

This TRY DAY FRIDAY...

FRESH BEETS

Brought to you by the Health & Wellness Coalition of Wichita and
Dietician Anne Marie de Jong.



This brilliantly colored earthy vegetable provides a bounty of nutrition and flavor. Enjoy beet roots and beet greens!

NUTRITION: The sweet and earthy root provides folate, manganese, potassium, iron and fiber. The greens, tender and mild in flavor, provide vitamin A and K, potassium, magnesium, and calcium. Additionally, beets contain powerful phytochemicals known as betalains which are antioxidant and anti-inflammatory agents.

AVAILABILITY: Beets are available year-round in most supermarkets, but during the summer and fall, beets are plentiful at farmers' markets. Colors vary from the traditional ruby-red to deep golden to almost white. There is even a stunning red and white striped Chioggia beet. Explore the vibrant offerings and unique flavors!

SELECTION: When possible choose beets with the greens attached to reap the additional culinary and nutritional benefits of the greens. Select beetroots that are firm with smooth skin and tails. The greens should be bright and crisp. Small or medium beets are usually more tender than larger beets.

PREPARATION: Leaving about one inch of the stem, remove greens from roots but leave the tails. Store beet roots in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for up to three weeks. Beets greens should be stored separately, also refrigerated. Use greens as soon as possible, no more than a few days. Always scrub beets and wash greens well before using.

USE: Beets can be eaten raw, roasted, steamed, grilled, boiled or baked. Cook with the skins and tails attached. After cooking, the skin easily slips off. Cooked beets can be stored in the refrigerator for up to a week. Beet greens can be eaten raw or sautéed, similar to chard. Beet greens are best eaten immediately after cooking.

And a reminder, red beets bleed and turn everything they touch vibrant pink.
This includes tinting you and your work surfaces!

BASIC COOKING METHODS:

Roasted Beets

After removing greens, gently scrub beets. Wrap each unpeeled beet in a sheet of aluminum foil for easy cleanup. Place foil wrapped beets on a baking sheet and roast in a 400 degree Fahrenheit oven until beets are tender. Small beets need about 30 minutes; large beets may need an hour or longer. Once cooked and slightly cooled, the skin is easily removed. Roasting concentrates the earthy flavor making roasted beets a perfect addition to any leafy green salad.

Steamed Beets

Place scrubbed unpeeled beets in a steam basket. Quarter the unpeeled beets to reduce cooking time. Cover and steam until tender when pierced with a knife. Allow about 40 minutes for large beets; 25 minutes for smaller ones; and 15 minutes for quartered beets. When cool enough to handle, slip off skins.

Boiled Beets

Place scrubbed unpeeled beets in a pot of boiling water seasoned with a tablespoon of vinegar. Slow boil for 1 hour or until tender. When cooked, rinse under cold water. Skins should easily slip off.

Boiled beets have a milder, less earthy flavor that is often preferred by children.

Balsamic Beets and Greens

Serves 6

6 small beets with their greens
2 teaspoons olive oil
2 teaspoons butter
1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
salt and pepper

Remove greens from roots. Gently scrub the roots. Steam roots until tender, about 35 minutes. Peel, quarter, and set aside.

While beets are steaming, wash the greens. Discard any yellow leaves and tough stems. In a pan, sauté greens in olive oil for 5 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Remove from pan and set aside.

Using the same pan, sauté quartered beets with butter. Add the vinegar and coat beets.

Serve beetroots nested in beet greens.

Recipe adapted from *Vegetarian Cooking for Everyone*

Orange Glazed Beets

Serves 6

2 tablespoons orange juice
2 tablespoons brown sugar
1 tablespoon butter
3 cups cubed, cooked beets

In a small saucepan over medium heat, combine orange juice, brown sugar and butter. Heat until glaze is thick and bubbly. Add cubed beets and gently coat. Serve warm.

Recipe adapted from *Eating Well* magazine

Mediterranean Beet Dip

3 medium beets, cooked and cubed
¼ cup feta cheese
1 tablespoon lemon juice
2 tablespoons chopped walnuts
2 fresh mint leaves
¼ teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons olive oil

Blend all ingredients in a food processor or blender until smooth. Serve with raw vegetables or crackers. Refrigerate to store.

