meanwhile, combine banana and green clay powder. Strain herbs, and add one to two teaspoons of the herbal infusion to the banana mixture. Avoiding eye area, apply to clean face and neck. Lie down and let dry for about 15 minutes. Rinse with warm water, then pat dry.