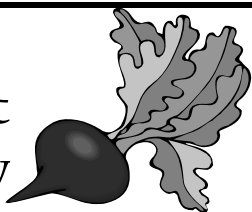


Reasons for the Seasons

Produce Tips for Placer & Nevada County Consumers

Local Season-
August
thru January



BEETS

Beets are a root vegetable with two edible parts: the root and the leaves, often referred to as greens. Beets come in a glistening array of colors, from garnet red, to red-white striped, to deep gold, to creamy white. The entire beet, from its robust and flavorful root to its buttery green top, is sweet and delicious.

Nutrition Benefits

Beet roots are:

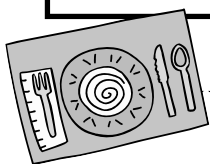
- ◆ Excellent source of folate
- ◆ Good source of vitamin C
- ◆ Good source of potassium

Greens are:

- ◆ Excellent source of vitamins A and C
- ◆ Excellent source of iron
- ◆ Excellent source of beta carotene
- ◆ Excellent source of calcium
- ◆ Good source of riboflavin

Serving Tips

- ◆ Sprinkle sliced cooked beets with lemon or orange juice, ground pepper, and herbs.
- ◆ Toss warm cooked beets with a low fat vinaigrette dressing.
- ◆ Mix beets with a creamy yogurt flavored with cloves, nutmeg, or cinnamon.
- ◆ Toss peeled and sliced raw young beets into a mixed green salad.



Healthy Eating, Healthy Children

- ★ ● Eat with your child and be a good role model. Children learn by watching you and others eat.
- ★ ● Eat the same foods as your child. Don't be a short order cook and prepare a different meal for your child.
- ★ ● Offer whole fruits for snacks, such as oranges, grapes, and apples.
- ★ ● Offer water when your child is thirsty. Limit sugary drinks such as soda. Also, limit fruit drinks that are not 100% juice.
- ★ ● Reward with love, not food. Children should eat when they are hungry, not to receive a reward.

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Produce Tips for Placer & Nevada County Consumers

BEETS



Locally Grown Varieties

Detroit, Ruby Queen, Crosby, and Early Wonder

Shopping Tips

- ✓ Look for smooth, hard, round beets.
- ✓ Choose beets with a healthy deep red color.
- ✓ The surface should be free of cuts and bruises.
- ✓ Avoid beets with soft, moist spots or shriveled, flabby skin.
- ✓ If the leaves are attached and you plan to eat them, they should be small, crisp, and dark green.
- ✓ When selecting beets, avoid leaves that are longer than eight inches, yellow or limp.



Handling and Storage

- ◆ To maintain firmness cut off beet greens before storing, but leave at least an inch of the stem attached.
- ◆ Place the unwashed roots in a plastic bag and store in the refrigerator crisper for up to three weeks.
- ◆ Store the greens separately in the same way and use them as soon as possible. They will only keep for a few days.
- You may also store the greens by wrapping them in a clean, damp paper towel.

Preparation

Roots:

Scrub the beets very gently and rinse well, but be careful not to break the skin, which is quite thin. Leave at least 1 inch of stem and don't trim the root.

- ◆ **Baking:** Locks in nutrients and intensifies the natural sweetness of beets. Wrap beets in foil, place them in a baking pan, and bake until tender.
- ◆ **Boiling:** Beets should never be cut or peeled before cooking them in liquid; otherwise, they will "bleed" their rich red juices while cooking and turn an unappetizing dull brown. Place whole beets in a pot of boiling water, cover and simmer until the beets are just tender. Boiled beets hold their color better if vinegar or lemon juice is added to the cooking water. This will keep them a beautiful crimson.
- ◆ **Microwaving:** Place 1 whole beet in a microwaveable dish with a little water. Cover and cook until tender.
- ◆ **Steaming:** Beets can be cooked in a vegetable steamer over boiling water.

Greens:

- ◆ Wash greens before serving as they are likely to have sand or dirt clinging to them. Pinch off leaves that are thick and tough.
- ◆ Dry greens well, if serving them in salads.
- ◆ Use the cooking liquid from greens in a sauce or add it to soup. A large amount of the nutrients of greens is released into the liquid as they cook.

Reasons for the Seasons

Produce Tips for Placer & Nevada County Consumers



BEEF FRUIT SALAD WITH RASPBERRY DRESSING

(4 SERVINGS)

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup honeydew, peeled and sliced
- 1 cup cantaloupe, peeled and sliced
- 2 cups cooked beets, peeled, and sliced
- 1/2 cup raspberry vinaigrette
- 2 cups low-fat cottage cheese

DIRECTIONS:

1. In a large bowl, combine melons, beets, and dressing. Mix gently.
2. Place 1 cup of the fruit salad on each plate and top with 1/2 cup of cottage cheese.
3. Serve.

QUICK BEET GREENS

(4 SERVINGS)

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound beet greens, shredded
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 2 tablespoons sunflower seeds, toasted

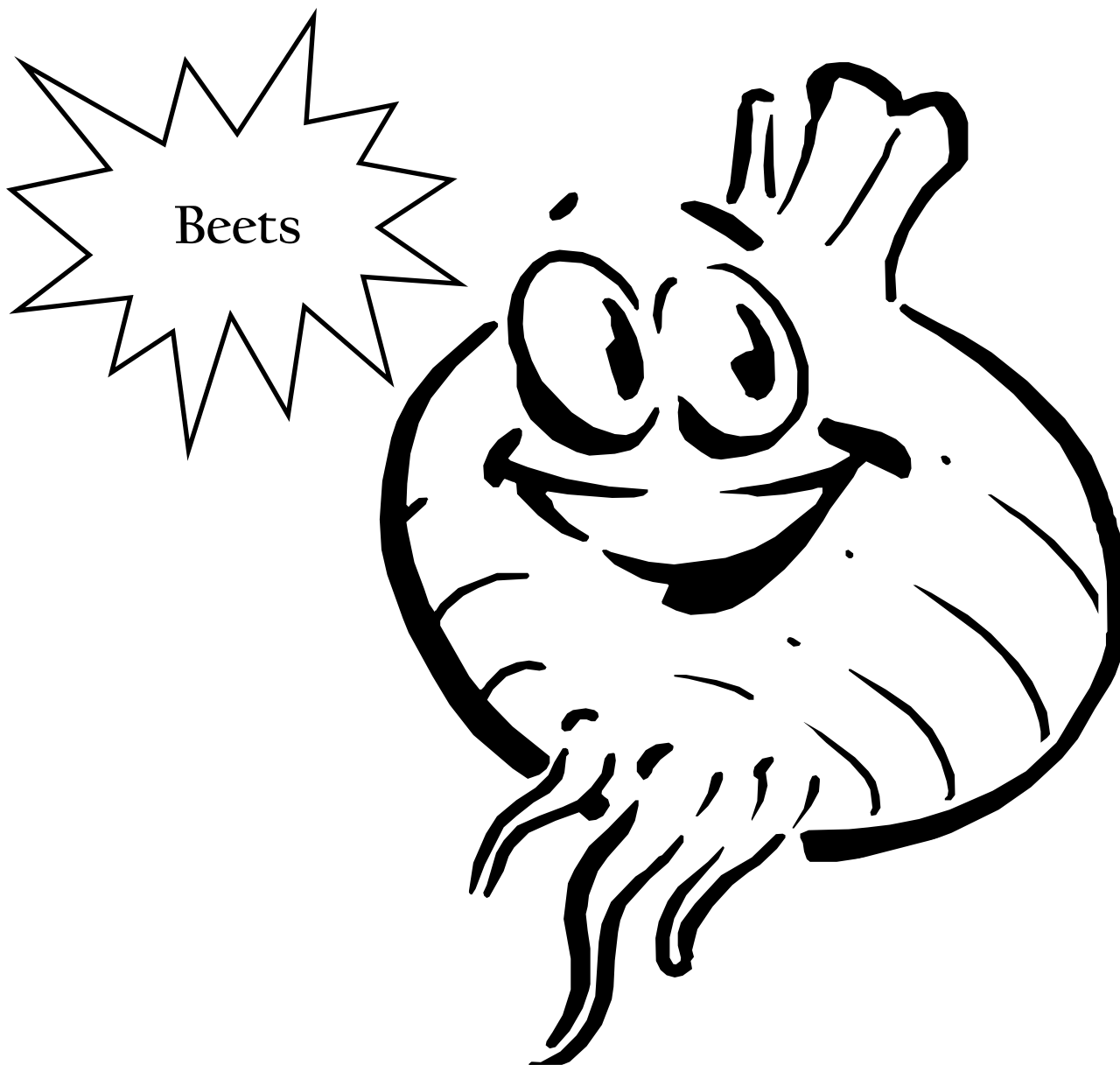


DIRECTIONS:

1. Toss beet greens, garlic, and oil in a large sauce pan or skillet.
2. Cover and sauté until greens are just wilted.
3. Add a splash of water, if necessary to prevent greens from sticking to the pan.
4. Toast sunflower seeds in a dry skillet or hot oven several minutes, tossing often and stir into greens.
5. Serve.

Reasons for the Seasons

Coloring Activity Page for Kids



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