

3 Vegetables You Can Use from Top to Bottom



Avoiding waste at all costs is extremely important to me as a frugal gardener. Throwing away parts of a plant that I might be able to use is akin to throwing money in the trash!

Now is the time of year where I'm in full harvest mode. I also receive a weekly CSA farm basket to satisfy my veggie cravings. I rarely meal plan at this time of year because I need to be able to get creative and think on my toes as I pick what's ripe in my garden and dig into my organic farm basket. Most recipes simply don't use all the parts of a plant, so I need to think outside the box when it's time to cook dinner.

Here are 3 plants that you can eat from

top to bottom:

Beets

Sure, you know that you can eat the root portion of this sweet and earthy vegetable, but did you know that the tops are edible, too? Don't toss them out! After harvesting, separate the tops from the roots and wash both parts of the plant thoroughly to remove dirt. Beet greens are very similar to swiss chard and taste great sauteed.

Carrots

They're not particularly flavorful, but the tops of your carrot plants are definitely edible. Use them to make carrot pesto or as a garnish for heavy dishes. In the late fall, you can harvest the tops of mature carrots before the roots, since the tops are a lot less cold hardy.

Kohlrabi

An alien-looking root vegetable that has a mild turnip-like flavor. I much prefer kohlrabi to turnips, actually! The bulb can be shredded and used raw in a salad or cubed and roasted with other root veggies. The leaves are fair game, too. Cook them together or separately, or use them like you would cabbage leaves and stuff them with whatever you're in the mood for.

Plants you *can't* eat from top to bottom:

Oh how I wish I could eat every plant from root to stem, but not all plants are wholly edible. Only eat the fruit of **tomato** plants, the rest might make you sick. Don't bother eating **squash** foliage, it's not at all tasty. Avoid eating **rhubarb** leaves, they're poisonous!

Do you have a favorite unconventional plant part that you love to cook with? Let me know by leaving a comment!