

SNAP BEANS



SNAP BEANS, also called green beans or string beans, are leguminous, which means that they belong to the family of plants that have the ability to convert nitrogen from the atmosphere into a form that is stable in soil. This is very important, as nitrogen is one of the most essential nutrients for plant growth. Snap beans are beans that are eaten together with their pods, as opposed to shelling beans that are removed from their pod, dried and must be cooked in order to be eaten. Snap beans are a warm season crop available in the Northeast from June through August.

STORAGE

- ◆ Snap beans will keep for **about a week** stored in a paper bag in the refrigerator drawer.
- ◆ **To freeze**, wash well, trim, and blanch in boiling water for 4 minutes. Cool in ice water, drain, and pack in freezer bags with a bit of room at the top.

PREPARATION

- ◆ There are many varieties of snap beans of various sizes, shapes, and colors, and they are all prepared in similar ways.
- ◆ Wash snap beans in cool water and trim stems. If there is a string attached to the stem, remove it.
- ◆ All snap beans may be **eaten raw or cooked**.
- ◆ **Eat raw** snap beans like carrot sticks **with your favorite dip or cut up and add to salads**.
- ◆ Don't overcook snap beans. They should be boiled or steamed for only a few minutes until they are crisp-tender. Overcooked beans become mushy and lose their color, flavor, and nutritional value.
- ◆ Cook snap beans with other seasonal vegetables in a **stir-fry, casserole, stew, or as a side dish**. Try sautéing snap beans in sesame oil. At the last minute add soy sauce and garnish with toasted sesame seeds.

Nutritional Information

Snap beans contain Vitamin A, C, K, folate and fiber. Vitamin C is important in immune response, wound healing, and allergic reactions. Vitamin C also helps with iron absorption. Vitamin A is important in vision, growth and development, skin health, immune function and reproduction. Vitamin K is involved in blood clotting. A healthy diet with enough folate may reduce a woman's risk of having a child with certain birth defects of the brain or spinal chord. Adequate intake of fiber is helpful in maintaining low cholesterol levels and aids in digestion.

Snap Bean Recipes

Bean Salad

- 1/4 cup minced onions
- 2 Tablespoons oil
- 1 Tablespoon vinegar
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 2 cloves garlic, minced or pressed
- Chopped herbs—thyme, dill or summer savory
- Pepper to taste
- 1 pound beans, washed and ends trimmed



In a medium bowl, combine onions, oil, vinegar, salt, garlic, herbs and pepper. Mix well. Add raw beans to dressing and toss. Marinate beans in the dressing for 24 hours and serve.

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Beans Au Gratin

- 4 cups lightly steamed beans
- 1/4 teaspoons salt
- Dash cayenne pepper
- 2 Tablespoons butter, melted or olive oil
- 1/3 cup cream
- 3/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese



Preheat oven to 425 degrees. In a bowl, mix together the beans, salt, pepper, butter, cream, and about a third of the cheese. Put mixture into a greased baking dish. Sprinkle with remaining cheese. Bake at 425 degrees for about 20 minutes.

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Italian Style Beans

- 3 to 4 cups fresh snap beans, washed and tips cut
- 1 Tablespoon olive oil
- 1/4 cup chopped onion
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1/2 cup diced green pepper
- 1/4 cup boiling water
- Fresh or dry basil, to taste
- 1/2 cup grated cheese, Parmesan or cheddar



You can leave the beans whole or cut them into 1 inch pieces. In a large skillet or saucepan over medium flame, heat oil. Add onions and green pepper and cook for 2 to 3 minutes. Add garlic cook for one minute. Add beans, boiling water and basil. Cover and cook for about 10-15 minutes, or until beans are tender. Make sure beans do not burn. Remove from heat and stir in half of cheese. Serve beans hot and use the rest of the cheese to sprinkle on top of the beans at the table.

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