

GREEN BEANS



Green beans are in season from July through August.

Tips for selecting green beans

Select beans that have a fresh, bright skin and velvety touch. They should snap with a clean break without strings. Look for even-shaped plump beans with few strings. The length of the bean is not related to quality. Do not choose beans:

- with seeds that are visible through the skin (these are tough and old),
- with a dull appearance,
- that have wilted or tough skins,
- that are woody or stringy, or
- that have holes, spots, brown skin, insects, or worms.

Storage

Green beans are best when eaten soon after picking. Store unwashed beans in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for up to two weeks. Can be frozen—contact your county Extension office (counties.extension.wisc.edu) for information.

Preparation

Wash thoroughly in cold water. Snap or cut off about ¼-inch from the stem end of each bean. Green beans may be left whole or cut into bite-size pieces. Cook by steaming or boiling in a small amount of water uncovered for about 12 minutes until crisp-tender. Green beans are delicious added directly to soups, stews, or stir-fries.

Key nutrient

- Fiber to help prevent constipation

Recipes

Vegetable stir-fry

- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 small onion, chopped
- ½ cup washed, raw potatoes cut into thin strips
- ½ cup fresh carrots, thinly sliced
- ½ cup fresh green beans, cut in 2-inch pieces
- ½ cup celery, thinly sliced
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce

Heat oil in a large skillet or wok and add onions. When onions are soft, add potatoes. When potatoes are almost soft, add carrots, beans, and celery, stirring quickly until vegetables are tender but still crisp, about 6 to 8 minutes. Stir in soy sauce, then cover the skillet or wok and let steam for 3 minutes. Serve with rice, pasta, or your favorite grain. Serves 3; 95 Cal; 5 g fat.

Almond crunch beans

- ½ pound fresh green beans
 - ¼ cup water
 - 1 tablespoon margarine or butter
 - 1 to 2 tablespoons toasted slivered almonds
 - Salt to taste
- Cut beans in 1-inch pieces. Cook and stir beans, water, margarine, and salt in a skillet over medium heat until margarine is melted. Cover and cook until beans are tender, about 15 minutes. Stir in almonds. Serves 3; 85 Cal; 7 g fat.



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