

Seasonal Eating
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Brussels Sprouts Bring Fresh Crunch to the Salad Bowl
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Myth – Brussels sprouts have to be mushy, grey, bitter tasting balls of vegetable that children are forced to eat. Truth – when cooked properly or used raw in salads, Brussels sprouts bring a lovely fresh flavor and variety to the table!

Brussels sprouts are finding new life especially in salads where they add crisp texture and a mild, nutty flavor. Thinly sliced or shaved raw, these small green vegetables add a fresh crunch that pairs well with apples, dried cranberries, nuts, Parmesan cheese and tangy vinaigrettes.

Brussels sprouts are especially well-suited for salads because they hold up better than many leafy greens, staying firm even after dressing. Their sturdy leaves also absorb flavors nicely, making them a popular choice for make-ahead meals, potlucks, cookouts and bagged lunches.

Nutrition is another reason for their rise in popularity. Brussels sprouts are rich in fiber, vitamin C and antioxidants, giving salads an extra healthy boost.

To prepare the sprouts, trim off the core end and remove any wilted outer leaves. Slice thinly lengthwise with a chef's knife to shred. The smoky bacon and almonds are a nice contrast to the almost sweet flavor of the shaved greens. The vinaigrette adds tanginess with the mustard and vinegar to round out this great picnic dish or accompaniment to barbecue for the summer season.

So put away those negative thoughts about Brussels sprouts and try them with a brand-new perspective of raw, crunchy and mildly sweet. Check out the Bedford County Farmer's Market opening on Thursdays at 3:30 p.m. (one hour later than last year) at the Celebration Pavilion in front of Cooper Steel Arena. For more information and recipes check out the Seasonal Eating page at bedford.tennessee.edu.

Shaved Brussels Sprouts Salad

- 1/4 pound bacon, finely chopped
- 1/4 cup red onion, finely chopped
- 3/4 tablespoon spicy brown mustard
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- pinch salt and pepper
- 1/2 pound brussels sprouts, trimmed and thinly sliced
- 1/2 cup dried cranberries
- 1/4 cup coarsely chopped smoked almonds



In a medium skillet, cook the bacon until crisp and remove to a paper towel. Leave 2 tablespoons of drippings in the pan. Add the red onion and cook until softened. Add the mustard, vinegar and sugar. Whisk in the olive oil off the heat and season with a little salt and pepper. In a large bowl, combine the Brussels sprouts and the cranberries. Pour the warm dressing over the top and toss well. Sprinkle with almonds and crumbled bacon just before serving.