



**For the week of
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Editor:

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Condiment really cuts the mustard

Does mustard (the condiment) come from the same plant as mustard greens?

It sure does! Prepared mustard is made from mustard seed from a variety of different types of mustard plants, which are in the same overall family as broccoli, Brussels sprouts, collards, kale and kohlrabi. Mustard greens are the leaves of those plants, harvested before the plants flower or seed. (The leaves are too bitter after that.)

Not all mustard plants are used for greens, but then again, not all mustard plants are used for prepared mustard, either. Some mustard is grown for its oil — used as a salad oil and as an industrial lubricating oil.

Basically, there are two major types of mustard seed. White (also known as yellow) mustard seeds are the main ingredient in American-style mustards. They're more mild in flavor than the other major type — brown (or Asian) mustard seeds. English mustard uses a combination of white and brown seeds. Black mustard seeds also exist, but they're close in flavor to brown seeds and are more expensive to grow and harvest. Still, some Dijon mustards, for example, still use black mustard seeds as their basis.

Most mustard seed is ground into powder to make prepared mustard. The powder is mixed with seasonings and a liquid such as water, vinegar, beer or wine. The result is a mustard that can be spicy and hot or mild and sweet — the seasoning combinations are endless. In fact, the Mount Horeb Mustard Museum in Wisconsin boasts 4,000 different types of mustards on display.

Whole mustard seeds are also used in pickling — you can see them in some pickle jars or in pickle relish. Powdered mustard is also sold as a seasoning, often used in cheese and egg dishes but also to help season meat, poultry, fish, soups, stews and sauces.

Prepared mustard can be a fine addition to almost any sandwich. Plain yellow mustard has only 3 calories a teaspoon. More flavorful mustards are often somewhat higher in calories, but usually not by much. Just check the Nutrition Facts label. Mustards also can be used to spice up recipes and are a great seasoning on spinach, Brussels sprouts, cabbage and green beans.

Chow Line is a service of Ohio State University Extension and the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center. Send questions to Chow Line, c/o Martha Filipic, 2021 Coffey Road, Columbus, OH 43210-1044, or filipic.3@osu.edu.