

# GO FOR GREEN BEANS!

## GARDENING SEASON

July to August

## CHOOSING TIPS

Select beans that have a fresh bright skin and velvety touch. They should snap with a clean break without strings. Look for even shaped, plump beans with few strings. The length of the bean is not related to quality. Do not choose beans:

- ~ With seeds that are visible through the skin (these are tough and old)
- ~ With dull appearance
- ~ That have wilted or tough skins
- ~ Are woody or stringy
- ~ That have holes/spots, brown skin, insects or worms

## STORAGE

Green beans are best when eaten soon after picking. Store unwashed in a plastic bag in the refrigerator. They can be stored up to two weeks in the refrigerator. Beans can be frozen.

## PREPARATION

Wash thoroughly in cold water. Snap or cut off about  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch off stem end of each bean. Green beans may be left whole or cut into bite size pieces. Cook by steaming or boiling in a small amount of water, uncovered about 12 minutes just until crisp tender. They are also delicious added directly to soup, stew, or stir-fry.



## KEY NUTRIENT

~ Fiber to help prevent constipation.

## RECIPES

### Vegetable Stir-Fry

- ◆ 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- ◆ 1 small onion, chopped
- ◆  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup washed, raw potatoes cut into thin strips
- ◆  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup fresh carrots, thinly sliced
- ◆  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup fresh green beans, cut in 2-inch pieces
- ◆  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup celery, thinly sliced
- ◆ 1 tablespoon soy sauce

In a large skillet, heat the oil. Add onions to the skillet. When onions are soft, add potatoes. When potatoes are almost soft, add carrots, beans, and celery, stirring quickly until vegetables are tender but still crisp, about 6 to 8 minutes. Stir in soy sauce; cover skillet and let steam for 3 minutes. Serve with rice, pasta, or your favorite grain. Serves 3; 95 Cal; 5 g fat.

### Almond-Crunch Beans

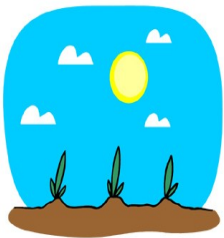
- ◆  $\frac{1}{2}$  pound fresh beans
- ◆  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup water
- ◆ 1 tablespoon margarine or butter
- ◆ 1-2 tablespoons toasted slivered almonds
- ◆ Salt to taste

Cut beans in 1-inch pieces. Cook and stir beans, water, margarine and salt in 12-inch skillet over medium heat until margarine is melted. Cover and cook until beans are tender, 15 minutes. Stir in almonds. Serves 3; 85 Cal; 7 g fat.



# Growing Green Beans in Wisconsin

Green beans are an enormously popular garden plant for numerous reasons. Beans are easy to grow and have relatively few disease and insect problems. Beans are a type of legume. Legume plants are unique in that they supply their own nitrogen through a mutually beneficial relationship with soil microorganisms. This makes beans especially attractive as a plant to rotate around the garden to help following year vegetables.



## Planting Green Beans

- Delay planting until the last expected frost date which is the end of May for northern Wis-

consin

- Soil temperature needs to be at least 50°F
- Plant in a sunny location
- Work soils 6 to 7 inches deep
- Plant at 8 oz of seed per 100 ft of row
- Seeding depth: 1 inch
- Space between rows: 18 to 24 inches
- Space between plants: 2 to 3 inches

## Soil and Fertility

- Well drained sandy loam soil is best
- Soil test once every 3 years
- Maintained pH near 6.8 on mineral soils and 5.6 on organic soils
- Beans are shallow rooted, early feeders
- Supply fertilizer at planting
- Prevent fertilizer from directly contacting the seed. Beans are sensitive to salt.

## Soil and Fertility continued...

Under optimum soil test levels apply...

1.5 oz of nitrogen per 100 sq ft

.5 oz of phosphate per 100 sq ft

1.1 oz of potassium per 100 sq ft

Soils low in iron, manganese, and zinc can have reduced yields.

## Selecting Bean Varieties

Bean varieties are classified as either pole or bush. Bush beans may be categorized as filet (French-style) or snap beans. Filet beans have flattened pods. All pole beans are snap beans. Wax beans are another type of bean. Beans are available in an assortment of colors from yellow to purple. If garden diseases have been a problem, consider selecting varieties with specific disease resistance.

## Handling and Harvesting Your Beans

Harvest when beans are sweet, tender and have a uniform pod size but before seeds start to develop significantly. Large pods do not have a good flavor. Pick beans 14 to 18 days after full bloom. Wait until the dew has thoroughly dried to prevent the spread of bacterial blights. Rinse them in cool water for a few minutes to reduce heat and remove soil. Dry beans on a screen table. Pack them into a waxed cardboard box and store them in a cooler at 41°F and 95% humidity. Top condition will remain for 5 days. Beans are typically sold by the pound and placed in a plastic produce bag.



Prepared by Nick Schneider, Clark County Crops and Soils Agent. April 2005. For more information contact your local Extension Office to obtain these references: Growing bean and peas in Wisconsin. Publication A3685. Commercial Vegetable Production in Wisconsin. Publication A3422.