



Eat It, Don't Toss It!

Whether you call it using “secondary edibles” or “stem to root” cooking, the results are the same:

- less food waste,
- greater variety,
- cost savings.



We've become accustomed to eating only bits and pieces of produce: broccoli florets, beet roots, strawberry fruits. We've forgotten what our great-grandparents had to remember: there's a lot of taste and nutrition left in the leftovers!

Edible Leaves

When it comes to plants, it seems that there are the parts we eat, and then there are the parts we compost. Except... we're shorting ourselves by eating only half of the good stuff! (*Note: In general, smaller, younger leaves will be more tender and tasty than bigger, older leaves.*)

Beans Leaves (Lima, snap, green)

Add leaves to any variety of vegetable dishes. They may be eaten cooked or fresh, but cooked may taste better.

Broccoli, Cauliflower, Turnips, Brussels, and Kohlrabi Leaves

Peel broccoli stalks and use like cabbage in slaw, salads, or sauté. Use the dark green leaves of all these veggies as you would kale or collards. Toss in stir-fries or pasta dishes. Add raw to slaws or salads.

Carrot Tops

A great addition to pesto! They can also be added to salsa or chutney.

Radish & Beet Leaves

Eat leaves raw in salads or use in cooked dishes as you would spinach. Beet greens are actually more nutritious than the beets themselves!

Pumpkins and other Squash Leaves

Break off the stem and de-string like celery. Cook like collards. The prickly bits will cook down and be soft, but the leaves will never be smooth like other greens. The texture is unusual, but not unpleasant.

Other Delicious Bits

Corn Cobs

Simmer leftover cobs with onions, carrots, and garlic to make a broth that can be used as a base for corn or clam chowder or risotto.

Appealing Peels (Carrot, Potato, Parsnip)

Mix the peels with any spices and a little oil until everything is coated. Place them in a single layer on a baking sheet. Bake at 400°F until the peels are slightly browned and crispy, about 8 to 10 minutes. Stir several times.

Strawberry Tops

Toss into water, vinegar, or kombucha to infuse with flavor. To make syrup, sprinkle with sugar and refrigerate overnight. Blend and use to flavor iced tea, lemonade, pancake syrup, or ice cream.

Watermelon seeds

Roast with oil and salt and use like pumpkin seeds.

Citrus Peels

Dehydrate zest only and powder in a blender. Boil whole peel with sugar to make “candied” peels.

Apples

Sprinkle peels with sugar and cinnamon and dehydrate, or chop and add to muffins, breads, and pancakes.

Secondary Edible Parts of Vegetables

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Vegetable	Common Edible Parts	Other Edible Parts
Beans, snap	pod with seeds	leaves
Beans, lima	seeds	pods, leaves
Beets	root	leaves
Broccoli	flower	leaves, flower stem
Carrot	root	leaves
Cauliflower	immature flower	flower stem, leaves
Celery	leaf stems	leaves, seeds
Corn, sweet	seeds	young ears, unfurled tassel, young leaves
Cucumber	fruit with seeds	stem tips and young leaves
Eggplant	fruit with seeds	leaves edible but not flavorful
Kohlrabi	swollen stem	leaves
Okra	pods with seeds	leaves
Onions	root	young leaves
Parsley	tops	roots
Peas, English	seeds	pods, leaves
Peas, Southern	seeds, pods	young leaves
Pepper	pods	leaves after cooking, immature seeds
Potatoes, Sweet	roots	leaves and stem shoots
Radish	roots	leaves
Squash	fruit with seeds	seeds, flowers, young leaves
Tomato	fruits with seeds	-----
Turnip	roots, leaves	-----
Watermelon	fruit -- interior pulp and seeds	rind of fruit