Beet Basics

Shop and Save

- Beets should be round and firm with smooth skins and a deep color. If the greens are attached and you plan to use them, they should be green and fresh, not wilted.
- Small to medium sized beets (up to 2 1/2 inches across) have better flavor. Choose beets that are about the same size so they will cook evenly. The larger the beet, the longer the cooking time will be.
- Fresh beets are available year round but might be less expensive and fresher from July through October.
- Buying canned beets might save you money and time.

Store Well Waste Less

- You can use beet greens raw in salads or cooked as a side dish. Remove leaves from beets, if still attached, and store separately in an open bag. Use within 2-3 days.
- Store unwashed beets in open or perforated plastic bags (20 holes per medium bag) in the refrigerator. Use within 3 weeks.
- Scrub gently under running water before cooking.
- Cooked beets can be frozen. Package in airtight containers, label and date.

Easy Sauteed Beet Greens

Heat 2 teaspoons oil in a medium-size pan over medium heat. Add the cleaned and chopped greens from 2 bunches of beets (4 to 5 cups without stems) and 2 cloves of garlic, minced. Stir until just wilted, then reduce heat to low and stir occasionally for 5 to 8 minutes until soft.

When done, stir in 1 teaspoon lemon juice, 1/8 teaspoon red pepper flakes and a dash of salt. Makes about 1 cup.

1 pound fresh beets = 2 medium beets with tops = 3 medium, trimmed = 2 cups sliced or diced
15 ounce can of beets = about 1 cup drained

After eating beets, some people notice their urine turns pink or red. This is surprising, but harmless.
Un-beet-able Berry Smoothie

**Ingredients:**
- 1 cup pineapple juice
- 1 cup low-fat plain or vanilla yogurt
- 1 1/2 cup fresh or frozen berries, any type
- 1/2 cup beets, canned or cooked
- 1 small frozen banana (optional)

**Directions:**
1. Combine all ingredients in a blender.
2. Blend until smooth; serve right away.
3. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.

**Makes**: 4 cups  
**Prep time**: 5 minutes

Roasted Beets

**Ingredients:**
- 1 pound (3 to 4 medium) beets
- 2 teaspoons vegetable oil
- 1/4 teaspoon each salt and pepper

**Directions:**
1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F.
2. Place washed and trimmed beets on a piece of foil, drizzle with oil and seal edges closed. Foil keeps the beets moist and makes clean-up easy.
3. Place beets on a baking sheet. Roast for 45 to 60 minutes until they can be pierced to the center. Open foil carefully when testing for doneness.
4. When beets are cool enough to handle, slice off ends and remove skin if desired.
5. Season with salt and pepper. Serve now or use in another recipe.
6. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.

**Makes**: 4 servings  
**Prep time**: 5 to 10 minutes  
**Cook time**: 45 to 60 minutes

Cook Fresh Beets

**Cook beets ahead** to shorten time to make a recipe. Beets are done when they can be pierced to the center with a dull knife. Refrigerate; use within 5 days.

**Keep nutrients and color** by cooking beets with the skin on and the stem and root ends trimmed to about one inch. After cooking, slice off the ends and discard. The skin softens after cooking and can be eaten or removed. To remove, rub off with your fingers or a paper towel.

**Cook whole, unpeeled beets:**
- **Boil** - cover with water and simmer for 30 minutes or more depending on size.
- **Microwave** - pierce the skin and place in microwave-safe dish with 2 to 4 tablespoons of water. Cover and microwave on HIGH for 10 to 15 minutes depending on size and number of beets.

**Roast** - try our recipe.

**Slow cooker** - wrap each beet in foil. Cook for 2 to 4 hours on HIGH.

**Cook cut, unpeeled beets:**
- **Roast** - place on a baking pan, drizzle with oil, sprinkle with salt, pepper and herbs as desired. Cook for about 45 minutes in a 400 to 425-degree F oven.

**Kids Can!**

When kids help make healthy food, they are more likely to try it. Show kids how to:
- safely handle sharp lids when opening cans.
- fill a blender part way and be sure the lid is on tight.