



BEETS

What is It?

- Beets are considered root vegetables because the part of the plant most commonly eaten grows underground; however, the leafy green plant tops are edible too.
- The Romans were some of the first people to grow beets. They ate beetroots and also used them to feed animals.
- The Greeks were the first people to consume both the roots and leaves.
- Beets come in various colors like red, purple, orange, and yellow, and one variety, the Chioggia beet, can even be striped like a candy cane.
- Beet juice has been used as a natural red dye since the 16th century.
- Beets are one of the sweetest vegetables. One variety, called a Sugar Beet, is used to make sugar.
- The heaviest beet on record weighed 52 lb. 14 oz!



Beets, credit: WSDA

Grow It

- Beets are hardy vegetables and can be planted directly in the soil, about 1/2-1 inch deep, four weeks before the last frost. Beets do well when planted with onions, cooking greens, radishes, turnips, and garlic. If possible, plant beets where bush beans or peas previously grew because the soil is rich in nitrogen that beets need to grow.
- [Find more gardening tips here.](#)





Make It

Recipe: Red Beet and Apple Salad
Yield: 4 servings

| Ingredients | Directions |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 large beet (or 2 small beets)• 4 apples, peeled• 1 tablespoon lemon juice• 1 tablespoon honey• Salt (to taste) | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Wash and peel beet(s) and apples.2. Grate beet(s) and apples into a large bowl.3. Put lemon juice, honey, and salt together in a small bowl. Whisk with a fork.4. Pour the dressing over the grated beet and apples; mix well.5. Served chilled. |

Recipe: Beet Chips
Yield: 6 servings

| Ingredients | Directions |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5 beets• 2 sweet potatoes• 3 tablespoons olive oil• 1 tablespoon salt | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F.2. Slice beets and sweet potatoes thinly using a mandolin or sharp knife. They should be the thickness of a thick potato chip. Cut them as consistently as possible.3. Cut sliced rounds with metal star-shaped (or whatever your prefer) cookie cutter.4. On cookie sheet, toss chips with olive oil and salt.5. Spread evenly on cookie sheet.6. Roast 20-30 minutes turning halfway through, until crisp. Check often to make sure they don't burn.7. Let them cool. Eat and enjoy! |

Eat It

- 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.

Read It

- Tops and Bottoms by Janet Stevens
- City Beet, written by Tziporah Cohen and illustrated by Udayana Lugo



Golden Beets, credit: WSDA

Find It

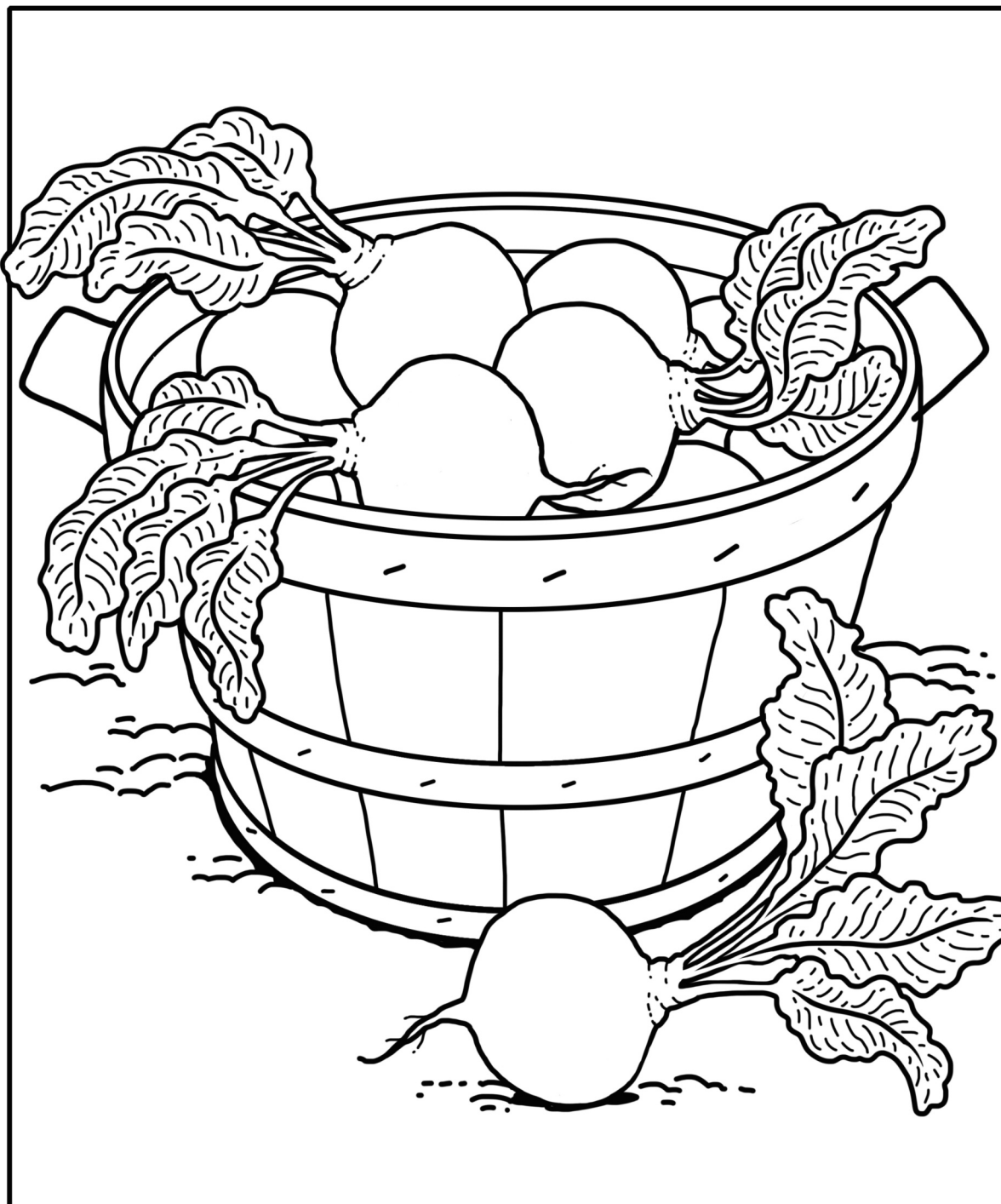
- Washington beets are available year-round at most grocery stores and can be found fresh, frozen or canned. Check the product label or shelf tag to see where a product is grown. They are also commonly found at Washington state's many farmers markets, farm stands, and other local markets from early spring until late fall.
- Select beets with firm skins. Beets should be round with a slender taproot. 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.
- Search for local farms and markets that sell Washington-grown beets here: [Washington Food & Farm Finder - Eat Local First](#)
- Find a farmers market near you here: [Find a Farmers Market - Washington Farmers Market](#). Many farmers markets and vendors accept WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program, WIC Fruit and Vegetable Benefit, and SNAP Market Match.

Play It

Enjoy the coloring activity on the next page from Oregon Food Hero.

Name _____

Beets



I like beets because



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