



Beets

Plant: Beets are a root vegetable that should be grown in full sun. Planting should use a compost or well-rotted manure tilled to a depth of 12" into the soil. Make sure to first soak the seeds in warm water for 24 hours before planting. When planting beets, do so in early Spring. The seeds should be spaced 4" from other plants, 18-24" from the next row, and 0.5" down into the soil. Beets take about 40-70 days to mature.

Grow: Beets require regular watering to promote root development, about once a week. They prefer sandy soils that are high in organic matter. Begin thinning the plants when the seedlings are 4-5" tall by cutting rather than pulling to avoid disturbing nearby plants.

Harvest: Harvesting should take place in about 40-70 days and when they are 2-3" wide. When harvesting, separate the green tops from the roots to prevent the greens from drawing the moisture from the roots.

Nutritional Information:

Beets are high in phytonutrients called betalains. These nutrients are antioxidants, anti-inflammatory, and detoxifying agents. They have been shown in studies to reduce tumor cell growth. Beets are also great sources of folate, manganese, fiber, potassium, and vitamin C. The greens attached to the roots are very rich in carotenoids (specifically beta carotene and lutein/zeaxanthin) and many other vitamins and minerals.

How to Prepare: To prevent loss of betalains when cooking, be sure to steam beets for 15 minutes or less or roast for under an hour. To soften the crunchy texture of raw beets, cook them by boiling, steaming, or roasting. Their sweet taste is due to their high sugar content. The greens attached to the beet roots may be consumed raw or cooked as well; prepare in a fashion similar to other delicate greens like spinach.

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size	
1 cup (136.0 g)	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 58	Calories from Fat 2
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 0.2g	0%
Saturated Fat 0.0g	0%
Polyunsaturated Fat 0.1g	
Monounsaturated Fat 0.0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 106mg	4%
Total Carbohydrates 13.0g	4%
Dietary Fiber 3.8g	15%
Sugars 9.2g	
Protein 2.2g	
Vitamin A 1%	Vitamin C 11%
Calcium 2%	Iron 6%
* Based on a 2000 calorie diet	



Balsamic-Dressed Roasted Beets

Yields: 8 servings
Serving size: ½ cup

Ingredients

- 6 medium beets (about 2 ½ pounds)
- 1/2 cup fresh orange juice
- 1/4 cup balsamic vinegar
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 star anise
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

Preparation

1. Preheat oven to 400°.
2. Leave root and 1 inch of stem on beets; scrub with a brush. Wrap beets in foil. Bake at 400° for 1 hour or until tender. Cool beets to room temperature. Peel and cut each beet into 8 wedges.
3. Combine juice, vinegar, sugar, and star anise in a small saucepan; bring to a boil. Cook until reduced to 1/3 cup (about 10 minutes). Discard star anise. Combine beets, vinegar mixture, salt, and pepper; toss well.

Nutrition Facts per Serving:

79 calories, <1 g fat, 18 g carbohydrates, 4 g fiber, 2 g protein