

Beets

Native of the Mediterranean and Western Europe. The most common color is red, due to betain pigments, but white beets and red and white ringed beets are also available. Bred for sweetness and tenderness. Greens from Beets are also edible.



Growing Info: Beets are quite easy to grow here, and can do well in every season except winter. We plant successions through the spring and summer for a constant supply through the growing season.

Common Problems: You may see evidence of vole, groundhog, and rabbit damage to the tops of the roots. We can control the groundhogs by trapping, but voles (small burrowing mole-like creatures) and rabbits elude our controls. We have to just accept that we'll be sharing a small portion of our harvest with them!

TIPS:

Short-term Storage: If you get beets with the tops on, you will need to chop them off and store the roots and the greens separately (see Storage Section of this Handbook).

Long-term Storage: Beet roots can be stored by first boiling and roasting, and then freezing. It may be a good idea to make soup out of them to store for later. Or you can just freeze large cooked chunks.

General Cooking Info: Beets can be eaten raw or cooked. Cutting them into very thin strips to put into salad, or shredding into salad makes for a quick easy way to consume them. Large chunks of raw beets can cause a burning sensation in the back of the throat for some people which is not very pleasant. If you want to use large pieces of beets in your salad, it is good to boil or steam them, and then put them in. Roasting beets brings out the natural sweetness of beets. You will get beets of differing maturity through the season. Sometimes you'll get baby beets which are usually very tender and sweet. These are best steamed or roasted. Sometimes you'll get large beets which may have a tough skin. Some people find that they prefer to peel them at this stage. Juicing beets along with fruit makes for a very nutritious drink!



Chioggia beets: A very old variety known for exceptional sweetness.

Easy Pickled Beets

4 cans of beets
 1 cup sugar
 1 cup apple cider vinegar
 1 large plastic bowl with lid
 Drain the liquid from 3 1/2 cans of beets, reserving 1/2 can liquid. Place drained beets in a large plastic bowl. Add remaining ingredients. Cover and shake well.

Refrigerate over night or longer if desired.

Very easy, very good.

from *Cooks.com*

Pantzaria Salata: Cold Beet and Garlic Salad

This cold salad is easy to make, and delicious. The combination of beets and garlic is a Greek favorite. •2 pounds of fresh red beets or 2 cans of sliced beets (discard liquid)

- 2 -3 cloves of garlic, minced
- 1/2 cup of olive oil
- 1/4 cup of red wine vinegar
- sea salt (optional)
- fresh ground pepper (optional)

Preparation:

If using fresh beets: Remove leaves, leaving about an inch of stem, and don't cut the taproot. Wash gently (don't break the skin), and place in a pot of cold water to cover. Bring to a boil and cook until done (firm but cooked, about 40-50 minutes). Drain the beets, cool under running cold water, and remove skin with fingers. Slice.

Combine beets, garlic, oil, and vinegar in a bowl and toss. Add salt and pepper to taste, and refrigerate covered for several hours before serving.

Notes:

- Try this salad with a dollop of thick yogurt on top or on the side. It's delicious!
- I prefer this salad well seasoned with salt and pepper but it tastes delicious even without.

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Eggless Beet Brownies

3 ounces Semisweet or Bittersweet Chocolate

1 cup Beet Puree

1/2 cup Light/Dark Brown Sugar, firmly packed

1/4 cup Unsweetened Cocoa Powder

2 tablespoons butter

2 teaspoons Vanilla

1/4 cup Unsweetened Applesauce

3/4 cup Oat Flour

3/4 teaspoon Baking Powder

1/2 cup Walnuts, chopped (optional)

1/2 teaspoon Salt

1 Preheat the oven to 350F. Coat and 8 inch square pan with cooking spray, or line with sprayed foil.

2 Melt the chocolate in a double boiler or over a very low flame. Take care while doing so or else the chocolate will get burnt. So increase the time little by little. Stir it well, it should be smooth.

3 In the same bowl, combine the beet puree, sugar, cocoa powder, margarine, vanilla and unsweetened applesauce and whisk it well. This mixture should be smooth and creamy.

4 Stir in the oat flour, baking powder, chopped walnuts and salt with a wooden spoon.

5 Pour the batter into the prepared pan and baked 35-40 minutes. I checked it after 35 minutes and felt that it was not done. Brownies should spring back when touched, but it did not. So baked it for another 5 minutes.

6 Cool completely in the pan on a wire rack. Since I lined the pan with aluminum foil I lifted it after an hour and I cooled it on a wire rack. After another 2 hours I was able to cut them into neat squares without any trouble. If baking it directly in the pan, it will take some more (actually a lot more) time for the brownies to cool completely and getting neat pieces will also be difficult.