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CELERY

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1.0 Introduction

Celery is considered as the third most important salad vegetable in the western countries including United States and European countries. Celery is an important salad crop primarily grown for its long fleshy leafstalks and looks somewhat like leafy onion. It ranks second in importance among salad crops. But it is not a commercially popular vegetable in India. In the high elevation of southern part of India, it is grown on limited scale for salad purpose (Yawalkar, 1969). It is also an important aromatic plant grown predominantly for its fresh herbs as salad crop in different parts of the world. The dried fruits are also used as spice. Celery is known as various vernacular name *viz.*, Celeri in French, Sellerie in German, Apio in Spanish, Salleri in Swedish, Karafs in Arabic, Selderiji in Dutch, Sedano in Italian, Aipo in Portugese, Syelderey in Russian, Serorjini in Japanese; Chin in Chinese; Karnauli or Ajmod in India (Malhotra, 2006). Celery was perhaps not under extensive cultivation up to the medieval period, though there is documentation available in the ancient literature that it was cultivated before 850 BC. It is believed to be that the celery production developed in the lowlands of Italy and gradually spread to England and France. The first document of its cultivation in France was reported during 1623. Though the present cultivated celery plants are a quite sweet, appetising and wholesome food but its wild ancestors were considered poisonous. In USA, France, and in other European countries, it is grown commercially and is available in the market throughout the year.

2.0 Composition and Uses

2.1.0 Composition

Celery is a rich source of water and antioxidants that are helpful in maintaining your health. Celery also contains vitamins A, C, and K, folate, essential minerals and over a dozen other antioxidants. It is much lower in calories than other green veggies. Celery leaves have the same earthy, herbaceous flavour as celery stalks. The flavour is savoury with a hint of saltiness since celery is naturally high in sodium. Celery leaves contain small amounts of many different minerals including potassium, calcium and manganese. Like the rest of the plant, celery leaves are good sources of both soluble and insoluble dietary fibre. Constituents of celery are given in Table 1.

Table 1: Composition of Celery (per 100 g edible portion)

Moisture	95 per cent	Na	88 mg
Energy	16 Kcal	K	284 mg
Protein	0.7 g	Vitamin A	127 IU
Fat	0.1 g	Thiamine	0.03 mg
Carbohydrate	3.6 g	Riboflavin	0.03 mg

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