



Summer 2014

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Eat Well!

A Newsletter for Healthy Eating

Green Beans

By Kate Yerxa, Extension Educator

In Maine, the most commonly grown beans are green snap beans. You can plant seeds that will grow as either bush or pole type. Some other bean varieties include Italian, purple or wax. Beans are low in calories and are great sources of vitamins A, C and K.

Harvesting

Beans should be picked from the garden when they are straight and slender. The bean will break easily with a “snap” when ready. You will see the seeds (beans) bulging in the pods if they are over ripe. Over ripe beans will be tough, stringy, and have a starchy taste. Avoid beans with rust spots and scars.

Storing

Beans are best when used right after harvest, but can be kept

in the refrigerator for three to five days before use. If you are interested in freezing or canning green or yellow beans from your garden, review the *Food Bites* section of this newsletter

Preparing

Before cooking, wash green beans. Green beans can be cooked whole, cut in pieces, cut lengthwise (“French style”) or they can be cut diagonally. Steaming, microwaving or boiling are popular ways to cook beans. Stir-frying or sautéing will preserve the best qualities of the fresh bean.

- Stir fry beans with other vegetables in a broth or a small amount of oil for only two to five minutes.

Continued on page 2

Looking for ways to save money on food? The *Eat Well!* newsletter has always given you great ideas on how to save money on food. Now these ideas are even easier to spot. Look for this picture in the *Eat Well* newsletter to find great tips to save money on food. **SAVE MONEY.**

Green Beans *(Continued from page 1)*

- Steam in a vegetable steamer over boiling water for five minutes, or in the microwave for three to four minutes.
- Boil for up to ten minutes.

Whichever cooking method you choose, remember to cook beans the shortest amount of time as possible, using the smallest amount of water possible. By using

a small amount of water with techniques like steaming or using high heat and a small amount of oil, you keep the most vitamins and minerals in the beans.

Go ahead and try new cooking methods to find the way you and your family like to eat green beans – you might even find that you like raw green beans the best!



Stovetop Steaming



Microwave Steaming



Stir Frying

Food Safety Corner

Sprout Safety

By Kathy Savoie, Extension Educator

Like any fresh produce that is consumed raw or lightly cooked, sprouts may contain bacteria that can cause foodborne illness. Sprouts are often served on salads, wraps, sandwiches and Asian foods. Unlike other fresh produce, sprouts from seeds and beans need warm and humid conditions to sprout and grow. The warm and humid conditions are also ideal for the growth of bacteria, including Salmonella, Listeria, and E. coli.

Rinsing sprouts first will not remove bacteria. Home-grown sprouts also present a health risk if they are eaten raw or lightly cooked.

What can you do to reduce your risk of illness?

- Children, the elderly, pregnant women, and persons with weakened immune systems should avoid eating raw or lightly cooked sprouts of any kind (including onion, alfalfa, clover, radish and mung bean sprouts).
- Cook sprouts thoroughly to reduce the risk of illness. Cooking kills the harmful bacteria.
- When you're eating out, ask that raw sprouts not be added to your food. If you buy ready-made sandwich, salad, or Asian food, check to make sure raw sprouts have not been added.

Adapted from Food Facts, U.S. Food and Drug Administration, January 2012



Kid's Korner Refrigerator Dilly Beans

Dilly beans...a pickling delight!



Ingredients

- 1 cup white vinegar
- 1 cup water
- 2 tablespoons canning or pickling salt
- 2 teaspoons dill seed
- 1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes (optional)
- 1 pound green beans, washed and ends trimmed
- 2 cloves of garlic, peeled



Directions

1. Combine vinegar, water, salt, dill seeds and crushed red pepper flakes in a pot. Bring to a boil.
2. Add green beans and garlic to quart jar or large container with a lid. Pour hot vinegar mixture over beans. Cover and refrigerate.
3. Keep refrigerated and use within two weeks.

Makes 8 servings Serving Size: 1/4 cup

Cost per recipes: \$2.75 Cost per serving: \$.34

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size (120g)
Servings Per Container 1/4 cup

Amount Per Serving

Calories 15 Calories from Fat 0

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 0g **0%**

Saturated Fat 0g **0%**

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 0mg **0%**

Sodium 880mg **37%**

Total Carbohydrate 3g **1%**

Dietary Fiber 1g **4%**

Sugars 1g

Protein 1g

Vitamin A 0% • Vitamin C 0%

Calcium 2% • Iron 0%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

		Calories: 2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Saturated Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Calories per gram:

Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4

Ask Extension!

Kate Garland

Horticulture Professional, Penobscot County

Kate Garland, University Maine Cooperative Extension Horticulturalist in Penobscot County, is our featured guest in the Eat Well! Newsletter. Kate has served as a Horticulturist for Cooperative Extension for nearly 4 years. She has studied botany and horticultural science, and has several years of experience working in the nursery industry.



Q. How do I get several harvests from green beans this year?

A. Green beans typically require about 50-60 days from when you plant the seed until it is time to harvest. Gardeners should wait until the soil warms to at least 70°F before planting the seeds. If you try to get them in the ground too early, the seeds may rot and it won't likely yield you a crop any earlier. Here are a few tips:

- Follow the planting directions on the seed packet. Try planting small batches of beans every two or three weeks to avoid having too many beans ripening at the same time.



- To make the most of your crop, be ready to pick every day or so when the beans begin to ripen. It's easy to waste beans if you do not harvest them on a regular basis.



- To keep your garden as productive as possible, pull the plants when they start to slow down in production and plant a short-season crop (radish, lettuce, other greens) in it's place.

Eat Well! is published four times a year for current, past and future UMaine Extension Eat Well program participants. For more information on Eat Well, contact your County Extension office. **Managing Editor:** Kate Yerxa, MS, RD, **Extension Editor:** Phoebe Nylund, Eat Well Program. **Eat Well Committee:** Kathleen Savoie, MS, RD, Extension Educator; Kate Yerxa, MS, RD, Extension Educator; and Christine Finmore, Community Education Assistant. **Design and Production:** Phoebe Nylund, Eat Well Program.

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Food Bites

Freezing Green Beans

By Kathy Savoie, Extension Educator

General Instructions for freezing green beans:

- Select packaging material that is moisture and vapor resistant, and easy to seal and label.
- Select young, tender, high-quality beans. Wash. Remove ends. Snap or cut into 2- to 4-inch lengths.
- Work quickly in small batches. Keep working surfaces, utensils and hands clean.
- Blanching is recommended for snap, green or wax beans. Use 1 gallon of water per pound of vegetables. Place vegetables in a blanching basket and lower into boiling water. Begin blanching time when water resumes boiling. Blanch for 3 minutes.

Cool beans quickly by putting blanched vegetables into a large quantity of ice and cold water for 3 minutes.

- Freeze beans at 0°F or lower. Don't overload freezer: add no more than 2 to 3 pounds per cubic foot of storage space in a 24-hour period.

For more specific information about freezing other types of vegetables and videos demonstrating how to freeze green beans, see University of Maine Cooperative Extension publication #4384, *Freezing Vegetables* which is available at <http://umaine.edu/publications/4384e/> and UMaine Cooperative Extension Bulletin #4046, *Let's Preserve Snap Beans* available at <http://extension.umaine.edu/publications/4046e/>.



Wash beans



Snap or cut beans



Blanch for 3 minutes



Cool beans quickly



Package and label beans



Freeze

