



The First **TRUE** Red Spinach

A traditional salad favorite, green spinach now has some competition. ARS scientists in the Crop Improvement and Protection Research Unit in Salinas, CA, developed and released **USDA Red**, the world's first true red spinach variety. Unlike other red-leaved veggie species that go by the name red spinach, USDA Red is a true spinach (*Spinacia oleracea*). It owes its red color to the phytonutrient betacyanin, instead of the more common anthocyanin.

Betacyanin is a potent antioxidant that has been shown to significantly reduce oxidative stress in humans and may help in preventing inflammation—the condition underlying many chronic diseases. Betacyanin adds another benefit to a plant already loaded with phytonutrients, making spinach a true “**super food.**”

