Produce Spotlight on SWISS CHARD



Swiss chard, known as chard, is a dark leafy green vegetable grown for its edible stems and leaves. Chard is an excellent source of fiber and vitamins A, C, and K, as well as minerals, including iron and potassium.

Serving Ideas

- Use baby chard in a green salad.
- Sauté with vegetable oil, minced garlic, and fresh lemon juice as a side dish.
- Add chard to stews and soups and substitute in spinach recipes.
- Use cooked wilted chard as a pizza topping or in vegetable lasagna.

Swiss Chard Math

1 pound of fresh chard = 5 to 6 packed cups of leaves and 2½ cups of stems
1 pound of fresh chard = 1 to 3 cups cooked (thinner leaves and stems cook down more than thick ones)



Shopping for Swiss Chard

Choose crisp stems and shiny, crisp leaves. Avoid wilted leaves with yellow and brown spots or little holes. For the freshest chard, shop at local farmers' markets or farmstands. Massachusetts-grown chard is available from June through November and sold in a bunch. Eat chard soon after purchasing.

Common Types

Barese – Dwarf variety for whole-plant harvest or baby leaf; grown for tender baby greens and spinach-like taste
Fordhook – Classic green chard with broad, strong stems and large leaves; slightly bitter and earthy flavor
Bright Lights – Multicolored stems of gold, pink, orange, purple, red, and white with lightly crinkled leaves; crisp, delicate, celery-like flavor
Ruby Red or Rhubarb chard – Thin red stems with dark green and red-veined leaves; fresh and crunchy texture with a slightly bitter taste

Storage and Preparation

- Refrigerate unwashed chard in a perforated plastic bag for 3 to 5 days.
- Wash in cold water before eating and pat or spin dry. Separate stems from the leaves. Chop stems and ribs into bite-sized pieces. Stack leaves on top of one another and slice crosswise into thick ribbons or tear by hand.
- Chard can be stir-fried, braised, sautéed, boiled, or steamed.
- Cooked chard should only be stored for 1 to 2 days in the refrigerator. Leaves can be frozen, but do not freeze ribs. Blanch leaves for 1 minute. Cool, drain, and package in labeled freezer bags.

Using Locally Grown Produce

For recipes featuring fruits and vegetables, visit our website https://extension.umass.edu/nutrition/recipes/. To locate places to buy local produce, visit https://www.mass.gov/orgs/massachusetts-grownand-fresher.



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