



Brassicaceae – Cabbage Family

Family Features

A family defined by having four petals in a cross pattern.

- Four petals, usually equal.
- Four sepals alternate with petals
- Usually six stamens.
- Superior ovary.
- Two fused carpels.
- Leaves alternate.
- Flower colours mainly yellow or white.
- Fruit usually dehiscent with the valves opening from the base of the fruit to release the seeds.

Many of our common vegetables are derived from the cultivation of wild cabbage:

Cabbage—selection for terminal buds

Brussel sprouts—Selection for lateral buds

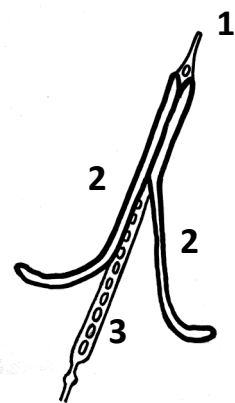
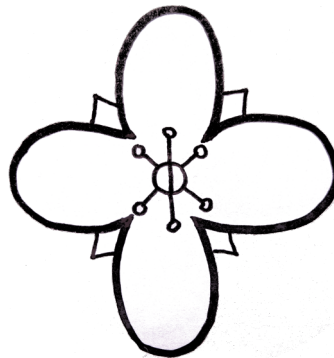
Kale—Selection for leaves

Broccoli—Selection for stem and flowers

Example species

Brassica oleracea –Wild Cabbage

Floral structure



Fruit characters

1. Beak
2. Valve
3. Septum

Fruit types

Most members of the family can be separated in two groups by the shape of their fruit. Plants will either have fruit which is long and narrow like *Cardamine hirsuta* (left), or fruit that is less than 3 times as long as wide like *Capsella bursa-pastoris* (right)

