

Try Me!

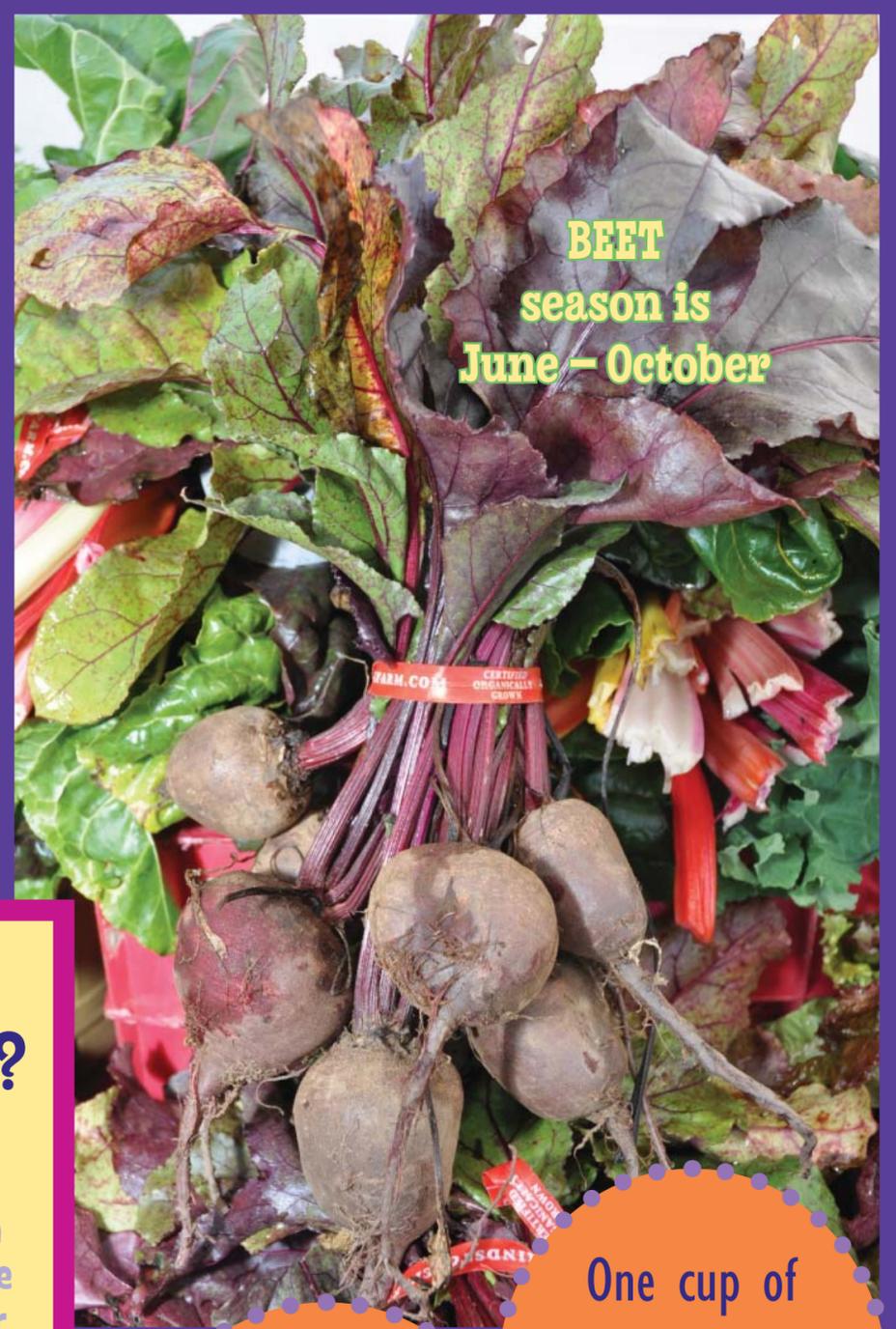
Beets

FUN FACTS:

- Beets (*beta vulgaris*) are a member of the order of flowering plants called **Caryophyllales**, which also includes cacti, carnations, spinach, and venus fly traps.
- Modern beets are derived from the wild sea beets that originated around the coasts of Europe, the Middle East, and Africa.
- At first, Greeks used just the leaves of the plant, both medicinally and as a culinary herb.
- Since the 16th century, beet juice has been used as a natural red dye.
- Beets are sometimes used to make homemade wine.

BUT HOW DO THEY TASTE ???

- The beet's sweet taste reflects their high sugar content, which makes them an important source for the production of refined sugar.
- Raw beet roots have a crunchy texture that turns soft and buttery when they are cooked.
- Beet leaves have a lively, bitter taste similar to chard. Give them a try!



BEEET
season is
June – October

Romans considered beet juice to be an aphrodisiac.

One cup of beets contains about 53 calories.

HOW TO SELECT AND STORE:

- o Choose small or medium-sized beets whose roots are firm, smooth-skinned and deep in color.
- o Avoid beets that have spots, bruises or soft, wet areas.
- o Store beets unwashed in the refrigerator crisper where they will keep for two to four weeks.
- o Also available, pre-cooked and canned in the local groceries vegetable section.

PREPARATION:

- o Cook beets lightly and do not peel until after cooking.
- o Adding an acidic ingredient such as lemon juice or vinegar will brighten the color while an alkaline substance such as baking soda will often cause them to turn a deeper purple. Salt will blunt beets color so add it only at the end of cooking if needed.
- o Beet juice will stain skin so be careful.

QUICK SERVING IDEAS:

- o Grate raw beets for a delicious and colorful addition to salads or garnish in soup.
- o Add chunks of beets when roasting vegetables.
- o Add it to some homemade vegetable juice.

NUTRITION INFO:

- o Beets are an excellent source of B vitamin, folate, and a very good source of manganese and potassium. Beets are a good source of dietary fiber, vitamin C, magnesium, iron, copper, and phosphorus.
- o Purple beets get their color from betacyanin — a powerful cancer fighting agent, especially known for fighting colon cancer.
- o The leaves are incredibly rich in nutrients, concentrated in vitamins and minerals