

Sugar Snap Peas

These are an important early season vegetable that you'll find readily available from sources like farmers markets, food co-ops, and home gardens. Fresh or lightly cooked, sugar snap peas can be enjoyed pods and all.

Handling

Rinse sugar snap peas in their pods and pat them dry. To string both sides at once, hold the top stem-end and pull down toward the flat side of the pea. Alternatively, string peas after cooking to retain sweetness.

Farmer John Writes

I would never show my mom the site amongst the pine trees where my sister was throwing the unshucked peas when she got tired of shucking. But Mom found the pile eventually.

—from *Farmer John on Glitter & Grease*

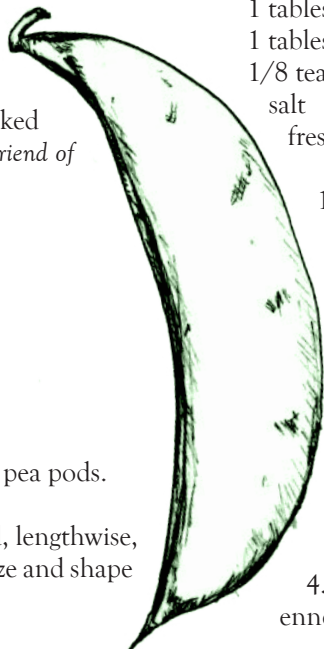
Sautéed Sugar Snap Peas with Carrots and Honey Glaze

The fresh, summery flavor of sugar snap peas is set off by the sweetness of lightly cooked carrots and a honey glaze. Sweet simplicity. *Friend of the Farm.*

Serves 3 to 4

1/2–1 pound sugar snap peas
2 medium carrots, peeled
2 tablespoons butter
1 tablespoon honey
freshly ground black pepper

1. Remove the strings from both edges of the pea pods.
2. Cut each carrot into thirds. Slice each third, lengthwise, into quarters so that the slices are about the size and shape of the sugar snap peas.
3. Place the carrots in a steamer basket set over 1 1/2 inches boiling water, cover, and steam until they are just crisp-tender, 3 to 5 minutes. Drain the carrots in a colander.
4. Melt the butter in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the sugar snap peas; cook, stirring frequently, for 5 minutes. Add the carrots. Continue to cook and stir until the peas are bright green and crisp-tender, about 3 minutes. Add the honey and cook for 1 more minute, stirring constantly, until the peas and carrots are thoroughly glazed with the honey.
5. Remove the skillet from heat. Season generously with pepper.



Storage

Store whole, unwashed sugar snap peas in a perforated plastic bag in the crisper drawer of your refrigerator for up to five

Sugar Snap Pea and Cucumber Salad with Walnut-Dill Dressing

Delicate cucumber slices and refreshing dill are wonderful companions for crispy-sweet sugar snap peas. The robust flavor of a walnut dressing adds depth to the bright flavors in this summery salad. Though some people find they need to string their peas, you might find you can skip the process altogether. *Friend of the Farm.*

Serves 4

1 pound sugar snap peas
1 cucumber, peeled if thick-skinned, halved lengthwise, seeded, thinly sliced
1 tablespoon walnut oil or peanut oil
2 tablespoons chopped walnuts
1 1/2 teaspoons freshly squeezed lemon juice (about 1/2 lemon)
1 tablespoon water
1 tablespoon fresh dill or 1 teaspoon dried dill
1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper
salt
freshly ground black pepper

1. Remove the strings from both edges of the pea pods (start by gently pulling from the stem).
2. Place the peas in a steamer basket set over 1 1/2 inches boiling water, cover, and steam until they are just crisp-tender, 3 to 5 minutes.
3. Drain the peas in the sink and immediately run cold water over them. Transfer the peas to a clean, dry dish towel and pat them dry. Place them in a large bowl and add the cucumber.
4. Put the oil, walnuts, lemon juice, water, dill, and cayenne pepper into a blender. Blend until smooth.
5. Pour the walnut dressing over the cucumbers and peas. Toss until well combined. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

The Crop

Peas, like all legumes, are great soil enhancers. Their leaves gather nitrogen from the air, and their roots thread that nitrogen into the soil, right where we want it. Another way to put nitrogen in soil is to inject fields with anhydrous ammonia. We prefer to let our plants do it in their organic, silent, and splendid way.

Excerpted from *Farmer John's Cookbook: The Real Dirt On Vegetables: Seasonal Recipes and Stories from a Community Farm* by Farmer John Peterson & Angelic Organics (Gibbs Smith, Publisher). Check with your local farm or bookstore for availability. Additional recipes, charts, individual copies of this book, and quantity discounts available at www.AngelicOrganics.com/cookbook.