

Chinese cabbage

Leafy cabbage

Green cabbage



Broccoli

Curly kale

it will cook both faster and more evenly.

Broccoli—purple-budded, or green in the form known as calabrese—also benefits from careful preparation. The stems should be stiff, the buds compact; wilted stems or leaves and open or yellowing buds indicate poor quality. To ensure that the firm stems are cooked in the same time as the tender buds, the stems should be peeled (*box, far right*) and thicker, lower parts should then be cut into 2.5 cm (1 inch) slices before boiling.

Perhaps the most unusual of all brassicas is kohlrabi—a swollen, edible stem that is at its best when it reaches a size of about 8 cm (3 inches) in diameter. Kohlrabi is sometimes sold with its leaves still attached: if they are crisp and fresh, prepare them like kale; the stem is cooked in the same way as turnip—but its flavour is mild and distinctly cabbage-like.

### Removing a Cabbage Core



Before a cabbage is shredded, the solid core—the inner stem of the plant—should be removed so that the leaves can be cooked more evenly. Slice the cabbage in two, then cut the white central wedge from each half, working diagonally from the centre of each cabbage half (*above*).

### Peeling Broccoli Stems



Begin peeling from the base of each broccoli stem. After the first 1 cm ( $\frac{1}{2}$  inch), grip the skin firmly between the knife and your thumb, and strip it from the stem (*above*). Turn the stem and repeat the process until all of the outer skin has been removed—up to the buds.