

Parsnip

Growing & Harvesting

Grow. Many parts of Montana may not have a long enough growing season between frosts to grow a decent parsnip. Plant seeds as soon as you can work the soil. Sow 1/2-inch deep, spaced 3-4 inches apart, and in rows 18 inches apart. Water 1-2 inches per week. Parsnips prefer cooler temperatures. For more growing information, visit www.msueextension.org and look for the MontGuide, *Planting a Successful Home Vegetable Garden*, or call your Extension office.

Harvest. Parsnip is considered a winter vegetable because its flavor is not fully developed until the roots have been exposed to near-freezing temperatures for 2-4 weeks in the fall and early winter. The root should be well-developed after being in the ground for around four months. Many gardeners leave parsnips in the ground over the winter and harvest in the spring.



Selection

Though parsnips look like white carrots, their flavor is slightly stronger, and they taste like turnips or rutabagas. The whiter the flesh, the sweeter the parsnip. Avoid parsnips which are yellowing or going brown around the core or are older and less sweet.

Storage

When storing parsnips, remove leaves and refrigerate parsnips unwashed in an unsealed bag for three weeks or more. Parsnips keep best in a perforated bag in the vegetable bin of the refrigerator.

Nutrition Information

Most vegetables are rich in fiber and phytochemicals, but provide negligible amounts of saturated fat, *trans* fat, cholesterol, and sodium and are gluten-free. Parsnips are rich in Vitamin C, folate, potassium and magnesium and they have 55 calories per half-cup serving.

Uses

Grate. Use grated parsnips in place of cabbage in a favorite coleslaw recipe.

Bake. Place whole or cut parsnips in a baking dish with a cover. Cook 20-30 minutes in 350°F degree oven.

Boil or Steam. Place trimmed, well-scrubbed parsnips in a steamer or pan of boiling water. Steam or boil about 12-15 minutes or until tender. Combine with mashed potatoes to enhance flavor and add fiber or eat mashed on their own.

Microwave. Cut parsnips into 1- to 1½-inch chunks and place them in a microwavable dish with two tablespoons of liquid. Cover with a lid or vented plastic wrap. Microwave on high for 4-6 minutes or until tender.

Roast. Chop parsnips into 1/4- to 1/2-inch sections, place in plastic bag and shake with olive oil and desired seasonings. Roast at 400°F for 20-30 minutes, or until crisp. Roast with other vegetables, such as potatoes, broccoli, asparagus or cauliflower.

Sauté. Heat pan to high, add butter or oil to coat bottom of pan, then add chopped 1/2- to 1-inch pieces of parsnips. Stir parsnips for even browning. Sauté about 12-15 minutes or until tender.

Season. To enhance the flavor of parsnips, use ginger, mace, nutmeg and/or cinnamon.

Preserve. For information on preserving parsnips, look for MontGuides: *Freezing Vegetables*; and *Drying Vegetables*. Visit www.msueextension.org/nutrition and click on the food preservation link or contact your Extension office.

Food Safety Tips

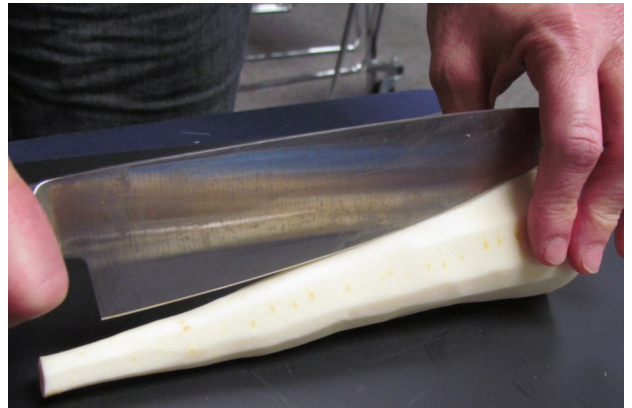
1. **Clean.** Wash hands and food contact surfaces before and after preparation.
2. **Chill.** Keep produce and food cool and chill promptly.
3. **Separate.** Keep produce and food separate from raw meats and eggs.
4. **Cook.** Cook food to a safe temperature.

Questions? Click on www.foodsafety.gov

Preparation: Step-by-Step



Wash hands. Thoroughly scrub parsnips with a brush to remove dirt and sand on the outer layer. If desired, peel with a vegetable peeler or knife.



Hold the parsnip to cut in half lengthwise. If roasting or boiling, cut into 1/4- to 1/2-inch chunks.



To slice for sautéing, set the flat side down on the cutting board and cut in half again. If the parsnip is large, remove the woody center.



If the parsnip is long, cut in half, then slice into 1/4-inch thick strips. Sauté in a pan with butter and seasonings. Cooking brings out the natural sweetness of parsnips.

For More Information:

Montana State University Extension: www.msuextension.org
MSU Extension Master Gardener: www.mtmastergardener.org
MSU Extension Food and Nutrition: www.msuextension.org/nutrition
MSU Extension Nutrition Education Programs: www.buycatlivebetter.org

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Fruits & Veggies More Matters. (2012). Parsnips: Nutrition. selection. storage. <http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/parsnips>
Seasonal Chef. (2008). A Dozen Ways to Use Parsnips. Retrieved from: <http://www.seasonalchef.com/recipe0308a.htm>
University of Illinois Extension. (2013). Parsnip. *Watch Your Garden Grow*. <http://urbanext.illinois.edu/veggies/parsnip.cfm>