

Harvest of the Month



Network for a Healthy California

Asparagus

6,500 students in Western Nevada County will sample Asparagus from Fiery Ginger Farm this month through Sierra Harvest's Farm to School Program!



Fiery Ginger Farm

Fiery Ginger Farm is an urban farm located in West Sacramento, California that provides naturally-grown food and hands-on learning opportunities to the families in our community. Their mission is to grow the highest quality food using sustainable practices, deliver hands-on, ag-based educational experiences, and develop community where they farm. Fiery Ginger believes that urban farms are powerful agents of change for the environment, the food system and the cities they service. Fiery Ginger farmers Hope & Shayne also run Spork Food Hub, working with over 30 local farms to provide nutrient dense and sustainable produce to over a dozen school districts, universities, restaurants, food security programs, hospitals, and other institutions.

www.fierygingerfarm.com

Asparagus origin story:

- Egyptians used asparagus spears as gifts for the gods. In fact, wild asparagus was pictured as an offering on an Egyptian frieze dating to 3000 BC.
- Asparagus has been cultivated for over 2,000 years and was prized by ancient Greeks and Romans for its medicinal properties as well as its taste.
- The word asparagus comes from the Greek word Asparagos, meaning sprout or shoot.
- Asparagus is often called the "Food of Kings." King Louis XIV of France was so fond of this delicacy that he ordered special greenhouses built so he could enjoy asparagus all year-round.



A healthy choice!

- Asparagus is low in calories and a rich source of essential vitamins and minerals, including vitamin K, vitamin C, folate, and potassium.
- It is a good source of dietary fiber, making it beneficial for digestive health.
- Asparagus is packed with antioxidants, which help combat inflammation and reduce the risk of chronic diseases.
- Its high folate content makes it particularly beneficial during pregnancy, as folate is essential for fetal development.



Let's learn more!

- Asparagus is a stem vegetable and the roots can grow 20 feet deep.
- Asparagus requires about three years from the time of planting to establish permanent roots and produce quality spears.
- After that, asparagus is a perennial, which means, when taken care of, it will continue to come back year after year for 20 to 30 years!
- Asparagus is part of the Asparagaceae family, although if you go further up in the family tree it is a cousin to onions, garlic, tulips, and even daffodils!
- There are over 300 varieties of asparagus, but the most common types are green, white, and purple.
- White asparagus is grown by covering the spears with soil as they grow, preventing them from developing chlorophyll and giving them their distinctive color.
- Purple asparagus is a different variety and its purple color comes from the high levels of anthocyanins (potent antioxidants),

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Roasted Garlic Parmesan Asparagus

Ingredients:

- 1 bunch of asparagus, trimmed
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- Salt and black pepper to taste

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 425°F (220°C).
2. Place asparagus spears on a baking sheet and drizzle with olive oil.
3. Sprinkle minced garlic, Parmesan cheese, salt, and pepper over the asparagus.
4. Roast in the preheated oven for 12-15 minutes, or until tender and slightly browned.



if your student is eligible for free/reduced school meals you likely qualify for CalFresh, which can help you afford healthy and nutritious food:

www.BenefitsCal.com