

FARMER IN THE FIELD



INDULGE YOUR TASTEBUDS.... CALIFORNIA ASPARAGUS IS IN SEASON

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This is the time of year when fields start to erupt with stalks of asparagus. And since asparagus can grow on an average of seven inches a day with the right weather, harvesting begins almost immediately. Nothing can compare to the taste of fresh picked asparagus. According to the 2002 Bon Appetite magazine reader survey, "How America Eats," asparagus reigns supreme as our favorite vegetable, followed by tomatoes and broccoli.

With California being the grower of 70 to 80% of the domestic fresh supply of asparagus you should have no problem satisfying your cravings. Some of you may be thinking "what's the big deal, there has been asparagus in the stores all winter?" But those of you who care about flavor and buying local know what a big deal it is.

When buying asparagus which is better, thin or jumbo? Some think the jumbo asparagus is older, true or false? That would be false. They actually come from the younger more vigorous plants. With commercial plants living as long as twelve years, that's understandable. Not to worry, thin or thick the flavor is still there.

Is white asparagus a different variety? No. Keeping the plant in the dark by covering it with dirt keeps it from turning green. To harvest the workers probe under the ground with special knives to cut the stalk once the tips break the surface of the soil. Which is more nutritious? Well, mom didn't tell us to eat our white vegetables when we were growing up, but the difference is so slight, green or white, enjoy!