

## **Beets**

By Kami McBride

Beets aren't exactly an herb but one of the intentions of the herb of the month insert sheet is to help spread the word about the medicinal qualities of your plant based foods. Indeed what you eat is your first medicine. Our bodies make about one million new cells each second, we are constantly rebuilding ourselves. Those new cells are either made from good food or not so good food.

Including more organic nutrient rich vegetables in our diet means that we create healthier cells. Healthy cells make up healthy tissue and healthy organs. When we eat well we feel better and have more energy. Simple as that. The vegetables in your box keep help keep your energy level up and keep you out of the doctor's office.

Beets are a wonderful food containing many health benefits. They are high in folic acid, potassium, calcium vitamin A and C.

Beets support women's health in several ways. Folic Acid, part of the B vitamin family is an important nutrient for healthy cell growth and regeneration. Folic acid is one of the nutrients that helps prevent birth defects and supports a healthy pregnancy. Just one cup of steamed beets contains 35% of your daily requirement for folic acid during pregnancy. If you are thinking about getting pregnant, start eating your beets! Beets are also high in iron and help to replenish the blood during and after menstruation.

In the vegetable world beets are one of the richest sources of flavonoids which are important for strengthening capillaries and blood vessel walls. Beets are a delicious food that help to lower blood pressure and are a tonic for the cardio vascular system. Flavonoids have an anti-inflammatory effect in the body and help to reduce the inflammation that can contribute to heart disease and cancer.

As indigestible cellulose and pectin in the beets travel through the digestive system, they absorb and remove from the body substances such as heavy metals and cholesterol deposits. In addition, these substances in the beets promote active secretion of digestive juices and bile. Studies show beets increase cell activity in the liver helping the body to detoxify. Beets support your digestive process, increase elimination and are considered a blood cleanser! Yes, I will have another helping.....

In one study it was found that beet juice is a potent inhibitor of cancerous cell mutations caused by nitrates. Nitrates are usually found as a chemical preservative in processed meats such as sausage, lunch meats and bacon.

I have met so many people that don't like beets and upon further investigation, their experience is beets from a can when they were a kid. If you haven't eaten beets in a while, fresh organic beets are a whole different experience. Chop them into small pieces, steam and let cool and then toss them into your salads or mix into other vegetable dishes. We love to steam a bunch of beets, puree them in the blender with a few cloves of garlic and feast on this simple garlic and beet soup.

### **Sweet Beet side dish**

5 medium sized beets thinly sliced

1 tablespoon ghee

2 tablespoons maple syrup

1 tablespoon finely chopped oregano

Steam beets until tender, add rest of ingredients and serve warm

### **Beet Juice Blast**

2 raw beets

2 carrots

1 apple

½ cup greens (spinach, kale or chard)

1 tablespoon ginger

Run everything through the juicer and drink fresh

**Kami McBride** has taught herbal medicine since 1988. Through her classes and personal wellness consultations she helps people understand how whole foods and herbal medicine are an important aspect of everyone's preventive health care plan. Kami has helped thousands of people learn to use herbs in their daily lives in ways that are healthy, safe and fun and she teaches classes in herbal medicine and women's health at her school and herb gardens in Vacaville, California. She can be reached at 707-446-1290 or [www.livingawareness.com](http://www.livingawareness.com)