



BEETS & RUTABAGA

IN THE CAFETERIA

New Hampshire Harvest of the Month provides resources for the cafeteria, classroom, and community to promote the use of local, seasonal foods.

www.nhharvestofthemonth.org

Tidbit

Beets and rutabagas are fleshy roots that store well in the winter. Beets come in an array of colors, from golden yellow and deep purple, to red and white striped. These roots can be eaten raw or cooked: grate them for a fresh salad, or glaze them with a balsamic-honey blend and roast.

Cooking Tips

- If you scrub these root vegetables vigorously, you don't need to peel them.
- If you have waxed rutabagas, remove the wax with your fingers and/or a knife; if wax remains, scrub under hot water.
- Allow 30-60 minutes to boil or steam beets and rutabagas, depending on size; when the root vegetables are fully cooked, you can easily remove their skins and pierce a fork through them.
- Peeling and chopping before boiling or steaming cuts down on the cooking time, although adds more prep time.
- Baking or roasting beets and rutabagas best preserves their flavor.
- Rutabagas can replace turnips in most recipes.

RECIPES

Grated Beet & Carrot Salad

Yield: 68 2 oz. servings: 1 oz. serving of red/orange vegetable and 1 oz. serving of other (beets) vegetable

Salad Ingredients:

2 ½ lbs beets
2 ½ lbs carrots

Honey-Ginger

Dressing Ingredients:

1 Tbsp. grated fresh ginger
or 1 tsp. dried ginger
¼ cup honey
¼ cup orange juice
¼ cup lemon juice
¼ cup olive oil

Directions:

1. Clean and grate vegetables, keeping beets separate. There is no need to peel, just scrub! To save time, shred the vegetables using a food processor.
2. Mix together dressing ingredients.
3. Add dressing to vegetables.
4. Mix in beets last.
5. Before serving, let sit one hour at room temperature, or in the refrigerator.

Source: VT FEED "A Guide for Using Local Food in Schools", edited by GMFTS

Mashed Rutabaga-Parmesan

Yield: ~50 ½ cup servings or 150-200 taste test servings; ¼ of other (rutabagas) vegetable and ¼ of starchy (potato) vegetable

Ingredients:

9 lbs rutabagas
9 lbs potatoes
1 cup butter
2 cups heavy cream
2 ½ cups parmesan
2 cloves raw garlic, minced
salt and pepper, to taste

Directions:

1. Peel and chop rutabagas into chunks and toss into a pot of boiling water. Cook for about 20 minutes, until easily pierced with a fork.
2. Drain, return to pot, and add butter, stirring to coat and melt.
3. Mash with a fork or potato masher.
4. Mix in cream and parmesan, and salt and pepper to taste.
5. Serve hot (reheat if necessary).

Source: www.stetted.com, edited by GMFTS

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Selection

- Choose beets and rutabagas that are firm and free of bruises.
- Select similar-sized roots to ensure even cooking.
- The greens of both roots are edible; if they are still intact and you plan to cook them, make sure they're not wilted and have a healthy green color. Otherwise, the quality of the greens is not an indication of the quality of the root.

Storage Tips

Winter storage:

- De-stemmed beets and rutabagas will keep for 2-4 weeks in the refrigerator.
- Buried in sand and/or placed in a cellar, they'll keep for months.
- Waxing rutabagas lengthens their shelf life.
- Unwashed greens, stored in a perforated plastic bag, will last 3-5 days in the refrigerator.

To freeze:

- Blanch for 2 minutes or cook and purée, then place in a labeled and dated freezer-grade bag.

Benefits

- Beet leaves are an excellent source of potassium and a good source of vitamin B9 (folic acid) and the mineral magnesium. Beet roots are an excellent source of vitamin A and the mineral potassium; they are a good source of vitamin C, B2 (riboflavin) and magnesium.
- Rutabagas are an excellent source of the mineral potassium and a good source of vitamin C.

Kid-Friendly Eating Tips

- Try pickling thinly-sliced beets!
- Grated raw beets are an excellent addition to a salad; beet greens can be treated like spinach or chard: sauté or use for a salad.
- Purée rutabaga on its own, with a bit of parmesan or add it to mashed potatoes and/or carrots.
- Rutabagas are a great addition to soups or stews and make a great soufflé.
- Cube and roast beets and rutabagas, with olive oil and your choice of herbs or with a honey or maple syrup glaze.

VARIETIES OF BEETS & RUTABAGAS:



Detroit Dark Red



Early Wonder Tall Top



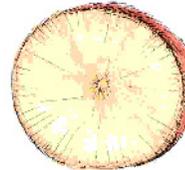
Forono



Chioggia



Touchstone Gold



Joan Rutabaga

Mini Activities

- How much does this rutabaga weigh?
- Taste test several beet varieties with a simple seasoning such as olive oil and oregano, honey or maple syrup.

Sources: *The Visual Food Encyclopedia*, *The Encyclopedia of Healing Foods*, GMFTS