

Seasonal Eating
Whitney Danhof, Extension Agent

A New Take on Green Beans
September 2015

Green beans have always been a favorite. I like southern style or northern style. I like fresh or canned. I like roasted, sautéed or boiled. They are a staple at my house and I'm pretty sure they are a go-to vegetable for many families. For one thing, they are kid friendly. Not too bitter with a mild flavor that even the most staunch vegetable avoiders will eat.



While boiled, canned green beans are the standard for most Southern meals, fresh green beans are excellent when slow sautéed. They develop a deep, toasty, caramelized flavor while losing their crispness and getting tender. Slow sautéing is great for vegetables that don't have a lot of moisture and so it works well for green beans. It takes just a little fat and cooks the beans over medium heat, stirring frequently until they brown and soften and develop all of that deep flavor. Start with some oil, heated in a sauté pan and add the beans and other vegetables like mushrooms or aromatics like onion or garlic. Let them cook, covered, stirring every once in a while. As they get tender, remove the lid and continue to brown, stirring more frequently. The result of this method of cooking is tender vegetables with a rich, browned flavor.

You can use slow sautéing with other low moisture vegetables as well like carrots, cauliflower, broccoli, turnips, parsnips, potatoes or winter squash. Higher moisture vegetables do better with quick sautéing over higher heat like peppers, summer squash, spinach, eggplant and cabbage.

So try a new take on green beans and slow sauté them to go along side your meat and salad. For more ideas on using seasonal produce, visit the Bedford County Extension website (bedford.tennessee.edu) and click on Seasonal Eating.

Slow Sautéed Green Beans

- 2 teaspoons pure maple syrup
- 2 teaspoons sherry wine vinegar
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 pound green beans, trimmed
- 8 ounces mushrooms, stemmed and halved or quartered
- 8 cloves garlic, peeled and halved
- 2 ounces thinly sliced prosciutto or shaved country ham, cut into 1" pieces
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt

In a small bowl, combine the maple syrup and sherry vinegar. In a large nonstick skillet, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add the beans, mushrooms, garlic, prosciutto and salt. Toss well to coat. Cover the pan and cook, stirring occasionally, until all the green beans have turned bright green, are beginning to turn brown, and have begun to soften, 10-12 minutes. Uncover and cook, stirring more frequently, until the beans are browned, 15-18 more minutes. Stir in the maple-vinegar mixture. Remove the garlic and serve.