

Nutrition Education

Brussels Sprouts

No one seems to know where Brussels sprouts originated but it is assumed they came from Belgium where Brussels is the capital city. In parts of Europe they are also known as "Brussels cabbage", which seems appropriate since they are a subspecies of the common cabbage and look like a tiny head of cabbage.

Brussels sprouts are nutritious as they provide vitamin A, vitamin C, folate and potassium. Research suggests that they may also provide protection against some forms of cancer. When selecting Brussels sprouts, look for small sprouts with tight heads. Small sprouts yield a more tender texture and the tight heads help indicate freshness. Store your Brussels sprouts unwashed in an airtight container or plastic bag. Keep them in the refrigerator for a maximum of three days. After that, the Brussels sprouts begin to develop a very strong flavor.

The key to cooking Brussels sprouts is in not overcooking them. The leaves cook faster than the core, so cut an X in the bottom of the stem for even cooking when cooking the sprouts whole. As a rule, when Brussels sprouts have lost the bright green color, they are overcooked and have lost a considerable amount of nutritional value as well. Depending on size, cooking time should be about 7 to 10 minutes whether you are steaming, braising or boiling.

Garlic Brussels Sprouts

INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/2 pounds fresh Brussels sprouts
- 4 garlic cloves, chopped
- 3 teaspoons butter or stick margarine, divided
- 2 teaspoons olive or canola oil
- 1/2 cup reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper

DIRECTIONS

1. Cut an X in the core end of each Brussels sprout; set aside. In a large saucepan, saute garlic in 1 teaspoon butter and oil for 2-3 minutes or until golden brown. Add sprouts; toss to coat. Add the broth, salt and pepper; cover and cook for 10 minutes or until sprouts are tender. Drain; add the remaining butter and toss until melted.

