



BEETS

Cafeteria Connection

Tell Me about Beets

With the highest sugar content of any vegetable, beet roots are a great way to add big flavor to any meal while contributing a range of nutritional benefits. Typically, the name beet refers to the bulbous root of the beet plant, though beet greens can be eaten too. These are the leafy green plant tops that are attached to beet roots but grow above ground. Beet roots are available year-round because they can be stored and eaten for several months after harvest, but peak season for Washington-grown beets and beet greens is May through September.

Crediting Information

- Beets, whether fresh or canned, credit toward the vegetable meal pattern component by volume served. For example, 1/2 cup roasted beets credit as 1/2 cup vegetable.
- In School Meals, beets contribute to the "other" vegetable sub-group.
- Yield information:
 - 1 #10 can contains approximately 9 1/8 cups beets.
 - 1 pound beets (without tops) provides 11.68 ounces cooked, sliced beets.
- Vegetables must be fresh, frozen, canned, or full-strength vegetable juice, referred to as 100% juice, to credit as a vegetable component. Dried vegetables, including beans, peas, and lentils, must be reconstituted to credit toward reimbursable meals. Please confirm crediting requirements for dried vegetables with your specialist.



Nutrition Facts

Beet roots are a good source of vitamin C, which supports healthy skin, gums, and immune system. They also provide B vitamins like riboflavin (vitamin B2) and folate (Vitamin B9), which play an important role in the growth and maintenance of cells.

Beet greens, like other leafy green vegetables, are very dense in nutrients. They contain a variety of vitamins which help to support the immune system and protect against disease. The calcium and iron in beet greens help build strong bones and muscles.



Selection and Storage

- Select beets with firm skins.
- Beets should be round but may have a long a slender taproot emerging from their base.
- Smaller beets are more tender.
- If greens are still attached, select beets with fresh looking leaves.
- Small beets (about a half -inch in diameter) are good for eating raw. Medium and large-sized beets are best for cooking. Very large beets (more than three inches in diameter) may be too woody for eating.

Culinary Tips

- To maintain optimum flavor, try roasting beets instead of boiling.
- Balance the sweet and rich earthy tones with a splash of acid, like lemon juice or balsamic vinegar.
- Don't forget to use the tops! Beet greens can be used in place of spinach, Swiss chard, kale, or any other cooking green. Sauté them with garlic and olive oil or chop them and add them to soup.

Recipes

- [Beet Hummus Washington Recipe for Schools](#)
- [Local Harvest Bake USDA Recipe for Schools](#)
- [Local Harvest Bake USDA Recipe for Child Care Centers](#)
- [Local Harvest Bake USDA Recipe for Adults in CACFP](#)

Sourcing

- [Find Beets](#)



Beets, credit: WSDA