

Using & Storing Green Beans

Look for South Carolina-grown green beans June through September.

Green Beans are Good for You

Green beans are:

- very low in calories.
- a source of vitamin C.

How to Buy Green Beans

Select pods of equal size (for even cooking) that are no thicker than a pencil. The beans should have a fresh, vivid color and a velvety feel, with a firm texture. When broken, they should snap crisply.

Do not buy beans that are limp, over-sized, split, or have rust spots or scars. If the seeds are bulging inside the pod, they are too mature.

Green beans and yellow wax beans are the same in taste and texture and can be substituted for each other in recipes.

One pound of green beans equals:

- about 2 cups cooked.
- about 3 cups raw, cut up.

How to Store Green Beans

Keep beans in a plastic bag in the refrigerator crisper. They will stay fresh 3 to 5 days.

How to Use Green Beans

Wash the beans, then snap or trim the cap end off each bean. Leave the beans whole for cooking or snap or cut them crosswise into 1-to 2-inch lengths.

You can cook green beans many ways, but whatever method you use, do not over cook.

Otherwise, they will lose their brilliant color and crisp-tender bite.

Add green beans to stews, chili and soups toward the end of cooking for a crunchy, fresh, green vegetable. Add blanched green beans to a raw vegetable platter or a fresh green salad for a change of pace.

Cooked green beans are delicious served plain, or try these finishing touches:

- Lightly sauté minced onion, garlic or sliced mushrooms in a little margarine or oil. Add cooked green beans and toss until coated.
- Lightly brush with margarine and sprinkle with one of the following
 - Grated Parmesan cheese
 - Basil
 - Dill
 - Lemon juice
 - Chopped peanuts or almonds
- Add a little cooked, crumbled bacon, diced ham or chopped hard-cooked egg.
- Toss beans with lite Italian dressing.
- Add undiluted cream of mushroom soup. Reheat. Garnish with crisp-fried onions.

How to Prepare Green Beans

To Blanch or Boil: Wash and trim beans. Put beans in saucepan and cover with water. Remove beans and set side. Bring water to a boil, and drop beans, one handful at a time, into water so that the water continues to boil. Cook to the desired doneness, 3 to 8 minutes. Drain and serve while the beans are still crisp-tender, or add them to another dish for further cooking.

To Microwave: Place a pound of cut-up, washed and trimmed beans in a microwave dish with ¼ cup water. Cover and cook on high 5 to 10 minutes.

To Steam: Wash and trim beans. Bring an inch of water to a boil and place steamer basket with beans over the water. Cover and steam 3 to 7 minutes to desired tenderness.

To Stir-fry: Wash and cut beans into 2-inch lengths. Heat 1 teaspoon oil for every cup of beans. Stir-fry in hot oil 2 to 5 minutes. Remove from heat. If you wish, cover for a minute or so to reach desired doneness.

Green Bean Recipes

Supper Salad:

4 cups chopped lettuce
½ cup lite Italian dressing
2 cups boiled potatoes, diced
2 cups cooked, cut-up green beans
1 3.5 ounce can tuna, drained
1 medium tomato, cut in wedges
2 hard-cooked eggs, cut in wedges
black pepper or paprika

Directions: Toss lettuce with ¼ cup dressing and arrange on platter. Toss potatoes with another ¼ cup dressing, and place on top of lettuce bed. Mix together green beans and tuna, and arrange around potatoes. Arrange tomatoes and egg wedges around the edge. Garnish with black pepper or paprika.
Serves 4.

Calories: 209 per serving
Fat: 5 grams per serving

Shepherd's Pie:

1 pound ground turkey or beef
1 clove minced garlic (or ¼ tsp. garlic powder)
1 small onion, chopped
2 cups cooked, cut-up green beans
1 can undiluted tomato soup
3 to 4 cups mashed potatoes
paprika or Parmesan cheese (optional)

Directions: Preheat oven to 350 °F. Cook ground turkey or beef over medium heat until no longer pink. Drain off fat. Add garlic and onion and cook 2 minutes or until onion is soft. Add green beans and soup and mix well. Pour into casserole dish and spoon mashed potatoes on top, smoothing potatoes to make a flat layer. Garnish with paprika or Parmesan cheese if desired. Bake 30 minutes.
Serves 8.

Calories: 317 per serving
Fat: 16 grams per serving

Source:

University of Illinois Extension fact sheet; originally developed by Michigan State University Extension

This information has been reviewed and adapted for use in South Carolina by J. G. Hunter, HGIC Nutrition Specialist, and K. L. Cason, Professor, State EFNEP Coordinator, Clemson University.(New 09/05.)

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