



SWISS CHARD

About Swiss Chard

The Plant

If you are looking for foods that are high in vitamins and minerals, low in calories, and can be served raw or cooked, Swiss chard is a great choice.

Swiss chard has a dark green leaf and is tougher than spinach. It goes by many names – leaf beets, sekettle beet, and spinach beet. It has large, wide, flat leaves. One cup chopped Swiss chard has 35 calories and is a rich source of calcium, potassium, magnesium, and iron.

How to Buy

Swiss chard is available in summer and early fall. Choose bright, dark green leaves with crisp stems. You can harvest Swiss chard when leaves and stems are tender or use it later when stems are slightly tougher. Swiss chard is highly perishable so prepare instantly and keep refrigerated no longer than two days. Store unwashed leaves in plastic bags in the crisper.

How to Prepare

Greens are usually leaves of immature plants such as Swiss chard. They are cooked in the green state for food or eaten raw in salads.

To wash fresh greens, place in pan of cold water. Remove stems or heavy ribs, place leaves in cold water, and let soak for a few minutes to loosen grit or dirt. Repeat the process two or three times and let drain or dry in a salad spinner.

Wash leaves as recommended above. Depending on plant maturity, chard may be need to cooked longer than five minutes. Boil stems about eight minutes and add leaves after stems have cooked five minutes. Very young chard may be added to salads or used in vegetable soups.

How to Store

Swiss chard is best eaten fresh, but it can be stored up to three or four days. Wash, dry, and wrap leaves and store them in the vegetable bin of the refrigerator. If purchased, leave in package in the refrigerator.

Sources

Vegetables for Health, University of Maine, www.extensionmaine.edu.

Vegetable of week, www.extensionpurdue.edu/efs.

Pick a Better Snack – Spinach, Iowa State Extension, www.extension.iastate.edu/food.

Watch Your Garden Grow, University of Illinois Extension, www.urbanext.illinois.edu/veggies/chard.

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For further information contact Kay Davis, WVU Extension Service Agent, at 304-647-7408 or www.ext.wvu.edu