

## **BEETS**

In the spring and early summer we harvest beets in bunches with their leafy tops. They are small, tender and come with wonderful edible greens. During the fall & winter you will receive larger beets without tops in your share for storage.

### **Storage Tips**

- Cut off stems one inch from the crown
- Refrigerate the unwashed beet roots
- Summer beets will stay in good condition for 2-3 weeks
- Wash and spin greens and place in a plastic bag in the refrigerator
- Greens are best when eaten within 3 days

### **Culinary Tips**

- Raw beets can be grated into a salad
- Scrub the beet clean, no need to peel
- Bake the beets to enhance their natural sweetness. Slice the washed and unpeeled beets into  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch thick slices. Arrange slices on a lightly oiled baking pan and season with thyme or tarragon. Add a small amount of water or apple juice and cover with foil. Put in 350° oven for 25 minutes until fork-tender
- Beets can also be steamed and boiled. Scrub beets clean but leave skins on until after cooking to minimize color and flavor loss. Run whole, cooked beets under cold water and rub off the skins. 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch beets take 30 minutes to cook in steam and 15-20 minutes in boiling water. Serve whole, sliced or grated.
- Toss grated beets with grated carrots, apples, oil and vinegar dressing. A touch of plain yogurt makes for a wonderful color transformation.
- The greens can be steamed, sautéed, and mixed with pasta with cheese.

### **Greens and Beans**

Use any combination of greens below:

Lots of swiss chard, spinach, beet greens, kohlrabi greens, collard greens or escarole (at least enough to fill a 4 qt. pot)

1 T. olive oil

1 clove garlic, crushed

1/2 - 1 cup chicken or vegetable broth

1 15 oz. can of cannellini beans, garbanzo beans (or whatever beans you like), drained

Over med. heat, add olive oil, then garlic and stir for a few seconds. Add greens to pot then pour broth over all. Cover, bring to boil and turn heat down to simmer for about 10-15 minutes. Uncover and stir. Greens should be cooked down and soft (cook longer if needed). Now add beans, heat through, salt and pepper to taste and enjoy. Excellent side dish! Can also serve with hearty bread to make a great light lunch or dinner.

### **Vinegar Drizzle**

Simmer vinegar on a low heat until it gets reduced to about half of its original volume and becomes thick and syrupy. Drizzle over cooked beets and cooked greens.

## **Roasted Beet Soup** *From Julie Ulmer*

4 Beets will make soup for 3-4 people

1 quart of vegetable stock

yogurt or tofu cream

fennel seeds

fresh herbs

salt and pepper

I prefer red beets for this soup, but really any heirloom beet: orange, yellow, white or pink would do just as nicely. Beets marry very well with the following spices: fennel, dill, cumin and parsley as well as basil, lovage, cilantro or thyme. You can't go wrong with any fresh herb and a roast beet, I suppose.

Roast or boil your beets till tender. Roasting is my preferred lazy woman's way to cook, all you have to do is prep the beets, pop them into a hot oven and forget about them for up to an hour for early season beets, or up to an hour and a half for late season beets. Preheat the oven to 400 F. Wash them well, cutting off the greens but leaving an inch or so of the stem attached. Do not cut the beets, but dry them well. Rub with a little bit of olive oil and place them into an ovenproof dish. Roast until tender. Let cool until you can handle them, and then the peel should come off easily. Chop the beets finely and set aside. Meanwhile, your stock should be nicely warmed if you'll be eating the soup hot or cool or room temperature if eating it cool.

Add the stock until the desired consistency and/or flavor is reached. I like to use my blender stick (or blender, food processor etc) to puree the soup, leaving aside several pieces of chopped beet for color and tooth after the soup is assembled.