



# FRESH IDEAS FOR FRESH VEGETABLES

STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION- CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS  
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Fresh produce has great appeal, for example, who can resist a fragrant vine-ripened tomato? As Idaho schools look for more ways to add attractive, nutritious produce to their menus, new ideas can help. These fresh vegetable preparation sheets can be a helpful resource on things such as yield, preparation, and seasoning tips for vegetables that may be less familiar, and provide fresh ideas for your old favorites.

Today, schools have put a greater emphasis on using local food in meals for a variety of reasons. Purchasing unprocessed produce through farm to school connections is a great opportunity to educate students on where food comes from as well as promote good nutrition. When students make these connections, they are more likely to try new or unfamiliar foods.

As school gardens become more popular, school cafeterias can help promote student efforts by featuring something school-grown on the menu or salad bar when available. If the quantity of the school garden harvest is insufficient to serve the entire school, purchased fresh produce can easily supplement it. This tool can help school food service feature school garden produce with finesse.

## BOK CHOY



Bok Choy is most often lightly stir fried or served raw in salads. It can also be added to hot broth for a light soup.

**FUN FACT #1:**  
Bok Choy, also known as Chinese Cabbage, has been grown and cultivated in China for over 5,000 years. Sometimes it is referred to as a "soup spoon" because of the shape of its leaves.

**FUN FACT #2:**  
There are many different varieties. Two common ones are Shanghai, which is green stemmed, and Pak-choy, which is white stemmed.

Bok Choy is in the DARK GREEN vegetable group. It is rich in vitamin A, vitamin C, vitamin K, and Folate.

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The front can be used as a marketing tool when featuring a vegetable in a meal. It contains fun facts, some basic nutrition information and can be displayed on the serving line for students to see near the featured vegetable.

## BOK CHOY

<b>Safety:</b>	To separate the stalks, trim off the end of the stems and wash with cold water. If using whole or halved, dunk in cold water and shake upside down, repeating until all grit is removed. Use gloves for product that will be served raw. Always use a different cutting board for vegetables and meats to prevent cross-contamination.
<b>Yield:</b>	For 100 1 cup servings of raw bok choy, purchase 27.7 lbs. <b>The Food Buying Guide (2013) does not list the cooked yield of bok choy</b> , but calculations show a raw to cooked yield of 41%, so 33.8 lbs fresh should yield 100 1/2 cup servings cooked. Verify these measurements in your own kitchen.
<b>Quality:</b>	Bok Choy should have thick, fleshy, firm stalks and glossy, dark-green leaves. There should be no bruised or slimy spots on the stem or leaves. The leafy portion should look fresh, not wilted.
<b>Storage:</b>	Bok Choy should be stored in refrigeration between 32 and 41 degrees, and may keep for up to 5 days.
<b>Preparation:</b>	To prepare Bok Choy, cut the bottom of the plant off to separate the stems like celery. Chop or slice stem ends and chop leafy end. To be used raw as a salad green or cooked. Slice the stem ends lengthwise in oil or broth, and then add the leafy ends to wilt. Do not overcook. Season as is desired. Often, baby bok choy is steamed whole or halved lengthwise to preserve the beauty of the shape.
<b>Seasonings:</b>	Bok Choy is delicious seasoned lightly with Asian flavors, like garlic and sesame, or ginger & soy sauce.



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The back each sheet contains information valuable to food service personnel. It includes sections on safety, yield, quality, storage, preparation, and recommended seasonings tips.

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