

Extension

Seasonal Eating
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Getting to the Root
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Root vegetables are some of my favorites. They are hearty and filling and full of flavor. Many are also very colorful which always makes food fun! As we start to think of the holiday season and winter meals, roots are a great addition. Think Thanksgiving. Where would it be without the sweet potatoes and mashed potatoes? Pot roast is incomplete without the carrots. Then there are parsnips and beets, turnips and rutabagas.

Roots are really good for roasting. You can do all one kind, like roasted beets or you can mix them together for a variety. Just cut them all to the same size and spread on a baking sheet in a single layer. Drizzle with a little olive oil and sprinkle with a little salt and pepper. Roast at 350-400 degrees until tender to a fork. The sugars in the root vegetables caramelize and give them a really good flavor.



Roots are also good for mashing. Boil them and then mash. We all know mashed potatoes but parsnips and turnips also mash well. Potatoes can also be combined with parsnips or turnips. Mashed sweet potatoes are good with a little maple syrup added for fall flavor. Carrots can be used like sweet potatoes in a casserole or soufflé as well. Just be sure to use a mixer, potato masher or ricer. The food processor will make root mashes gluey and sticky.

Over the years, I have really grown to enjoy cooked carrots. Growing up we only had raw carrots or carrots with pot roast. We never really had them by themselves as a side dish. The browned butter carrots below are a good side that is not overwhelmingly sweet. It has a good balance of vinegar and a little sugar. The really interesting part is the little bit of vanilla that is added at the end. It adds something special and unexpected. These would make a good side for pork or chicken or an addition to the Thanksgiving table.

So check out the roots at the market this fall and winter and make your winter meals colorful and hearty.

Check out the UT Extension Seasonal Eating Blog (<https://extension.tennessee.edu/Bedford/seasonaleatingblog/default.aspx>) for recipes using local farmers' market produce. The Seasonal Eating Cooking Demonstration on "Table of Thanks" will be held on November 19 at 12:00 noon at the Extension Office. Call the Office at 684-5971 to sign up and bring \$7.00 to class to cover the samples.

Browned Butter Carrots

1/2 pound carrots
1 tablespoon butter
Kosher salt
Black pepper
1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon water
1 tablespoon firmly packed brown sugar
1 tablespoon cider vinegar
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

Cut carrots in half lengthwise then into 2" pieces (cut any thick pieces in half again lengthwise). Melt butter in a skillet over medium heat. Cook, stirring constantly 3 minutes or until butter begins to turn golden brown. Add carrots and sprinkle with a little salt and pepper. Cook 8-10 minutes, stirring occasionally or until carrots are barely tender. Add water, cover and cook 10 more minutes. Uncover and add brown sugar and vinegar. Cook 8-10 minutes or until carrots are glazed and most of the liquid evaporates. Remove from heat and stir in vanilla.