



MEDIA RELEASE

TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
MARKET DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

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GREEN BEANS ARE GOOD TO GO FOR SUMMER

NASHVILLE - Now that green beans are spilling over the tops of bushel baskets on farms and at farmers markets across the state, Tammy Algood offers green bean lovers a simple recipe that's good warm or cold, at home or to carry to summer gatherings. Green beans, a "must-have" vegetable on Southern tables, are easy to pick, easy to store and preserve, and easy to use.

Algood is spokesperson for the statewide Pick Tennessee Products campaign, the promotion developed by the Tennessee Department of Agriculture Market Development Division to help consumers identify and choose foods grown or processed in Tennessee. Algood creates recipes featuring foods grown or processed in Tennessee. Her latest recipe is Green Bean Salad with Feta Crumbles.

"This is a tangy, crunchy, dish," says the food expert. "It's refreshing for hot summer days. Because of the mixture used to coat the beans, the longer it sits, the better it tastes – which makes this recipe an ideal candidate to make ahead of time."

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, vitamin A, dietary fiber, potassium, folate, and iron, magnesium, thiamin, riboflavin, copper, calcium, phosphorus, protein, omega-3 fatty acids and niacin.

"The best place to purchase green beans is direct from a farm or at a farmer's market," says Algood. "They'll be sold loose in bushel baskets, so you can sort through them and choose the best ones free from brown spots or bruises. Choose beans that have a smooth feel and a vibrant green color, and that are so firm that they 'snap' when broken." A pound of fresh green beans will equal about 4 cups.

Though still commonly referred to as "string beans," the string that once was the green bean's trademark is seldom found in modern varieties. These bright green, crunchy beans are available at local farms and farmers markets from now through early fall. Green beans are in the same family as shell beans like the popular pinto beans, black beans, navy beans and kidney beans. Yet unlike its cousins, the green bean's entire

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GREEN BEANS ARE GOOD TO GO FOR SUMMER 2 - 2 - 2 - 2 - 2 - 2

bean, pod and seeds, can be eaten when picked while immature. They are one of only a few varieties of beans that are eaten fresh.

Store fresh green beans unwashed in a bag kept in the refrigerator crisper. Whole fresh-picked green beans stored this way should keep easily for a week. Just prior to using the green beans, wash them thoroughly in cool water. Green beans can be cooked whole, as long as both ends of the beans are removed.

Visit www.PickTNProducts.org to find local farmers markets, pick your own farms and other retail outlets that carry local Tennessee produce. For more recipes featuring Tennessee farm and processed products or listings of artisan food products, visit www.PickTNProducts.org.

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Green Bean Salad with Feta Crumbles

¾ cup olive oil
¼ cup white wine vinegar
1 clove garlic, minced
½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon pepper
2 pounds fresh green beans, trimmed
1 small red onion, thinly sliced
1 (4-ounce) package feta cheese, crumbled
1 cup coarsely chopped walnuts, toasted

In a jar with a tight-fitting lid, add oil, vinegar, garlic, salt and pepper. Shake to emulsify. Set aside. Place beans in a steamer basket and place over boiling water. Cover and allow to steam for 12 minutes or until crisp-tender. Immediately plunge beans into cold water to stop the cooking process. Drain and pat dry. Combine beans, onions and cheese in a large bowl. Toss well. Pour oil mixture over top, cover and chill for 1 hour. Add walnuts, toss and serve. Yield: 8 servings.