



Good Food News

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2006

Can Organic Farming Feed

Us All? Yes --if we can get it!

from the Worldwatch Institute:

Two recent studies reveal that a global shift to organic farming would yield more food, not less, for the world's hungry, writes Worldwatch Institute Senior Researcher Brian Halweil in "Can Organic Farming Feed Us All?" Organic farming tends to raise yields in poorer nations, precisely those areas where people are hungry and can't afford chemical-intensive farming. Where there is a yield gap between conventional and organic crops, it tends to be widest in wealthy nations, where farmers use copious amounts of synthetic fertilizers and pesticides in a perennial attempt to maximize yields. "In poorer nations, organic farming techniques like composting and green manuring and biological pest control may be farmers' best hope for boosting production and reducing hunger," writes Halweil.

Beyond this yield advantage, organic farming has proven benefits for wildlife, water and air quality, and food safety. And while analysts on the two sides of this issue are constantly at odds, some experts are starting to advocate a middle path that uses many of the principles of organic farming and depends on just a fraction of the chemicals used in conventional agriculture. Such an integrative system, they believe, would have great benefits for farmers, consumers, and the environment. "The lack of widespread support for organic farming from governments, industry, and farmer organizations is short-sighted and may ultimately be contributing to world hunger," says Halweil.

*(To purchase a PDF download of this report go to:
<http://www.worldwatch.org>)*

And yet...

[North] American consumers can't get enough organic foods with producers unable to meet demand. As a result most sectors of the organic food industry are suffering undersupply, which is stunting market growth.

Shortage of organic products is making producers look outbound for raw materials. Increasing volume of organic fruit, vegetables, grains, seeds, beans, and herbs are being imported into the US. Finished products are also imported to meet consumer demand for all things organic.

The flood of imports is making the organic food trade gap to widen. It is estimated that over US \$1.5 billion of organic products are imported into the US, compared to about US \$150 million in American exports.

Supply shortages are taking its toll on the market. Nearly all market sectors would grow at much higher rates if sufficient supply was available. For instance, lack of organic milk has caused many retailers to have empty shelves throughout the year.

With North American demand for organic foods expected to strengthen in the coming years, supply shortages are likely to continue. Unless more North American farmers consider converting to organic practices, exporters are likely to capitalize on this lucrative market.

SAVE THE DATE!

**FoodShare's Plant sale and AGM
May 13, 2006**

Plant sale: 10am to 1 pm
AGM: noon to 1pm
Lunch 1-2pm

Field to Table Centre
200 Eastern Avenue
Toronto, ON M5A 1J1

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Food Share

working with communities to improve access to affordable healthy food - from field to table





recipes

Madhur Jaffrey's Gujarati-style Green Beans

- 1 pound fresh green beans
- 4 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 tablespoon whole black mustard seeds
- 4 cloves garlic – peeled and minced
- 1/2 - 1 hot, dried red chili coarsely crushed in mortar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon sugar
- freshly ground black pepper

Trim the beans and cut them into 1-inch lengths. Blanch the beans by dropping them into a pot of boiling water and boiling rapidly for 3-4 minutes or until they are just tender.

Drain immediately in a colander and rinse under cold, running water. Set aside.

Heat the oil in a large frying pan over a medium flame. When hot, put in the mustard seeds. As soon as the mustard seeds begin to pop, put in the garlic. Stir the garlic pieces around until they turn light brown. Put in the crushed red chili and stir for a few seconds. Put in the green beans, salt, and sugar. Stir to mix. Turn the heat to medium-low. Stir and cook the beans for 7-8 minutes or until they have absorbed the flavor of the spices. Add the black pepper, mix, and serve. serves 4



featured this week: Green Beans

Green beans and other beans, all derived from a common bean ancestor that originated in Peru. From there, they were spread throughout South and Central America by migrating Indian tribes. They were introduced into Europe around the 16th century by Spanish explorers returning from their voyages to the New World, and subsequently were spread through many other parts of the world by Spanish and Portuguese traders. Today, the largest commercial producers of fresh green beans include the United States, China, Japan, Spain, Italy and France.

While green beans are typically referred to as string beans, though are also commonly known as snap beans. Haricots verts are French green beans that are very thin and very tender. Green beans are in the same family as shell beans, such as pinto beans, black beans and kidney beans. Yet unlike their cousins, green beans' entire bean, pod and seed, can be eaten.

Green beans are picked while still immature and the inner bean is just beginning to form. They range in size, but they usually average four inches in length. They are usually deep emerald green in color and come to a slight point at either end. They contain tiny seeds within their thin pods.

Green beans, while quite low in calories (just 43.75 calories in a whole cup), are loaded with nutrients. Green beans are an excellent source of vitamin C, vitamin K and manganese. Plus green beans are very good source of vitamin A (notably through their concentration of carotenoids including beta-carotene), dietary fiber, potassium, folate, and iron. And, green beans are a good source of magnesium, thiamin, riboflavin, copper, calcium, phosphorous, protein, omega-3 fatty acids and niacin.

Quick Sesame Green Beans

INGREDIENTS:

- 8 ounces fresh green beans, trimmed
- 2 tablespoons low sodium soy sauce
- 1/2 tablespoon miso paste
- 1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger root
- 1 tablespoon sesame seeds, toasted

DIRECTIONS:

Place the green beans into a steamer insert and set in a pot over one inch of water. Bring to a boil, cover and steam for 5 minutes. Remove from the heat and transfer beans to a serving bowl. Meanwhile, in a small bowl, stir together the soy sauce, miso paste, red pepper flakes, garlic and ginger. Pour over the green beans and toss to coat. Sprinkle sesame seeds on top.

Toasting sesame seeds: Heat a dry skillet over medium heat. Add sesame seeds and cook, stirring constantly, until fragrant and lightly toasted. 4 servings.

by any other name... Green beans

- Phaseolus vulgaris - Latin
- habas verdes - Spanish
- groene bonen - Dutch
- haricots verts - French
- grüne Bohnen - German
- fagioli verdi - Italian
- feijões verdes - Portuguese
- Lubia Sabz - Iranian

DELIVERIES

for the week of **May 2**
orders are due 5 pm Tues. **April 25**

for the week of **May 9**
orders are due 5pm Tues. **May 2**



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