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6-1-2011

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Recommended Citation
Lewis, Lisa, "Green Beans" (2011). *All Current Publications*. Paper 143.
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FOOD $ENSE

UtahStateUniversity COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

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June 2011

Green Beans

Food $ense Guide to Eating Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

Lisa Lewis, Assistant Professor

Utah Local Fresh Season: Late Spring to early Fall

Availability: Green beans are usually available from late spring into early fall.

Eating: Green beans are mild in flavor. They are best cooked or steamed. Also, they can be eaten raw. Green beans can be incorporated into many dishes.

Selecting: Generally green beans are best when sold loose, rather than pre-packaged in a bag. Try to avoid beans with scars or "rust"/other discoloration. Any cut or opening could allow dirt to get into the inside of the bean. Also try to pick beans with the stems attached, which keeps the insides sealed clean as well. Get beans that are close to each other in size, as that will help them cook at a similar rate. Select green beans that are pliable or "flexible" rather than tough.

Cleaning and Preparing: To clean, rinse and scrub well under warm tap water. Be sure all visible debris is removed and all areas are rinsed. Cut away any damaged or discolored areas. Cut away the tips at both ends. Wash green beans before eating or cooking, but not before storing.

Storing: Fresh green beans stay fresh in a refrigerator for several days. Store beans in an airtight bag to prevent moisture loss and wilting. To keep longer they can be frozen, canned, or dried.

Cooking: Green beans flavor and texture is enhanced through cooking. They also compliment many dishes such as soups.

The best way to cook green beans is to steam or broil.

Steaming: After cleaning, place in a steamer. Place the steamer in a frying pan on the stove, and add about 2 inches of water. Cover and let boil for about 5 minutes, or until the spears are tender. Remove and serve as a side dish, or cool, slice, and add to a salad.

Broiling: Preheat oven to broil. Cover cookie sheet with aluminum foil. Spread clean/prepped beans in a single layer on the sheet. Lightly spray beans on both sides with olive oil. Sprinkle beans with 1/8 to 1/4 teaspoon of salt, and 1/4 to 1/8 teaspoon black pepper. Broil for approximately 8 minutes—until beans start to lightly brown. Carefully remove tray, and turn beans to other side with spatula. Broil other side for approximately 5 to 8 minutes. Remove, cool slightly, and enjoy as a side dish!

Incorporation into other recipes: Steam, cool, chop1/4 to 1/2 inch sections and add to pasta or green salad. After broiling, serve as a side dish. Stir fry whole or cut in half with other vegetables like carrots, onions, broccoli, cabbage, and red or green peppers. Add spices like ginger, garlic, pepper and soy sauce and serve over brown rice.

Growing: For information on growing green beans, see "Beans in the Garden" by Dan Drost. http://extension.usu.edu/files/publications/publication/HG_Garden_2005-08.pdf

Preserving Green Beans: The best way to preserve beans is by freezing, canning or drying. For more information visit www.extension.usu.edu and www.uga.edu/nchfp/how/can_04/beans_sbap_italian.html

Oven Roasted Green Beans
From Green Beans and More

Ingredients:
1 pound of fresh green beans
1 to 2 tablespoons olive oil
Salt and pepper

Directions:
1. Place rack on the center level in the oven, and pre-heat to 450ºF.
2. Line baking sheet with aluminum foil.
3. Wash beans, and snap the stem ends off.
4. Spread beans evenly on baking sheet.
5. Drizzle oil over beans, then toss by hand to coat beans.
6. Spread beans evenly on baking sheet again, and place in heated oven.
7. Roast for 10 minutes.
8. Remove sheet from oven, and turn beans over with spatula –beans will be browned in spots
9. Place sheet back in the oven, and cook another 7 to 10 minutes.
10. Lightly sprinkle with salt and pepper.
11. Remove from baking sheet and serve.

References:
1. Fruits and Veggies More Matters. 2011 http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/?page_id=206

2. Drost, Dan. 2005. Beans in the Garden. Utah State University Extension. Logan, Utah. http://extension.usu.edu/files/publications/publication/HG_Garden_2005-08.pdf

Green Bean and Feta Salad
From *All Recipes.com*, Submitted by USA WEEKEND columnist, *Jean Carper*

"*This super-green salad has lots of antioxidants, including lutein, beta carotene and vitamin C, and it's a delicious way to help you attain daily servings of fruits and vegetables recommended for adults*"

Ingredients:
4 cups mixed baby salad greens
1/2 pound fresh green beans, trimmed, cooked al dente and cut in half
2 ounces feta cheese, crumbled
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
1 tablespoon orange juice
1/2 teaspoon fennel seeds
Salt and pepper, to taste
1/3 cup dried cranberries (optional)

Directions:
In a medium-size bowl, combine greens, beans and cheese. Add oil, vinegar, juice, fennel seeds, salt and pepper; toss. Sprinkle with dried cranberries, if desired.

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This publication is issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Noelle E. Cockett, Vice President for Extension and Agriculture, Utah State University. (Food$ense/2011-15pr)