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GREEN VEGETABLES



No country in the world grows better vegetables than we do, and probably no country in the world cooks them worse. For generations we have wasted our root vegetables by excessive peeling and over-cooking, and boiled most of the goodness out of our green vegetables—only to pour it down the sink. In peace time such methods are lamentable enough. In wartime they are suicidal.

There is no need to worry about the cutting down of important fruit if we eat enough of our home-grown vegetables, especially if we learn to eat them raw as well as cooked. This involves no hardship. On the contrary, we shall discover, many of us for the first time, the variety of subtle flavours that our gardens provide.

True, two classes of people will suffer if we make full use of our vegetable crops. First, the vendors of patent medicines, whose wares will be less in demand. Secondly, the makers of too highly-seasoned sauces, because our palates, once accustomed to good eating, will be content with the delicate flavour of well-cooked vegetables.

Once we have discovered that vegetables can be a delight, we shall cease to think of them merely as something to be eaten with meat. We shall pay them the honour of serving them by themselves; we shall look upon them, and rightly, as one of our most important sources of health and strength.

Number

6

MINISTRY OF FOOD

WAR COOKERY LEAFLET



How to Cook Green Vegetables

(This is Important)

If you have a garden, don't cut your vegetables until you actually need them. Vital goodness is lost if they are left in the rack to get stale.

It is a mistake to soak green vegetables for a long time before cooking, as this wastes valuable mineral salts. Wash them thoroughly and, if tight-hearted, soak in salted water for not more than $\frac{1}{2}$ hour.

If the outside leaves are really too tough to serve, save them for soup. These dark green outside leaves have more food value than the centre.

Green vegetables must be cooked as quickly as possible, for slow cooking destroys much of their valuable vitamins. So shred them—that is, slice them with a knife. Shred cabbages, spring greens, turnip tops, nettles, brussel tops, even brussel sprouts if they are large; in short, shred any green vegetable except spinach, which cooks so quickly it does not need it. Divide cauliflowers into sprigs so that they will cook more quickly.



Green vegetables should never be drowned in water. You need only just enough water to keep your pan from burning—usually a teacupful will do. Make it hot in the pan before you put in the shredded greens, as this makes for quicker cooking.

Next sprinkle the greens in the pan with a very little salt. Less salt is needed than in the old-fashioned way of cooking greens, because by this method you keep in nearly all the natural salts of the vegetables.

Now put the lid on the pan. This is important because we are going to "steam boil" the greens, and if we let the steam escape, the pan may go dry.

Cook steadily for about 10 to 15 minutes. If you can spare the time, give the pan a shake or two during that time. You will find the greens are quite cooked but crisp and full of flavour. Drain off any liquid from the pan and save it for gravy or soup. If you can spare a teaspoonful of margarine, add it to the vegetables and toss well before serving. If not, serve the greens at once.

Tops

Broccoli tops, turnip tops and beetroot tops are all excellent if cooked as described above.

Cabbage with Variations

All sorts of additions can be made to cabbage cooked as described on the previous page. A few bacon rinds chopped small; a few teaspoons of vinegar and a sprinkle of nutmeg, or perhaps a shake of caraway seeds, and you have something quite new and intriguing.

Cabbage with Horseradish Sauce

Shred 2 lbs. of cabbage and cook as described. Drain and keep hot, using the liquid for the following sauce:

Melt 1 oz. fat in a pan, stir in 1 oz. flour and cook together for 2 or 3 minutes. Then add gradually 1 teacupful vegetable water and milk (half and half if possible), stirring all the time. Simmer for at least 5 minutes, then add 4 tablespoonfuls grated horseradish and, last of all, 1 tablespoonful vinegar.

Put the cabbage in a heated dish, pour the sauce over it and serve.

Spinach

Wash the spinach very thoroughly. Shake and put in a pan without any water; sprinkle with a little salt, put on the lid and cook gently until tender (about 10 minutes). Drain and serve or, if preferred, the spinach may be chopped, and a little margarine and pepper added.

Peas

Fresh garden peas are delicious steamed, and lose very little of their colour. Sprinkle with a pinch of salt and put a sprig or two of mint with them in the steamer. If you boil them, put a teaspoonful of sugar, if possible, and a little salt in the water as well as the mint, and be careful not to cook them too long or too fast, or they will come out of their skins. Save the water for soup and gravy.

Pea Pods

Pea pods provide a delicious dish if treated like this: Use clear-skinned, fleshy pods. Divide each pod into two. Hold one of the sections in your left hand, stalk end uppermost and inside towards you. Snap down about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of the pod at the stalk end towards you. Then, holding firmly, pull downward, stripping the inside skin from the outer. With a little practice, this is easy. Cook the fleshy outsides in a very little salted water until tender (about 10 minutes), drain and serve.

Pea pods also make an excellent stock for soup.

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MINISTRY OF FOOD

WAR COOKERY MANUAL



French or Runner Beans

When young, cook whole with only the tops and tails removed. When older, the stringy vein which develops along the rib of the pod must be removed.

Most housewives like to slice the beans lengthwise. But it is a great saving in time to break them with the fingers into 2-in. lengths, and less flavour is lost this way.

Boil until tender in a very small amount of salted water. If you like your beans to glisten, add a teaspoonful of fat to the water.

Be sure to save the water. It is good as a drink by itself; or use it for gravy or soup.

Broad Bean Tops

The tops of broad beans, which gardeners always pick off, make a delightful dish if cooked as a green vegetable.

Broad Beans

When young, broad beans can be cooked, unshelled, in a little salted water and eaten pod and all. Or the beans can be shelled and the pods sliced. The cooked sliced pods are very good as a hot vegetable or served cold in salad.

When the beans are older the pods are too tough to eat as a vegetable, but make good stock for soup.

Broad beans which have been allowed to mature in their pods may be stored for winter use. Make sure they are quite dry before packing in airtight tins. Soak and use as haricots.

Nettles

Young nettles, cooked as described on p. 2 are as delicious as spinach and a splendid spring tonic.

Cauliflower Leaves and Stalks

When buying cauliflowers, always ask for the leaves as well as the flower, as the leaves make a dish by themselves if cooked as cabbage. The stalks, cooked until tender in a very little salted water and then drained, rolled in browned breadcrumbs and quickly fried in a very little hot fat or browned in the oven, have a nutty flavour and are a new dish to most people. They are also delicious grated raw in a salad.



MINISTRY OF FOOD

