

# LIVE WELL WATERTOWN

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## Eat Well Watertown 2021 Zoom Series



Image by [RD LH](#) from [Pixabay](#)

# Spring Vegetables

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6:30-7:30

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## Spring Vegetables in New England

As we know, spring is fleeting in New England, and the availability of spring vegetables feels even more fleeting! These are the veggies that are generally available to be harvested in New England in April, May, and June:

- Fiddlehead ferns
- Early lettuce, including baby arugula
- Asparagus
- Pea greens (or shoots)
- Scallions
- Radishes

## Nutritional Information for Spring Veggies

- **Asparagus:** Many nutrients, but few calories. ½ cup contains only 20 calories, but 57% of RDA of Vitamin K! Good source of antioxidants
- **Radishes:** Good source of antioxidants; can help reduce risk for diabetes, enhance liver function. High in calcium, vitamin C, potassium, iron.
- **Pea Greens:** Good source of dietary fiber, vitamin C, E and A, and potassium
- **Fiddlehead ferns:** especially high in vitamin A, which helps organs like the heart and lungs function properly; it also plays a role in vision and the immune system. A 100-gram serving (about 3.5 ounces, or close to a half cup) offers a whopping 72% of the recommended daily allowance (RDA) for adults.
- **Arugula:** Antioxidants. Also glucosinolates, which give arugula its bitter taste and strong scent, and may protect against certain cancers, including breast, prostate, lung, and colon cancers. Arugula may also fight inflammation. It has ample vitamin K, which is good for your bones and may help prevent osteoporosis

## What Is a Fiddlehead?



Fiddleheads or fiddlehead greens are the furled fronds of a young fern, harvested for use as a vegetable. They can be harvested in the woods (and are a favorite in Maine), and are also available at greengrocers (like Russo's). The easiest way to cook them is to sauté them with some shallot or onion.

Image: Amy Traverso, Yankee Magazine

## Radishes

Radishes are usually the first crops you can harvest from your New England garden (except maybe for early lettuce). They're delicious on their own (sliced in salads), or eaten the way the French do, with sweet butter and a sprinkle of salt. But if you want to tone down the peppery flavor, consider cooking them. Cutting radishes releases an enzyme that creates that peppery taste; cooking them deactivates the enzyme.

- Try roasting, sautéing, or braising them.
- You can cook the green tops too, just as you would something like mustard green

## Asparagus: A Versatile Stalwart!

At the market, you'll find both green and white asparagus; the difference is all in the growing. White asparagus is grown underground (as the stalks mature, they are covered with dirt). This prohibits the production of chlorophyll, which turns the stalks green. White asparagus has a more delicate flavor than green. In Germany many towns have entire festivals centered on white asparagus!



Asparagus is easy to cook: you can roast in the oven; pan roast; steam; braise; sauté! It's also delicious added to frittatas or risotto.

What about the smell? During digestion, asparagusic acid breaks down into sulfurous-smelling byproducts. This happens to everybody – but, only some people have the ability to detect the smell!

## But they're bitter, aren't they?

Yes, these vegetables are all a bit bitter; perhaps that's one of the reasons we so enjoy them in the early spring, after the heaviness of winter root vegetables. As the earth wakes up after a winter's slumber, we wake up our palates with fresh, bright, green tastes!

## Demonstration Recipe

### Roasted Asparagus Bowl

(adapted from The Sprouted Kitchen, Bowl and Spoon)

#### Ingredients

½ c French or green lentils	½ tsp each: salt, dried oregano
1 ½ c low sodium chicken broth (or water)	½ c toasted walnut pieces
2 bunches asparagus	½ c chopped fresh herbs (basil, chives, parsley, or combo)

#### Dressing

1 tsp Dijon mustard	2 tbsp olive oil
1 minced shallot	1 ½ tbsp balsamic vinegar

1. Preheat oven to 450. Rinse lentils and add them to the broth in a pot. Bring to a boil, turn down to a simmer and cook for 20 min or until just tender. Drain any excess liquid.
2. Trim the ends of asparagus. Cut at a diagonal into 2-inch pieces. Drizzle 1 ½ tbsp olive oil, salt and oregano to toss. Place on a pan and add more oil if needed. Roast 13-15 minutes until edges brown.
3. Combine all dressing ingredients along with a pinch of salt and pepper. In your serving bowl, toss the lentils, dressing, roasted asparagus, walnuts, and herbs together. Serve warm or chilled.

## Additional Recipes

### Garlic Roasted Radishes

Garlic Roasted Radishes are a unique yet delicious way to prepare radishes. Roasting brings out the sweetness that's otherwise masked by the peppery kick that they're known for. This is a must try recipe!

Source: The Real Food Dietitians

Yield: 4 servings

Time: 30 minutes

#### **Ingredients**

1 lb radishes, ends trimmed and halved

1 Tbsp melted ghee or butter (may sub coconut oil or avocado oil)

½ tsp sea salt

¼ tsp pepper

2–3 garlic cloves, finely minced

¼ tsp dried parsley, dried chives or dried dill

1. Preheat oven to 425°F.
2. In a bowl, combine the radishes, melted ghee or butter, salt and pepper and toss until radishes are evenly coated. Save adding the minced garlic until just before the radishes are done roasting.
3. Spread radishes out in a large 9x13 inch baking dish. Don't overcrowd.
4. Bake for 20-25 minutes, tossing every 10 or so minutes. Add the minced garlic and dried parsley and bake for an additional 5 minutes or until radishes are golden brown and cooked through.
5. Optional: Serve with a side of ranch for dipping or drizzling on top and garnish with parsley, dill or chives.

### Brussels Sprouts Hash (vegetarian)

Source: Epicurious

Yield: 8 to 10 servings

Time: 30 minutes

#### **Ingredients**

6 tablespoons (¾ stick) butter, divided

½ pound shallots, thinly sliced

Coarse kosher salt

2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar

4 teaspoons sugar

1 ½ pounds brussels sprouts, trimmed

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

1 cup water

1. Melt 3 tablespoons butter in medium skillet over medium heat. Add shallots; sprinkle with coarse kosher salt and pepper. Sauté until soft and golden, about 10 minutes. Add vinegar and sugar. Stir until brown and glazed, about 3 minutes.
2. Halve brussels sprouts lengthwise. Cut lengthwise into thin (1/8-inch) slices. Heat oil in large skillet over medium-high heat. Add sprouts; sprinkle with salt and pepper. Sauté until brown at edges, 6 minutes. Add 1 cup water and 3 tablespoons butter. Sauté until most of water evaporates and sprouts are tender but still bright green, 3 minutes. Add shallots; season with salt and pepper.

### **Sautéed Dandelion Greens with Eggs**

Source: <https://www.abeautifulplate.com/wp-json/mv-create/v1/creations/179/print>

Yield: 2-4 servings

Time: 35 minutes

#### ***Ingredients***

4 cups chopped dandelion greens, thick stems removed (about 1-2 large bunches)

2 tablespoons unsalted butter, clarified butter, or ghee

1 large leek, white and light green parts only, finely chopped

4 large eggs

¼ cup crumbled feta cheese

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add the chopped dandelion greens and blanch for 1 to 2 minutes. Drain the greens thoroughly, using a wooden spoon to drain and press out as much liquid as possible.
2. Melt the butter or ghee in a 10-inch sauté pan set over medium heat. Sauté the leeks until tender, about 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the drained dandelion greens one handful at a time. Cook each handful until wilted, then add more.
3. When the greens are wilted, crack the eggs into the pan on top of the greens. Top with feta cheese and cook uncovered until the whites of the eggs are set, about 5 minutes.