



Baby Vegetables



Baby vegetables have become popular in fine restaurants and for upscale banquet meals because they are colorful, dainty, and easy to prepare. For all practical purposes, they are not prepared at all but just heated. Some baby vegetables are prematurely harvested, and others are strains specially developed to stay tiny. Obviously, they have little flavor.

BABY ARTICHOKEs

Season: March through May.

Pack: By weight. 10-lb (4.5-kg) carton is common.

Count: 10 to 12 pieces per pound (450 g).

Serving size: 3 to 4 pieces.

Kitchen yields: One 10-lb (4.5-kg) carton = 30 servings. Only outside leaves are peeled off.

BABY AVOCADOS/CUKES

Seedless finger or ladies' avocados, also known as *cocktail avocados*.

Season: Available year-round.

Pack: By weight. 10-lb (4.5-kg) carton is common.

Size: About 1 × 3 in (25 × 75 mm), oval-shaped.

Count: One 10-lb (4.5-kg) carton = 150 to 200.

Serving size: Varies. Baby avocados are often used as a garnish or are served as reception food, like olives.

Kitchen yields: Fruit is seedless or has soft pit; can be eaten whole.

BABY BEETS

Available in red and gold varieties.

Season: Available year-round.

Pack: Bunches; a 10-lb (4.5-kg) carton is common.

Count: 16 to 18 pieces per pound (450 g).

Serving size: 2 to 3 pieces.

Kitchen yields: One 10-lb (4.5-kg) carton = 70 servings. Discard only

the large leaves, leave the rest on, and serve whole. Do not peel.

BABY BOK CHOY

Season: Available fall and winter.

Pack: 10-lb (4.5-kg) carton.

Count: 1½ oz (40 g) each, but sizes can vary.

Serving size: 1 piece per person.

Kitchen yields: One 10-lb (4.5-kg) carton = 100 servings. Vegetable is usable as is. There is no waste.

BABY BRUSSELS SPROUTS

Season: Fall and winter.

Pack: By weight. A 10-lb (4.5-kg) carton is common.

Count: 40 to 50 per pound (450 g).

Serving size: 4 to 5 pieces.

Kitchen yields: 10-lb (4.5-kg) carton = 100 servings. Very little waste. Count varies greatly.

BABY CARROTS, UNPEELED, WITH TOPS

Long and round baby carrots are available. The color can range from red to pale white. They are very sweet.

Season: Available year-round.

Pack: 4½- to 5-lb (2- to 2.2-kg) carton.

Count: 24 bunches per case, 7 to 8 baby carrots to a bunch.

Serving size: 3 to 4 pieces.

Kitchen yields: 24 bunches = 50 servings. Some of the green top

should be left on to increase yield and eye appeal. Peeling is not necessary.

BABY CAULIFLOWER

Season: Available in fall and winter.

Pack: By weight. A 10-lb (4.5-kg) carton is common.

Count: 18 to 20 pieces per pound.

Serving size: 2 to 3 pieces.

Kitchen yields: One 10-lb (4.5-kg) carton = 70. Use as is, little waste. Do not trim off greens.

BABY CORN

Available white and yellow. For Canned Baby Corn, see the Groceries section.

Season: Summer.

Pack: By weight. A 10-lb (4.5-kg) carton is common.

Count: 12 to 13 pieces per pound (450 g), not cleaned; 37 pieces per pound, cleaned.

Kitchen yields: One 10-lb (4.5-kg) carton = 40 servings. Sizes vary widely. Whole corn can be used; no shucking is necessary.

BABY EGGPLANTS

Purple and white varieties are available. The shapes can be either round or elongated.

Pack: By weight. A 10-lb (4.5-kg) carton is common.

Count: Sizes vary greatly; 5 pieces to 1 lb (450 g) is common.

Serving size: 1 piece.

Kitchen yields: One 10-lb (4.5-kg) carton = 50 servings. The whole vegetable can be used. Baby eggplants are sometimes bitter.

BABY GREEN ASPARAGUS

Season: Available year-round.

Pack: 4-lb (1.8-kg) carton.

Count: 50 to 55 pieces per pound (450 g).

Serving size: 4 to 5 pieces.

Kitchen yields: One 4-lb (1.8-kg) carton = 45 servings. No waste; use as is.

BABY LEEKS

Season: Available year-round.

Pack: By weight. A 10-lb (4.5-kg) carton is common.

Count: 10 to 16 pieces per pound (450 g).

Serving size: 4 pieces.

Kitchen yields: One 10-lb (4.5-kg) carton = 40 servings. There is no waste.

BABY RADISHES

Season: Available year-round.

Pack: Bunches. A 10-lb (4.5-kg) carton is common. 6-oz (170-g) cello packs.

Count: One 6-oz (170-g) cello pack = 12 radishes, average.

BABY SPINACH

Season: Available year-round.

Pack: 8-oz (225-g) bags. Product is very lightweight.

Size: Leaves are about 1 to 2 in (25 to 50 mm) long.

Serving size: The tiny spinach leaves are usually served as salad or as a garnish. They are seldom cooked, because the yield would be small.

Kitchen yields: There is no waste.

BABY SQUASH

Many varieties are available, such as Baby Scallop Squash, Baby Patty Pan Squash, and Baby Zucchini. Baby squash is often sold with the flowers still intact, especially Zucchini Squash. Not to be confused with inedible ornamental squash.

Season: Usually summer, but some varieties are available year-round.

Pack: By weight. A 10-lb (2.25-kg) carton is common.

Counts:

Baby Patty Pan Squash: 20 pieces per pound (450 g)

Baby Scallop Squash: 20 pieces per pound (450 g).

Baby Zucchini: 15 pieces per pound average.

Serving size: 2 to 4 pieces.

Kitchen yields: Depend on variety. The whole vegetable can be used. There is no cleaning waste and little shrinkage.

SWEET GRAPE BABY TOMATOES

Very tiny red and yellow tomatoes have come on the market. Often the stems are still attached.

Season: Available year-round; peak occurs in summer.

Pack: Pints (0.47 l).

Count: About 15 pieces to a pint (0.47 l), but sizes vary.

Serving size: Varies; the tomatoes are often used as a garnish.

Kitchen yields: There is no waste.