



Brussels Sprouts

Fun Facts: Brussels sprouts look like little cabbage heads. Indeed, they are in the cabbage, or cruciferous, family of vegetables. They most likely are named for Brussels, the capital city of Belgium. In Europe, some people call them "Brussels cabbage." Brussels sprouts are one of the least commonly eaten vegetables in the U.S. Many people have not yet discovered the unique taste of lightly-cooked, nutritious Brussels sprouts.

Selecting Fresh Brussels Sprouts: Look for bright green, clean, firm, tight, compact and solid Brussels sprouts. Choose those that are less than two-inches in diameter. Look for sprouts where the stalk end is clean. Avoid Brussels sprouts with leaves that are yellow, loose, wilted, puffy, soft, or with small holes or rot.



Measuring Fresh Brussels Sprouts:

1 pound raw = about 12 ounces ready to eat = about 4 cups raw = 2 1/2 cups cooked
1/2 cup cooked = 3 or 4 medium sprouts = about 2 3/4 ounces by weight = 78 grams

Handling and Preserving: Remove damaged outer leaves. Refrigerate unwashed Brussels sprouts in a perforated plastic bag in the vegetable drawer. They keep up to 3 weeks, but for best flavor, use during the first few days. **To freeze,** select fresh sprouts. Remove damaged leaves. Rinse. To remove insects, soak in 4 cups cold water with 1 teaspoon salt for 30 minutes. Place small Brussels sprouts in boiling water for 3 minutes, medium sprouts for 4 minutes, and large sprouts for 5 minutes. Drain at once and place in ice water for 3 to 5 minutes, depending on size. Drain again. Pack into freezer bags, leaving 3 inches of air space. Squeeze out the air, seal, date and freeze.

Preparation and Serving: Remove loose or damaged leaves. Wash sprouts under cool running water. Trim off the end of stalks. To remove insects, soak in 4 cups cold water with 1 teaspoon salt for 30 minutes. To maintain nutrients, do not soak longer. Enjoy cooked Brussels sprouts as a side dish, plain or with a sauce, or use as directed in recipes. To cook: cut sprouts in half to help them cook more evenly. Steam, microwave, boil or stir-fry them until fork-tender. For best results, do not overcook.

Nutrition Facts One serving = 1/2 cup Brussels sprouts. Each 1/2 cup of cooked Brussels sprouts has: Calories 30; Protein 2 grams; Carbohydrates 7 grams; Fat 0 grams. Brussels sprouts are an excellent source of vitamin C and contribute fiber, B vitamins including folic acid, essential minerals and many other nutrients, antioxidants and phytochemicals to the diet. Eating them helps protect against cancer and other diseases.

References: www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/veggies; ESHA Food Processor; www.oznet.ksu.edu/library/fntr2/C648.pdf; Food for Fifty, 11th edition, 2001, by M. Molt, Prentice Hall; <http://aem.cornell.edu/research/researchpdf/rb0207.pdf>

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