**Plant Facts**

*Garden sorrel (Rumex acetosa)* also known as common sorrell, narrow-leaved docked, or spinach dock, is a common perennial herb from the *buckwheat* or *Polygonaceae* botanical family. It has arrow-shaped leaves that can develop shades of deeper greens, reds, purples in its veins, and can reach heights of 24 inches. The plant is leafed out all year long, in flower from May-June, and in seed from June to August. The plant has male and female flowers on separate plants, so it’s required to grow both for the production of seed, as sorrel is not self-fertile and wind pollinated. The tender leaves can be harvested all season long for their sour, lemony flavor from the presences of oxalic acid (also found in spinach, beets, and other wild sorrel varietals) that lends a bright bite to salads, stews, dressings, and drinks. Sorrel can have an acidifying action on the soil its grown in, making it a recommended companion plant for blueberries and other fruiting plants that require a more acidic soil. Also considered a dynamic accumulator, it draws nutrients and minerals from the soil, making them more bioavailable through the ecosystem.

**Growing & Propagation Info**

Sorrel is commonly known as a cool-season plant. Prepare beds before planting with aged compost and start seeds in the spring when the ground is soft, sowing seeds 1/2 inch deep and up to 2 to 3 inches apart. Thin successful seedlings from 12 to 18 inches apart when plants are 6 to 8 weeks old. Space rows 18 to 24 inches apart. Divide established sorrel in the spring. Choose male plants–without flowers–for divisions to avoid reseeding or the non-flowering cultivar 'Profusion'. To see successful results, sorrel must be kept moist though plants can tolerate moderately dry soils. It will be ready for harvest 60 days after sowing.

**Nutritional Benefits**

Sorrel is a nutritional powerhouse, providing significant amounts of important micronutrients, including vitamin A, a fat-soluble vitamin that helps you to maintain healthy vision, skin, immune function, growth, and reproductive health and vitamin C, an important antioxidant that helps the body resist infection. The fresh or dried leaves are considered astringent, diuretic (increasing urination), laxative (softening the bowel), and cooling. Juice of the leaf has also been applied topically for the treatment of itchy skin and for treatment of ringworm. Those prone to developing calcium-based kidney stones should be careful in consuming sorrel as the oxalic acid can interfere with calcium absorption.

**Recipe - Sorrel Herb Dressing**

Sorrell makes a wonderful and simple salad dressing. In a blender, add 1/2 cup of olive oil, 8 leaves of fresh sorrel, 1/2 tsp each of salt and black pepper, 3 TB apple cider vinegar, and 1/8 cup of other herb of your choosing (thyme, basil, oregano), blend until smooth and use to dress your favorite salad or greens mix. Enjoy!