

# Beet

## History

Ancient text from 800 B.C. mentioned beets growing in the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, one of the wonders of the ancient world. Beet juice has been used as red dye since the 16th century. The Victorians dyed their hair with beet juice in 19th century England. Beet tops may be cooked and eaten, as they are an excellent source of vitamin A, iron, and beta-carotene. Beets are also a great source of fiber, folate, and potassium. They contain antioxidants, called betalains, carotenoids, and flavonoids, which prevent colon cancer and heart disease. Beets should be trimmed or peeled after cooking because the peel holds in the important nutrients.



## Varieties

**Red beets** are the most common beets and can be found in many shades and sizes.

**Golden beets** are sweet and do not stain surfaces like red beets do.

**Chioggia**, or candy cane beets, are small, white and red striped beets.

## Fun Facts

- White rings inside the vegetable are created by the weather during growing season.
- Beets are also known as the blood turnip.
- Beets are related to Swiss chard.
- Small beets have a sweeter taste- shop for beets no larger than a baseball.
- *The Office* character, Dwight Schrute, owns a beet farm.
- Some cultures believe that if a man and woman eat from the same beet, they will fall in love.
- Beets are a traditional food at Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year.



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