

Green Beans

Green beans, like all legumes, contribute to soil health. Crisp, tender green beans entice many pickers every year.

STORAGE

Store unwashed beans in a perforated plastic bag in the vegetable bin of your refrigerator for up to two weeks.

Green Bean Salad with Walnuts and Shaved Parmesan in Lemon Dressing

This is one of those recipes that is stunningly good—both in spite of and because of its simplicity. The straightforward, summery freshness of green beans with lemon is offset perfectly by the deep, roasty flavor of freshly toasted walnuts and the distinctive tang of fresh Parmesan cheese. *Friend of the Farm.*

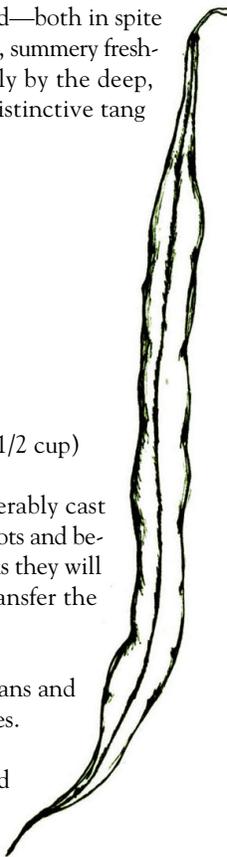
Serves 4 to 6

- 1/4 cup coarsely chopped walnuts
- 1 pound green beans
- 1 teaspoon salt plus more to taste
- freshly ground black pepper
- 1 1/2 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice (about 1/2 lemon)
- 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 4 ounces Parmesan cheese, thinly shaved (about 1/2 cup)

1. Toast the walnuts in a dry, heavy skillet (preferably cast iron) over high heat until they start to brown in spots and become fragrant. (Be careful not to overtoast them, as they will burn very quickly once toasted.) Immediately transfer the nuts to a dish to cool.
2. Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Add the beans and salt; cook until tender but still firm, 3 to 5 minutes.
3. Transfer the beans to a colander in the sink and run cold water over them. Trim the beans if necessary.
4. Toss the beans and walnuts in a large bowl and season with salt and pepper to taste.
5. In a small bowl, whisk the lemon juice and olive oil until well combined. Pour this mixture over the beans and toss until well coated. Transfer the salad to a serving platter or to individual plates. Scatter the Parmesan shavings on top.

The Crop

If green beans were left growing on the vine long enough, they would go through three distinct stages of growth: snap, fresh shell, and dried. Snap beans are eaten raw or cooked, pods and all; shell beans are eaten raw or cooked without the pod; and dried beans must be soaked and cooked before being eaten.



HANDLING

Rinse green beans under cold water. To preserve nutrients and flavor during cooking, trim or cut green beans after they have been cooked. Leave the beans whole or slice or julienne them.

Pungent Green Beans and Tomatoes with Cumin, Garlic, and Ginger

If you love cumin, this dish will delight you. Like many recipes from India, this one strives to bring out maximum flavor in the spices—so it contains both ground and whole cumin seeds, one dry-toasted and the other cooked in oil. Serve over couscous or quinoa, with the delicious juicy sauce sopped up by the grain. *Friend of the Farm.*

Serves 4

- 10 cloves garlic, smashed
- 1 piece ginger (about 1 inch long), peeled, chopped
- 1 1/2 cups chicken or vegetable stock, divided
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/4 cup mild-flavored vegetable oil
- 2 teaspoons whole cumin seeds
- 1 whole dried red chile pepper (optional)
- 2–4 fresh tomatoes, stems removed, peeled, finely chopped
- 2 teaspoons ground coriander
- 1 1/2 pounds green beans, cut in half (about 8 cups)
- 1 1/4 teaspoons salt
- 3 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice (about 1 lemon)
- freshly ground black pepper

1. Put the garlic, ginger, and 1/2 cup of the stock in a blender or a food processor; process until a smooth paste forms.
2. Place a large wok (or pot) over medium heat. When the wok is hot, add the ground cumin and toast it just until it is fragrant. (This will take only a few seconds—be very careful not to overtoast it, as it can burn quickly). Immediately scrape the cumin onto a small dish and set aside.
3. Quickly wipe the wok with a damp cloth or paper towel to remove any remaining spice. Return the wok to the heat; add the oil, let it heat up for about 20 seconds and then add the whole cumin seeds. After 5 seconds, add the dried chile pepper. After another 25 seconds (30 seconds total for the seeds, with or without the chile), add the ginger-garlic paste. Cook and stir the ingredients for 2 minutes. Stir in the tomatoes and coriander. Cook, stirring, for 3 minutes.
4. Add the green beans, salt, and the remaining stock. Stir the ingredients until they come to a gentle boil. Reduce the heat to low and cover. Simmer, stirring once or twice, until the beans are tender, 6 to 8 minutes (or even less time for just-picked green beans).
5. Remove the cover from the wok. Stir in the lemon juice and the toasted ground cumin. Increase the heat and bring the mixture to a boil. Boil, stirring occasionally, until all the liquid has been cooked off. Remove the wok from the heat.
6. Remove the chile pepper. Season with plenty of freshly ground black pepper to taste.

Excerpted from *Farmer John's Cookbook: The Real Dirt On Vegetables: Seasonal Recipes and Stories from a Community Supported Farm* by Farmer John Peterson & Angelic Organics (Gibbs Smith Publisher). Check with your local farm or bookstore for availability. Additional recipes, charts, individual copies of this book, and quantity discounts available at www.AngelicOrganics.com/cookbook.

