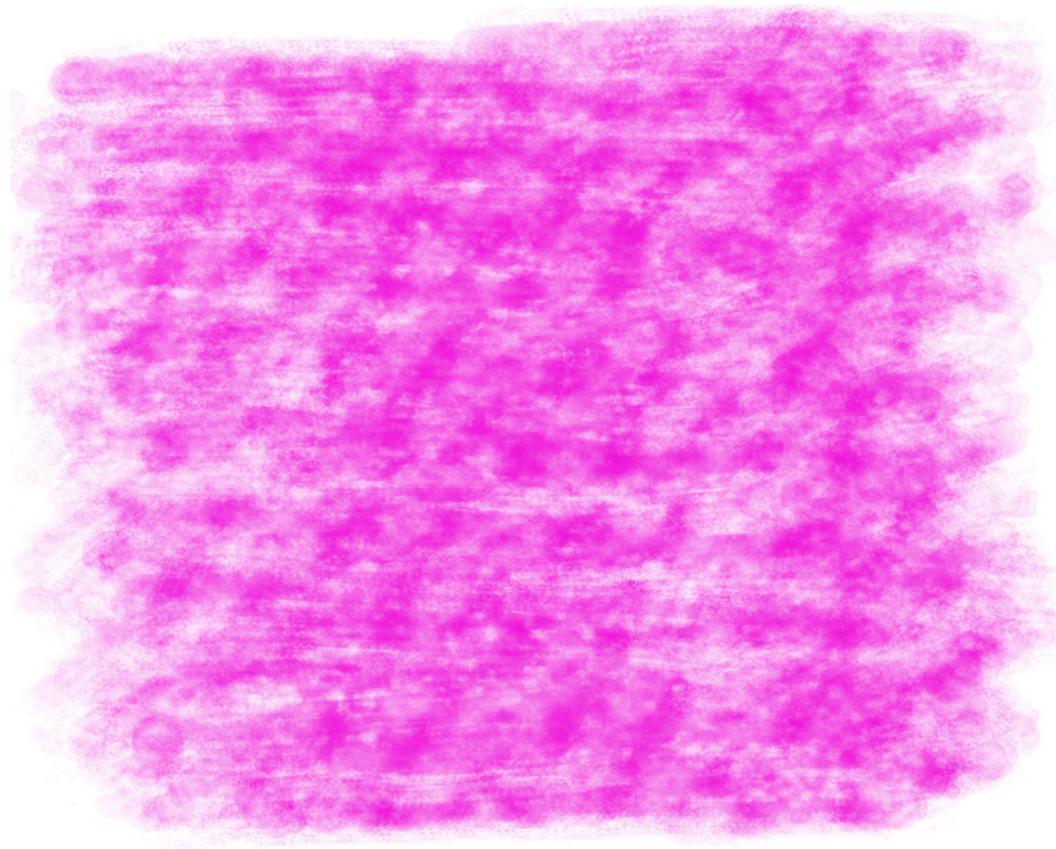
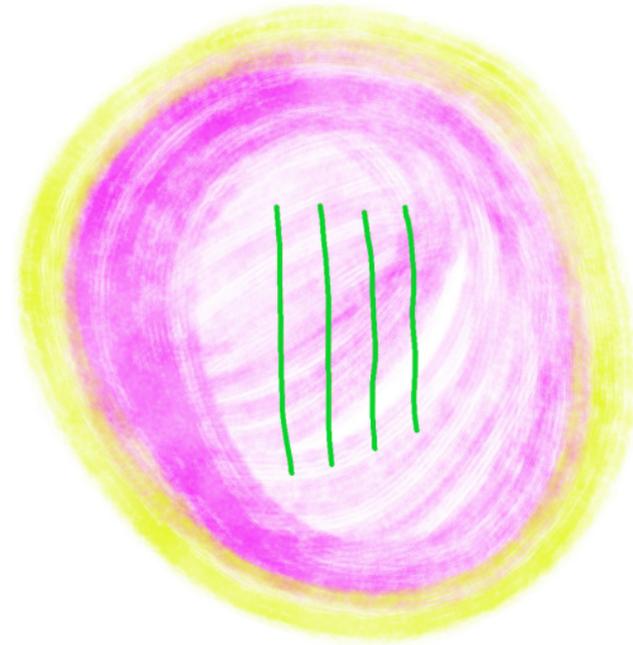


**IT'S ALL
ABOUT
LETTUCE**





Some things I've been

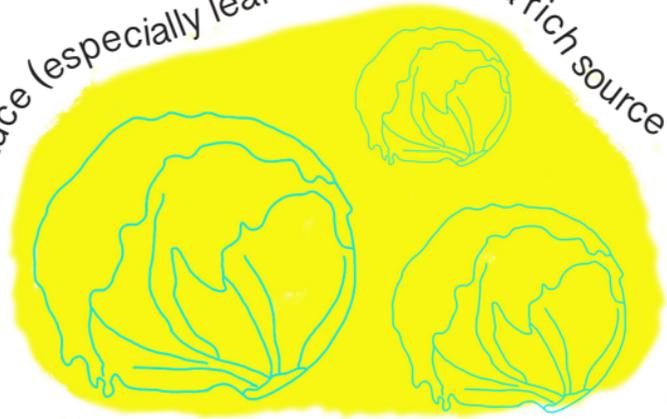


thinking
about
as

I started to grow lettuce indoors last year.

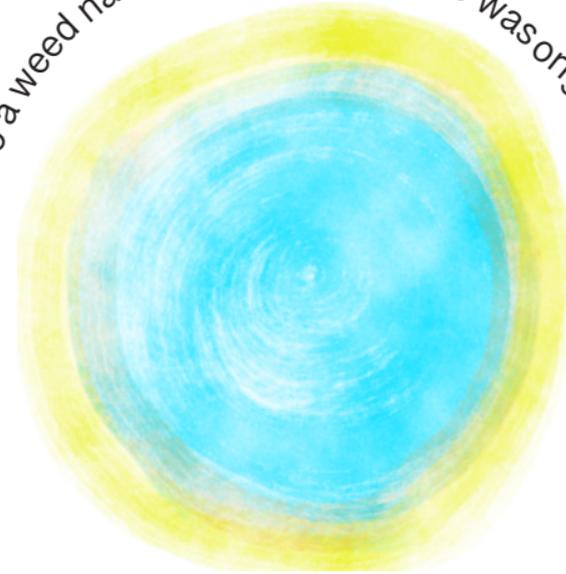
An annual of the daisy family,
most species of lettuce are
considered common weeds.

Lettuce (especially leaf varieties) are a rich source



of vitamins K &
A and contain
vitamin C, folate,
iron, potassium,
and calcium.

Traced back to a weed natural to Egypt, lettuce was originally farmed



for use
as an oil
about
6000
years ago.

As the leaves were bred to be less bitter
over time, a number of varieties developed
and lettuce plants began to migrate.

Lettuce doesn't last long after harvest, so initially, it was sold locally.

In the 1930s, one cultivar, **Iceberg Lettuce** (1894), gained popularity thanks to the development of mass-produced refrigerators.

Named after its ability to



stay crisp after being packed in ice, the cultivar quickly became a part of the new system of long-distance food exports.

As a key export crop, lettuce production comes with a number of impacts:

- * typically grown as a monoculture, its production depletes nutrients from the soil & requires the use of chemicals in support;
- * often grown near animal production facilities, lettuce is at high risk for contamination (especially the parasites *E. coli* and *Salmonella*);
- * it requires a lot of water;
- * it needs constant refrigeration;
- * a lot of waste is left behind during harvest (only $\frac{1}{4}$ of what is grown per head is estimated to end up on shelves).

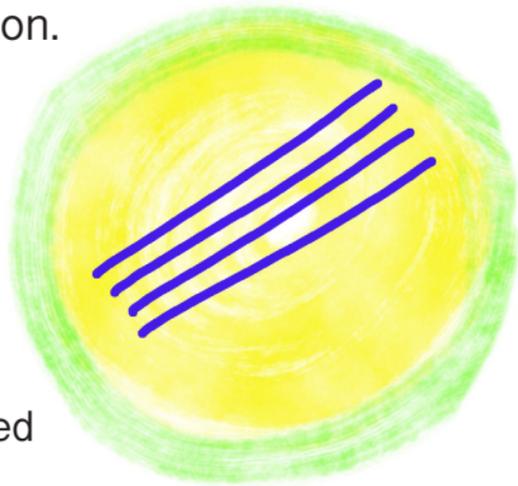


Lettuce has a short growing season (50 to 75 days).
it can be planted consecutively in
order to extend production.

29 million tonnes of

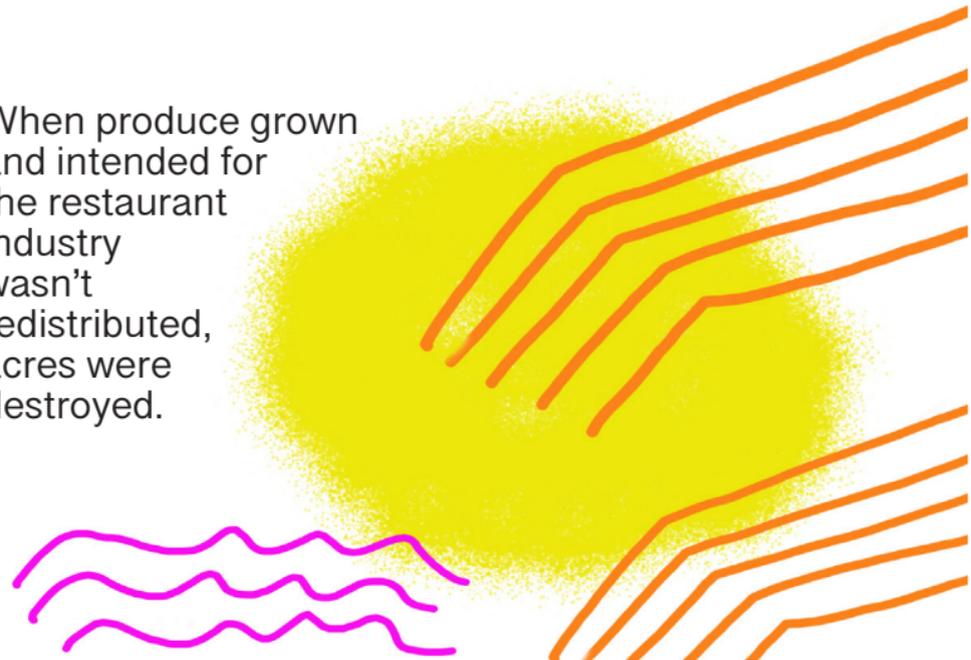
lettuce was produced

and sold worldwide in 2019 (almost \$3 billion USD).



Lettuce, like many other crops, faced
widespread loss when distribution lines
collapsed across the pandemic.

When produce grown
and intended for
the restaurant
industry
wasn't
redistributed,
acres were
destroyed.



I didn't have to plant much lettuce seed in the garden this year, it started coming up on its own.

The plants from last year must have dropped and spread some seed before I gathered them for saving.



It's popping up on the ground

and in the cracks in the sidewalk

all over the garden.

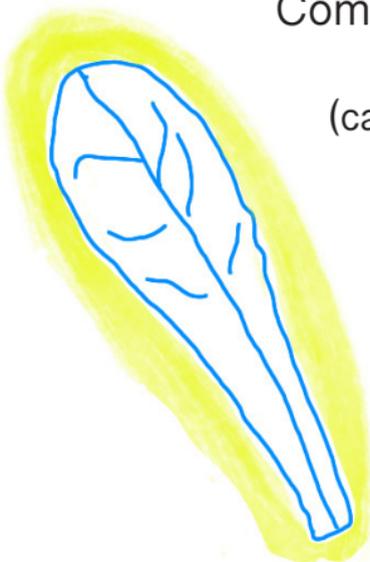


One of the longer-term impacts expected from loss across the pandemic, along with shifts in food production lines, are increased food prices.

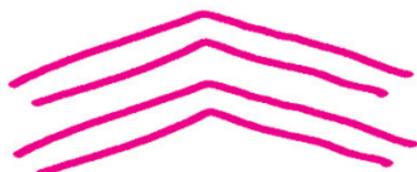
Combined with the impacts of climate change

(caused by extreme heat, wildfires, floods, and droughts),

food prices overall are expected to increase by 3-5% this year.



More perishable vegetables are expected to increase in price as much as 6.5%.



Scientists now anticipate Edmonton will have above average precipitation overall with cooler, wetter springs followed by longer, wetter, and hotter summers. They predict temperatures to begin annual increases of:

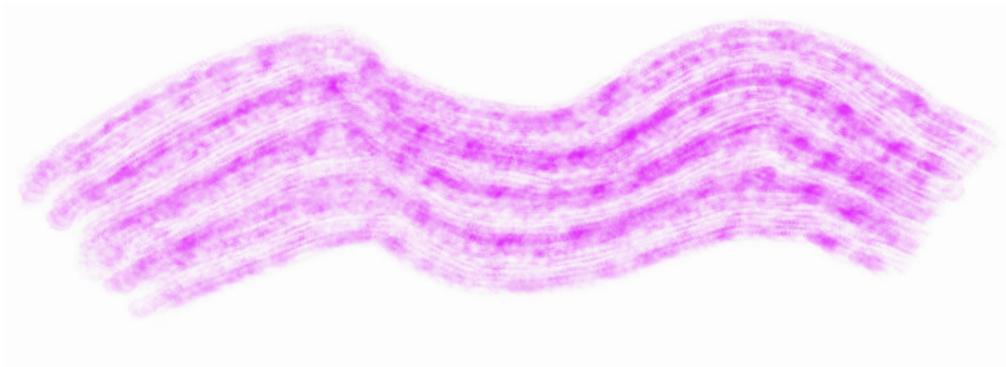
2-4 degrees across the 2020s and 4-7 degrees across the next 30 years.

Edmonton is expected to move into gardening zone 4b in the next 20 years, likely sooner. [we've only sat within zone 4a since 2001.]



RESOURCES and more about LETTUCE:

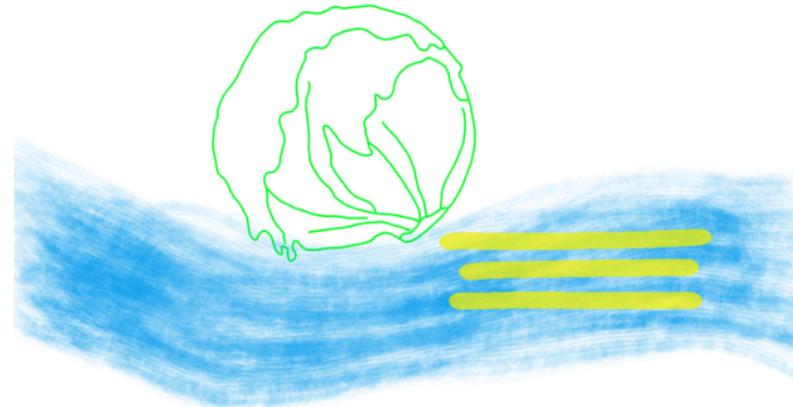
www.cbattle.com/lettuce

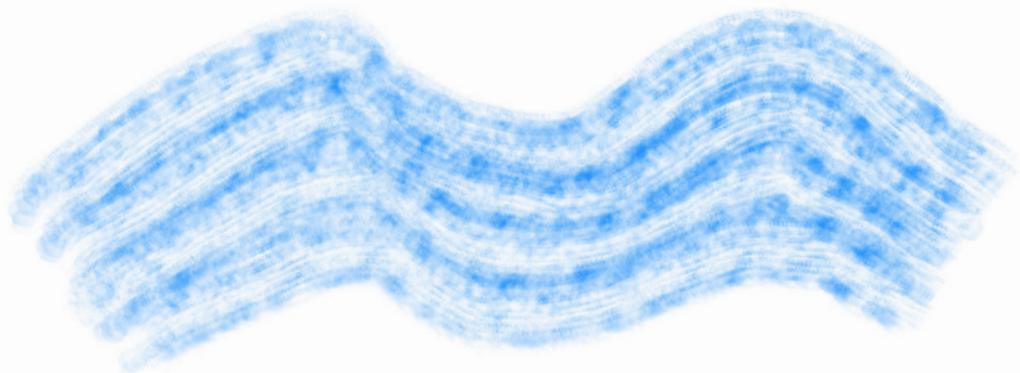


Thank you! April Dean, Amanda McKenzie,
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c. battle, summer 2021