

Dakota Gardener: French lettuce is great for Dakota gardens

By Tom Kalb, Horticulturist NDSU Extension

France is famous for many things — the Eiffel Tower, the Louvre, wine and croissants among them.

But the French can also be proud of being the home of tremendous lettuce!

Batavia lettuce, also called French Crisp and Summer Crisp lettuce, is mild, sweet and crispy. It's absolutely delicious. C'est magnifique!

Batavia lettuce is preferred by chefs for its texture and flavor. The leaves of Batavia lettuce are crisper compared to leaf lettuce but not as hard and crunchy as iceberg lettuce. This texture is perfect for salads and sandwiches. Batavia lettuce has much more flavor than iceberg lettuce.

Batavia lettuce is preferred by gardeners because it is easy to grow. While most lettuce varieties turn bitter and go to seed in summer, Batavia lettuce keeps producing. Batavia lettuce tolerates the heat and rarely turns bitter. It's amazing! You may be enjoying salads all summer long.

I was introduced to Batavia lettuce while living in Taiwan, where the summers are scorching hot. Your body gets drenched with sweat all day, and then the temperature cools down to only 80 degrees Fahrenheit at night. That's 24/7 heat. My air conditioner was one of my best friends!

My organization, the World Vegetable Center, recommended the Batavia variety called Sierra for tropical countries. It could take the heat better than I could.

Newer, better Batavia varieties are available today. The most heat-tolerant Batavia lettuce today is Muir. It has slightly ruffled, bright green leaves that loosely form into a head. Gardeners in North Dakota highly recommend it.

Other great Batavia varieties recommended by North Dakota gardeners include Nevada, Albachiara and

Fusion. For those who like some red color in the leaves, Magenta, Chrystal, Pablo and Sierra will delight your eyes and your taste buds.

This brings us to an important point when selecting lettuce varieties: look for varieties that can tolerate heat.

Besides the Batavia varieties, Buttercrunch is an heirloom that tolerates heat. Seed of this butterhead type is sold at every garden center.

If you prefer leaf lettuce, Bergam's Green, Starfighter and Tropicana are widely available. Red Salad Bowl and New Red Fire are popular red-leaf types.

I originally thought romaine lettuce was difficult to grow, but it isn't. Our team of gardeners likes Green Forest, Bluerock and Sunland for their flavor, crisp texture and tolerance to heat.

Whatever lettuce seed you grow, you can extend the harvest in summer by keeping the plants cool. Plant your lettuce in a location where it is out of the afternoon sun. It helps to use straw mulch or a shade cloth cover in summer, too.

Lettuce seeds can be directly sown into the garden in early May. You can start your seeds indoors three to four weeks earlier and transplant the young plants into your garden.

Where can you get these varieties? Do a Google search, and seed companies that sell the varieties will pop up. Some of these varieties may be at your local garden center, too.

North Dakota State University is inviting gardeners to test promising lettuce varieties, including Batavia varieties, in their gardens. To place an order or to find more information, visit ndsu.ag/gardentrials-26.

A fresh salad from the garden is wonderful. You can make that happen this summer by selecting a Batavia variety. Au revoir!

Forage Matters: Springtime is go time

By James Rogers, Forage crops production specialist NDSU Extension

Several years ago, I wrote a column with the same headline. Weather conditions at that time were ideal, with favorable soil moisture and temperatures. Spring was in the air. Optimism for the coming spring and growing season was high.

This year, my feeling is a little different. While I have been in North Dakota a short time — March 1 marked my four-year anniversary in the state — I know that this winter was unusual. A grower told me shortly after I came to North Dakota that this country needs snow. While parts of the state saw significant snowfall, the winter has been mostly open. I do look forward to spring, warmer temperatures and a new growing season, but I am apprehensive about how good this growing season will be.

North Dakota State University Extension just released an excellent news release written by Miranda Meehan, livestock environmental stewardship specialist, and Kevin Sedivec, rangeland management specialist, on the upcoming grazing and haying season (ndsu.ag/grazingoutlook26). In this release, they provide several scenarios based on moisture received during the fall and spring, as well as the effect of grazing intensity during the fall of 2025 on 2026 forage production.

If we do experience a year with below-normal precipitation and above-normal temperatures, are you prepared? A large emphasis on the 2026 forage production outlook is placed on fall 2025 grazing management. If there are pasture and range areas that were grazed the previous fall to the point that developing tillers were consumed and limited leaf area remained before frost, these areas should be rested this spring to allow for plant recovery. Being prepared for unfavorable growing conditions is a management strategy for every year.

Texas famously experienced drought conditions from 1949 to 1954. A summary of conditions affecting the recovery, "The Effect of the 1949-1954 Drought on the Ranges of Texas" by Vernon A. Young, was published in 1956. The

following is a quote from their summary:

"In general, ranges that were properly managed before and during the drought came through in fair to good condition; overstocked ranges were severely damaged and subsequent recovery has been limited. Thus ranchmen have evidence for the need for carrying out proper management practices year after year, not only to meet drought periods, but to build an economic unit by capitalizing on the years of favorable moisture. Thus the old rule still prevails that close grazing does not pay."

These words from 70 years ago are still true today.

Are you prepared? As we move into spring, look back on past grazing management and anticipate how that will affect forage production moving forward. There are several monitoring tools and information sources available that can help refine how this year is shaping up: NDSU Extension, North Dakota Natural Resources Conservation Service, North Dakota Agricultural Weather Network, National Drought Mitigation Center (home of the U.S. Drought Monitor), and Climate Prediction Center. Burn restrictions and fire danger maps can be found at ndresponse.gov.

Unfavorable growing conditions this year can create plant stresses, leading to concerns about forage antiquity factors that need to be addressed. Nitrate can accumulate in plants that undergo periods of rapid growth followed by slow growth. Dry weather conditions can increase the risk for prussic acid accumulation in sorghums. Be aware of the potential for these conditions to develop, and test as needed. Monitor animal health and body condition during tough grazing times. Have a dry-weather response plan in place that includes a well-thought-out destocking plan if necessary.

Extended dry weather conditions can reduce plant vigor, leading to plant death. This often results in desirable plants being replaced by less desirable ones, such as an increase in Kentucky bluegrass. Practice good grazing management year in and year out to maintain healthy plants and healthy root systems, so when we do encounter dry years, the grazing resource is preserved.

Springtime is go time: cows calving, breeding season underway, crops being planted and cattle being turned onto grass. Hopefully, we will experience knee-high grass with abundant water resources in 2026. Even if we do, it still pays to practice good grazing management as insurance for those years when we don't.

April 2026 Events and Activities Oakes Senior Center, 207 5th Street S. Oakes, ND 58474. Ph #: 742-3509

Wednesday, April 1st : Tom Foolery Day! Just a quick reminder to double-check everything you read/hear/see today

Thursday, April 2nd: We will be decorating Easter Eggs after lunch... using different techniques

Monday, April 6th: National Caramel Popcorn Day will have Caramel popcorn with BINGO

Wednesday, April 8th: Join us for Brew Crew at 2:00 PM! Coffee and treats provided by Senior Center. If you're not a coffee drinker, we have lots of teas to choose from as well, and conversation is always plentiful! Open to EVERYONE!

Thursday, April 9th: Birthday Dinner Day! Let's celebrate the February birthdays! Call 742-3509 by 9:15 AM to sign up for lunch that includes cake and ice cream.

Monday, April 13th: National Peach Cobbler Day will have peach cobbler for lunch.

Tuesday, April 16th: National Wear Your PJs to Work Day... Wear your PJs.

Wednesday, April 22nd: Join us for Brew Crew at 2:00 PM! Coffee and treats provided by Senior Center. If you're not a coffee drinker, we have lots of teas to choose from as well, and conversation.

Thursday, April 23rd: Craft

day... We will be doing a craft at 1:00 PM. Craft yet to be determined.

Tuesday, April 28th: Dickey County Health District will be offering foot care at the Oakes Senior Center. Call 349-4348 for an appointment. The fee for this is \$30.00

Bingo: Every Monday after lunch at 1:00 PM. Play for cash and other prizes! The more people that play, the greater the cash prizes. Come Join Us!

Wii Bowling: Tuesdays at 1:00 PM

Bone Builders: Every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 10:00 AM. On the first Wednesday of every month, we will be joined by Jamie, from BEYOND THE FLEX, who will observe, teach, and share helpful tips with us OPEN TO EVERYONE!

Monthly shopping trips to Aberdeen will be on the third Friday of each month, beginning on Friday, April 17th. Call 742-3509 to sign up. Space is limited. The driver may take you anywhere in Aberdeen. Pick-up times are 7-7:30 AM in Oakes, and 8-8:30 AM in Ellendale. Any appointments should be made between 9:45AM-2:00PM. Return home starts by 3:30 PM, or earlier. The fare for this trip is \$10.00.

Easter Egg Coloring Tips

Many families will soon be partaking in a springtime tradition that has spanned generations: coloring Easter eggs.

While eggs once symbolized fertility and rebirth in Pagan celebrations, they have since come to be associated with Christianity. History.com says eggs historically were not allowed to be eaten during the 40 days of Lent. Subsequently, they were painted and decorated to mark the end of penance and enjoyed as a treat on Easter Sunday. Britannica also notes that the egg has come to represent the tomb Christ escaped, much like a chick breaks out of its shell.

Although it may seem like coloring Easter eggs already is a relatively simple project, there are steps that can simplify the process and make eggs more unique.

- Remove eggs from the refrigerator. Prior to dyeing eggs, bring them to room temperature by removing them from the fridge about 20 minutes before it's time to start boiling. This minimizes the chances that the egg shells will crack.

- Use a pin. Poking a tiny hole into the large ends of the eggs before boiling can release the air pressure inside and prevent the eggs from bursting during boiling.

- Keep vinegar on hand. Vinegar is the key to vibrant eggs because it acts as a mordant, which helps the dye bond to the shell. Without vinegar, the egg colors will be pale.

- Use a whisk. Instead of potentially breaking eggs when

dropping them into dye with fingers or spoons, place the egg inside the wires of a kitchen whisk.

- Use protective gear. Children tend to get messy when coloring eggs. Make sure they are dressed in clothes that can get splattered. Also, wearing kitchen dishwashing gloves or latex gloves will keep hands from being stained by dye. Cover tables or counters with a water-resistant sheet or tablecloth to further prevent staining.

- Experiment with different dyeing methods. Wrap rubber bands or string around the eggs before dipping to create geometric shapes and white lines. For a soft, marbled look, mix dye in a tray with shaving cream and roll the egg through. For a speckled appearance, place eggs in a container with dry rice and drops of dye and then shake.

- Create a drying station. Letting eggs dry on a paper towel or newspaper can contribute to smears and white spots. Instead, poke flat-head pins into a foam board. Rest the eggs on the pins while they dry.

- Create some sheen. When the eggs are completely dry, rubbing them with a drop of vegetable oil on a cloth will shine them up nicely.

Eggs are a traditional component of Easter festivities and decor. A few easy tweaks can make the process go more smoothly and result in vivid and creative eggs.

COMMUNITY EASTER EGG HUNT

Saturday, April 4th at 9:30 am

Infant – Age 10 Registration begins at 9:15 am

Oakes Public School South Gym



Oakes Lions Winners	
3/11-3/17	
Shelley Atkinson	\$50
Robert Forward	\$50
Pamela Nicholson	\$50
Kristina Malmberg	\$100
Erik Loepp	\$100
Ron Greenmeyer	\$50
Brady Ptacek	\$50

Public Notices

www.ndpublicnotices.com

Oakes Fire District Board Meeting
Oakes Fire station
April 9th at 7PM
Open to the public
(Submitted to the Oakes Times
03/26/2026, 04/02/2026)

REQUEST FOR BIDS
Notice is hereby given that the City Council of the City of Oakes, North Dakota will receive sealed bids for screened gravel for the City of Oakes to be delivered to the Oakes City Shop.
Sealed bids must be submitted to the City Auditor at City Hall, 124 S 5th St by 4:00 pm April 10th, 2026. The City reserves the right to reject any or all bids.
(Submitted to the Oakes Times
04/02/2026, 04/09/2026)

CPEC FINAL NOTICE
Central Power Electric Cooperative, Inc. intends to seek financial assistance from USDA Rural Utilities Service(RUS) for the rebuild of an existing distribution substation. The proposed project consists of directly adjacent to the existing substation on property owned by Central Power. This property is located in the SW1/4, Section 8, T130N, R59W, Dickey County, ND. The location is 3/4 mile west of the intersection of 110th Avenue SE and 92nd Street SE. If implemented, the proposed project will convert Central Power's property at the site which is actively tilled. In accordance with Executive Order 11988, Floodplain Management and USDA

Departmental Regulation 9500-3, Land Use Policy, notices are required to be posted informing the public of the proposed conversion and request comments. The first notice was published on March 12, 2026 in the Oakes Times and this notice should have been on the March 26, 2026 but instead April 2, 2026; no comments were received. As a result, this is the second and final notice to inform the public of the proposed effects to floodplains.
(Submitted to the Oakes Times
04/02/2026)

PORT EMMA TOWNSHIP ANNUAL MEETING
Port Emma Township will hold their annual meeting on Monday, April 13th, 2026 at 1:00 p.m. at the Guelph School. The tax equalization meeting will be held at 3:00 p.m. immediately following the annual meeting.
Marty Visto, Clerk/Treasurer
Port Emma Township
(Published in Oakes Times, April 2, 2026, April 9, 2026)

LOVELL TOWNSHIP ANNUAL MEETING
The Lovell Township annual meeting will be held Tuesday, April 7th, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. at Dylan Stearns shop.
Meagan Stearns, Clerk/Treasurer
Lovell Township
(Published in Oakes Times, March 26, 2026, April 2, 2026)

Oakes Comm. Hosp. seeks Med Lab Scientist in Oakes, ND. Req's BS degree in Med Tech, Bio/Chem Sciences, ND med tech license. Apply to terra.eriksson@commonspirit.org.



Need Something Specific? Call us!

Hard Red Spring Wheat • AP Elevate • AP Gunsmoke CL • AP Smith • AP Iconic • CP3099A • CP3188 • CP3530 • CP3055 • SY Murdock • LCS Rebel • LCS Buster • LCS Cannon	Lentils • Vicery Small Green • RichLea Medium Green Durum • Stronghold • Defy • Spifire Barley • Genesis Oats • Jury (Common)	Flax • Marvelous Peas • Orchestra • CP5244 Forage Crops • Lavina Forage Barley • Baler Forage Oats
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Financing Options Available

Contact Your Trusted Seed Advisor

701-256-2599



HOW YOU CAN HELP THE OAKES AREA FOOD PANTRY

DONATE FOOD

- Host a food drive with your work or organization
- Food can be dropped off at 115 S 5th St
- Food should be non-perishable and not expired

DONATE MONEY

- The Food Pantry is a 501(c)(3) organization, and your donation could be tax deductible
- Host an event like a bake sale and donate the proceeds to the Food Pantry
- Monetary donations can be dropped off at Starion Bank or mailed to the Oakes Food Pantry PO 203 Oakes, ND 58474

VOLUNTEER

- Property maintenance (snow removal, cleaning, small updates)
- Put away and organize donated food
- Help work the Saturdays the Food Pantry is open

PROMOTE:

- Like and follow the Oakes Area Food Pantry on Facebook and share our posts
- Help get the word out to those in need that the Food Pantry is open the 2nd & 4th Saturday of each month, 10am-noon

REACH OUT:

- If you are interested in volunteering, please reach out to a board member or message the Oakes Area Food Pantry on facebook
- Learn more about the Food Pantry and share your ideas by attending a meeting, meetings are posted to the facebook page



Together with your help, we can fight food insecurities in our community.