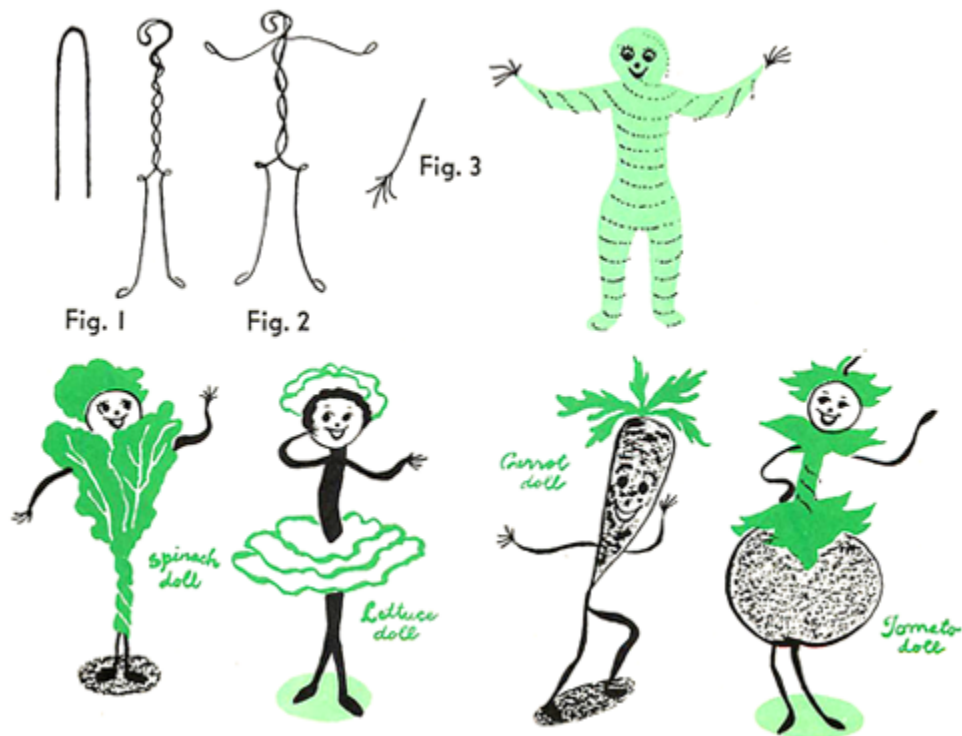




## Zion Farmers Market KidCraft

### Spinach Doll



Crepe paper vegetable dolls are easy to do and make attractive decorations for a 'Eat Healthier Vegetable Party'.

#### **Supplies**

Green tissue paper  
Wire or pipe cleaners  
Paint  
Cotton balls  
Scissors  
Glue or tape

#### **Instructions**

Use a piece of wire twice the length desired for the doll, allowing enough for the feet. You could even use large twist ties for this. Bend and twist to form head and feet, as in figure 1.

Twist a second piece of wire around neck to make arms. Bend ends to form hands. If picture wire is used the ends can be separated to form fingers, as pictured in figures 2 and 3.

Pad head, arms, legs, and body with cotton and cover with crepe paper.

Paint in facial features. From green crepe paper cut shapes in the form of spinach and lettuce leaves.

Wrap these about the bodies of the wire dolls in the manner shown here to make spinach and lettuce vegetable dolls. Note how the legs of the spinach doll are bound together.

### **Spinch Facts for Kids**

Come in. Now what can we do for you? Well, in fact, we can do a great deal because we're one of the most nutritious vegetables you can eat. Oh, you don't think we're very tasty, eh? Well, that only means you've never tried us in one of the many mouth-watering ways we can be served - like creamy spinach lasagna, or spinach and fetta cheese puffs. To tempt your tastebuds we've added some recipes to this site so you can try us and see just how delicious we are. But first, let me tell you more about us.

We consist of small, medium to bright green, thick, soft, oval to arrow-shaped leaves and green stems, both of which are eaten. Our leaves form rose-like clusters or rosettes from which our flowering shoot emerges.

### **Availability**

We're generally available all year round with our peak being from May to September.

### **Did you know?**

Popeye the Sailorman was a great lover of spinach - 'I'm Popeye the Sailorman, I'm Popeye the Sailorman, I'm first to the finish, cause I eat my spinach, I'm Popeye the Sailorman'

Silverbeet is sometimes called spinach in Australia, but true spinach has smaller leaves and a much sweeter, milder flavour. In the United States, silverbeet is called Swiss chard

We're related to a group of plants called goosefoots because of the shape of their leaves.

### **Varieties**

We're sold as spinach or English spinach and not by variety.

### **Why Spinach is Good to Eat**

- Popeye was said to get his strength from us because we have a high level of iron, which is needed to take oxygen to muscles. However, Popeye obviously didn't realise that most of our iron is bound up with oxalic acid and so can't be used by the body. But we do have lots of other good features!
- We're an excellent source of vitamin C, beta carotene, folate (one of the B vitamins), vitamin B6, vitamin E, magnesium and potassium.
- We're also high in dietary fibre.
- We contain a substance belonging to the carotenoid family, called zeaxanthin. It looks like it's valuable for keeping eyes healthy, especially in older people.

### **How Spinach is Grown and Harvested**

We grow best in cool climates with long hot summers and really cold winters. We can be grown in a wide range of soils and are easy to maintain.

We're mostly sown straight from seeds and are ready to harvest about 6-7 weeks later. We're harvested when we have grown about 10-12 leaves, by being pulled out of the ground (roots and all) and cut just below the lowest leaves. Our roots are generally trimmed before we're sent to market.

### **Choosing Spinach**

Also known as English spinach, we're sold in bunches or loose leaf (baby). Select those of us with fresh looking, bright green, tender leaves. Avoid wilted, yellow or damaged leaves.

**How to Keep Spinach**

Trim off our roots. Store us unwashed in the vegetable crisper or in a plastic bag in the refrigerator. Use within 2-3 days.

**History of Spinach**

We probably originated in the Middle East and were taken to Spain in the 13th century by the Moors. However, we were not recorded as a new vegetable in the rest of Europe until the 16th century.

Our seed was sent out from England in 1787 with the First Fleet but in the new colony we found it difficult to grow. As a result silverbeet was used instead of us.

**Fun Ways to Eat and Cook Spinach**

We're a delicate vegetable that needs to be eaten within 1-2 days of harvesting. Cut off our root and thick stem ends and wash our leaves just before using.

Our leaves can be torn or cut and used raw in salads or cooked with only the water that clings to them after being washed. Cook, covered, until wilted, 2-4 minutes, in a saucepan or microwave on High. 500g fresh spinach cooks down to about 1 cup.

Serve as a vegetable or add to sauces, omelettes, soups, quiches, stuffings or use the leaves as wrappers with all sorts of interesting fillings.

Why not try a few more adventurous recipe ideas.