DIRECTNEWS



MARCH 2019 ISSUE

<u>Organic</u> Tomatoes



Tomatoes are an intensely nutritious plant food. They are available in a variety of colors, including not only red but also in pink, yellow, orange, green, brown, purple, black, and striped. We usually identify tomatoes as a vegetable, however, they are technically classified as a fruit. There are also different tomato varieties, with different shapes, and flavor. For SNACKING - marble-sized grape, plum, and cherry; for COOKING - firm, petite romas; and ideal for BURGERS — hefty beefsteaks.

Tomatoes are the major dietary source of the antioxidant lycopene, which has been linked to many health benefits. They also have an impressive amount of vitamins A, C, and K as well as significant amounts of vitamin B6, folate, and thiamin. Tomatoes are also a good source of potassium, manganese, magnesium, phosphorous, copper, dietary fiber, and protein.

Choose tomatoes that have rich colors, are well shaped, and are smooth skinned with no wrinkles, cracks, bruises, or soft spots. Ripe tomatoes will yield to slight pressure. Store unripe tomatoes in a paper bag in a cool area. Ripe tomatoes should be kept at room temperature on the counter away from sunlight.





Grapes Tomatoes



LETTUCE STEM

Lettuce Stem, also known as Celtuce, Asparagus Lettuce, Celery Lettuce, or Chinese Lettuce (萵筍), is a type of lettuce which most people would eat the stems instead of the leaves. They're a very popular ingredient in many Chinese dishes. The stems are best eaten stir-fried, grilled, roasted, boiled, sautéed, pickled, or they can also be eaten raw after peeled. Raw stems can be thinly sliced and added to salads, or spiralized to substitute as noodle. The leaves can also be eaten, however, should be cooked to eliminate some of the bitterness.

Lettuce Stem is very low in calories, contains mostly water, and is an excellent source of Vitamins A, B9 (folate), and C, fiber, potassium, and manganese. It is also a good source of iron, magnesium, calcium, copper, phosphorus, selenium, and zinc.

Ham and Celtuce

 $\hbox{* Ham and Celtuce recipe: https://www.spicetheplate.com/pork/ham-and-celtuce/}$

Preparation: 10 mins / Cook Time: 10 mins / Total Time: 20 mins

Ingredients:

- 2 lettuce stem, peeled and shredded
- 3 tbsp. diced ham
- 2 tbsp. minced garlic
- Half long red chili pepper, cut into small pieces

For seasoning:

- 2 tbsp. seasame oil
- 2 tbsp. chili oil
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp sugar
- 1 tsp soy sauce
- 1 tsp vinegar
- A touch of toasted sesame seeds

Direction:

- Step 1: Bring a medium pot of water to boil, stir in the stem lettuce and cook for about 5 minutes, fish the stem lettuce out, rinse under cold water, drain well, and set aside.
- Step 2: Heat sesame oil in a pan over medium heat, add in ham and

garlic, cook for 2 minutes until crispy and browned.

Step 3: Toss in chili pepper, chili oil, salt, sugar, soy sauce, vinegar and sesame seeds and cook for another 30 seconds.

Step 4: Mix well with stem lettuce and serve.







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FRESH DIRECT PRODUCE

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Simply Fresh® Asian Vegetables



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Baby Bok Choy (奶油白菜) is a Chinese cabbage young, petite, and tender stems in comparison to the regular Bok Choy. They are widely prepared in Asian cuisines as stir fried, sautéed, steamed, and added to soups.

Baby Bok Choy contains large amounts of vitamins A, B6, C, and K, potassium, calcium, manganese, and folate. It is also a good source of iron, vitamins B1, and B2, phosphorus, fiber, choline, magnesium, niacin, copper, omega-3 fatty acids, zinc, pantothenic acid, flavonoids, antioxidant phenolic acids and protein. Baby Bok Choy is cholesterol, fat, and saturated fat free, and low in sodium.



Shanghai Bok Choy (上海白菜), is sweet, crispy, juicy, and is a type of Chinese cabbage which can be added to soups, sautéed, or steamed. Although looking similar to Baby Bok Choy, Shanghai Bok Choy has flatter stems with the same shade of light green throughout.

Shanghai Bok Choy contains a wealth of vitamins A, C, and K, and is an excellent source of calcium, fiber, magnesium, potassium, manganese, and iron. It is a very good source of folate, calcium, and vitamin B6 as well.

Gai Lan (芥蘭), also known as Chinese broccoli or Chinese kale, is a member of Brassica oleracea, the same family as kale, collard greens and cruciferous vegetables including broccoli and cauliflower. It has dark green leaves, slender stalks, and small white flowers. Gai lan can be boiled, or steamed and served with oyster sauce, or stir-fried with ginger and garlic.

Gai Lan is fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol free. It is low in sodium, and is an excellent source of vitamins A, C, iron, and calcium.



Yue Choy (油菜), is a tender vegetable which looks a lot like Gai Lan, except the stalks of Yue Choy are skinnier, and the flowers are yellow. The taste of the leaves is very much like baby spinach, and is used in many Asian stir-fried dishes.

Yue Choy is an excellent source of folacin, vitamins A, C, and K. It also contains vitamins B1, B2, B6, and E, calcium, fiber, iron, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium, and Zinc.

Shanghai Baby Bok Choy with Black Bean Sauce

Preparation: 35 mins / Serving: 3-4

Ingredients:

- Kosher salt
- 12 oz Shanghai Baby Bok Choy, cut in half
- 2 tsp soy sauce
- 1/8 tsp white pepper powder
- 1 tsp sesame oil
- 2 tsp cornstarch
- 3 tbsp. water
- 2 tbsp. vegetable, peanut, or canola oil
- 1 tbsp. fermented black bean
- 6 medium cloves garlic, roughly chopped

* Shanghai Baby Bok Choy recipe: https://www.yummly.com/recipe/Shanghai-Baby-Bok-Choy-With-Black-Bean-Sauce-940022

Direction:

- Step 1: Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add bok choy and blanch until bright green, about
 - 40 seconds. Transfer to a colander set in the sink and let drain well.
- **Step 2:** While bok choy drains, combine soy sauce, white pepper, sesame oil, cornstarch, and water in a small bowl. Set aside.
- **Step 3:** Heat vegetable oil in a wok over high heat until lightly smoking. Add garlic and black beans and cook, stirring constantly, until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add drained bok choy and continue to cook, stirring and tossing constantly, until bok choy is almost tender, about 2 minutes.
- **Step 4:** Push bok choy up sides of wok. Stir sauce mixture with a fork and add it to the center. Let it come to a boil (about 20 seconds), then toss with the bok choy. Serve immediately.





Platinum member