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**Contributors**

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# ROOT *Vegetables*

## General Rules

Choose firm, fresh vegetables and buy frequently in small quantities so that they do not become stale.

Keep root vegetables in a well ventilated vegetable rack in a cool dry place. Remove any leaves but do not wash off the soil as the vegetables keep in better condition if unwashed.

Before peeling or scraping, scrub all root vegetables. Then drain from the dirty water.

Avoid peeling vegetables a long time before they are to be cooked. If this cannot be avoided leave the prepared vegetables to soak in cold salt water.

Keep any liquid in which vegetables have been cooked. It can be used in soups, stews and sauces.

Serve vegetables as soon as possible after cooking. Flavour and food value both deteriorate with keeping.

Allow 1½-2 lb. of root vegetables for 4 people.





## **BEETROOT (Boiled)**

Wash well, taking care not to bruise them or break their skins. Leave unpeeled for boiling whole and do not cut off the roots or cut the stalks shorter than 2 inches. Boil in salted water to cover, for 1½-2 hours depending on the size. To test when a beetroot is cooked pinch the skin. It should come off easily if the beetroot is done. Leave unpeeled for baking whole. Peel and slice for the quick method of cooking in a little boiling salted water.

## **CARROTS**

Old carrots should be scraped and cut in chunks, slices or dice. New carrots should not be peeled or scraped and if small are better cooked whole. Carrots may be boiled, cooked in a casserole, baked or stewed in fat.

## **CELERIAC**

Scrape or peel thinly and cut in chunks, slices or dice. It may be boiled, cooked in a casserole, baked or stewed in fat.

## **JERUSALEM ARTICHOKEs**

If they are to be boiled it is better not to peel them. Boil in the same way as potatoes. Peel before serving. If they are peeled put them at once into water to which vinegar has been added (1 tablespoon vinegar to 1 quart water). This helps to prevent discolouration. Jerusalem artichokes can be boiled, steamed, cooked in a casserole, fried, baked or stewed in fat.

## **KOHL RABI**

Remove the green leaves and stalks and peel fairly thickly to remove the outer skin. Cut in chunks, slices or dice and boil, cook in a casserole, bake or stew in fat. Can be served raw in salads, if sliced thinly.

## **PARSNIPS**

Peel thinly and cut in chunks, slices or dice. The best ways of cooking are boiling, cooking in a casserole, baking or stewing in fat.

## **TURNIPS**

Peel thickly to remove the coarse outer skin. Small, young turnips should be cooked whole, others cut in chunks, slices or dice. They may be boiled, baked or stewed in fat.

## **SWEDES**

Peel thickly to remove the coarse outer skin. Cut in chunks slices or dice and either boil, cook in a casserole, bake or stew in fat.





### BOILED ROOT VEGETABLES

Prepare the vegetables as already described and, with the exception of small young carrots and turnips, cut them in slices, chunks or dice.

Use only enough water to keep the pan from burning say,  $\frac{1}{2}$  pint to 2 lb. of vegetables. Add salt, 2 level teaspoons to 2 lb. of vegetables and bring to the boil.

Add the vegetables and put on the lid. If no lid is available a plate can be used. This point is important because the vegetables are to be "steam boiled" and if the steam is allowed to escape the pan will go dry and burn.

Boil for 10-20 minutes or until tender, giving the pan an occasional shake.

Drain off any liquid and use it to make a sauce (see Recipes) to serve with the vegetables or in place of stock for gravy or soup.

Serve the vegetables at once.

### BAKED VEGETABLES USING A COVERED DISH OR CASSEROLE

All root vegetables can be cooked in the oven in this way. Peel the vegetables thinly, or thickly according to the skins. Cut into thin slices, or dice, and place in a dish with a little fat, salt, and sufficient water to moisten the bottom. Cover and cook in a moderate oven till tender,  $\frac{1}{2}$ -1 hour. Serve sprinkled with chopped parsley.

### BEETROOTS BAKED IN THEIR JACKETS

Scrub the beetroot and stand them on the baking shelf in a moderately hot oven. Beetroot will take 1 to 2 hours. The time depends on the heat of the oven and the size and age of the beetroot. Test by pinching the skin and if it comes off easily the beetroot is cooked.

### VEGETABLES BAKED IN FAT

If large, cut the vegetables into medium sized even pieces. Put them in the baking tin round the joint or in a separate tin with a little fat. Cook until tender, turning them occasionally, or cover with greased paper until the last 10 minutes. Time 50-60 minutes.

### FRYING ROOT VEGETABLES

This method is suitable for raw or cooked root vegetables. Heat a little fat in a frying pan. Slice or mash the vegetables to be fried, put them into the fat and fry till brown on both sides.

### VEGETABLES STEWED IN FAT

This method is suitable for all root vegetables. Peel or scrape the vegetables, and dice or cut into thin slices. Heat sufficient lard, cooking fat, or dripping to cover the bottom of the saucepan. When the fat is hot but not smoking, add the vegetables and seasoning and cover with a tightly fitting lid. Cook over a moderate heat till tender 10-20 minutes, according to the vegetables. Shake the pan occasionally.

## RECIPES

ALL QUANTITIES FOR 4  
ALL SPOONS LEVEL

### VEGETABLES AU GRATIN

1 lb. any root vegetable  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  pint milk or vegetable stock  
3 tablespoons flour  
Salt and pepper

1 oz. margarine  
6 tablespoons grated cheese  
Browned breadcrumbs

Prepare and slice the vegetables and cook in a little boiling salted water until tender. Drain and keep hot, saving any liquid to make the sauce. Mix the flour to a smooth paste with a little of the liquid. Boil remaining liquid and pour on to the flour mixture, return to the pan and stir until it boils. Boil 5 minutes. Remove from the heat and add the salt, pepper and fat. Put the vegetables in a baking dish, pour over the sauce and cover the top with the grated cheese and then a thin layer of browned breadcrumbs. Brown the top under the grill or in a hot oven.

### BAKED CARROT & ONION PIE

1  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. carrots  
6 oz. turnips  
8 oz. onion or leek  
4  $\frac{1}{2}$  tablespoons flour  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  pint milk and vegetable stock  
1 teaspoon salt  
Pinch of pepper

Pinch of nutmeg  
2 oz. grated cheese  
2 slices bread (cut  $\frac{1}{2}$ " thick from a 2 lb. loaf), diced  
2 tablespoons melted margarine or dripping

Prepare and slice the carrots, turnips and onion or leek. Boil in a little salted water until tender. Strain the vegetables, keeping the liquid for the sauce, and place in a greased piedish. Blend the flour with a little of the cold milk, bring the rest of the liquid to the boil and pour on to the blended flour. Return to the saucepan, stir until it boils and boil gently for 5 minutes. Add the seasonings and cheese and pour the sauce over the vegetables in the piedish. Cover with the diced bread and sprinkle over the melted margarine or dripping. Bake in a hot oven for 15-20 minutes until brown and crisp on top.



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## OHIO PUDDING

(with carrot and potato)

2 oz. plain flour  
2 teaspoons baking powder  
1 oz. sugar  
2½ oz. raw grated carrot

4 oz. raw grated potato  
2 oz. dried fruit  
1 teaspoon salt  
1 teaspoon bicarbonate soda

Mix all the ingredients together. Put into a greased basin, cover with greased paper, and steam 1½-2 hours. Serve with custard or lemon sauce.

## CARROTS A LA KING

1 lb. carrots  
½ pint white sauce  
1 small onion or leek, chopped  
finely

Seasoning  
2 tablespoons chopped parsley

Cook the carrots until tender and drain. Use the cooking liquid in the sauce. Make the white sauce, adding the onion at the beginning and cooking it in the sauce. Season well; pour over the carrots; add chopped parsley and serve.

## HAVARD BEETS

1 lb. cooked beetroot  
1 oz. margarine  
2 tablespoons plain flour  
7 tablespoons vinegar with  
water added to make ½ pint  
in all

1 tablespoon sugar  
Pinch of ground cloves  
2 teaspoons salt

Cut the beetroot into cubes. Melt the margarine, stir in the flour and cook for a minute. Add the liquid, stir until it boils and boil 5 minutes. Add the sugar, cloves and salt. Add the beetroot. Allow to stand for 30 minutes. Reheat or serve cold.





## VEGETABLE SUPPER DISH

$\frac{3}{4}$  lb. carrots  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  lb. swedes or turnips  
8 oz. onion or leek  
3-4 oz. bacon  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  pint boiling water

2 teaspoons salt  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon pepper  
Pinch of ground mace or nutmeg  
2 tablespoons flour  
3-4 tablespoons chopped parsley

Prepare the vegetables and cut into dice. Chop the bacon and fry, with the rinds, until a little of the fat is extracted. Add the vegetables and fry all together for a few minutes. Add the water and seasonings, cover the pan with a lid and boil gently for 20-30 minutes, until the vegetables are tender. Remove the bacon rinds. Blend the flour to a smooth cream with a little cold water, add a little of the vegetable liquor, mix well and stir into the vegetables in the pan. Bring to the boil, stirring all the time, and boil gently for 5 minutes. Add the parsley, mix well and serve immediately.

N.B. Other vegetables, such as celeriac or kohlrabi can be used in place of the swedes or turnips.

## SAUCE FOR VEGETABLES

$\frac{1}{2}$  oz. margarine, fat or dripping  
2 tablespoons plain flour  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  pint hot vegetable stock

Salt and pepper  
Pinch of nutmeg (optional)

Boil the vegetables, strain and keep the vegetable water making it up to half a pint if necessary with water or milk. Melt the fat in the saucepan and mix in the flour, stirring until it is well blended. Add the vegetable stock and stir until the mixture boils. Boil 5 minutes. Add seasoning (salt may not be needed as there will be some in the vegetable stock) nutmeg, if used, and the vegetables. Mix well and serve at once. Chopped parsley or other chopped herbs may be added to the sauce or sprinkled on top just before serving.

The Ministry of Food has compiled the *ABC of Cookery*, which explains how to prepare and cook food. Obtainable from H.M. Stationery Office. Price 1s. 0d. or by post 1s. 2d.

