

About Edamame

Edamame (pronounced “eh-dah-MAH-may”) is a traditional Japanese vegetable that is growing in popularity in the United States. Also called “vegetable soybean” and “sweet bean,” edamame is a nutritious and tasty vegetable or snack food with a sweet, nutty flavor.

Called *edamame* in Japanese (“branched bean”) and *mao dou* in Chinese (“hairy bean”), these specialty vegetable soybeans originated in China more than 2000 years ago. Edamame is the same species as grain (or field) soybeans, *Glycine max*, but it has larger seed, sweeter flavor, smoother texture, and better digestibility.

Growing Edamame

Edamame is easy to grow in the Pacific Northwest. Long summer days combined with relatively cool summer temperatures make it necessary to choose a variety which matures early and is less sensitive to photoperiod. Log House Plants has selected six early varieties that will mature in 75-90 days in the Willamette Valley.

In the Pacific Northwest, you may plant seeds between late April and mid-June or plant starts until July 4th. Space rows 24 inches apart, and plant seeds 4 inches apart within the row. Allow additional space for ‘Black Pearl’ edamame.

Harvest edamame when the pods begin to plump and the beans almost touch within the pod. Pods should be bright green in color, similar to snow peas. By the time pods show any yellow, the optimum time for harvest has passed and beans have become starchy, losing their sweet, nutty flavor. The window for harvesting can be as short as 3-4 days, so monitor the plants frequently as the pods approach maturity.

How to Use Edamame

When ready to prepare, remove the bean pods from the plant. Place in salted boiling water and cook 3 to 5 minutes. Drain and let cool for a few minutes. Remove beans from pods; discard pods. Edamame can also be steamed or microwaved. Edamame release a sweet, pleasant aroma when cooked.

- As a snack, use thumb and forefinger to squeeze beans from pod – you will soon be able to aim directly into your mouth!
- For a vegetable side dish, shell the beans, and then toss with a bit of olive oil and a sprinkle of salt.
- Use cooked beans to add texture and give a protein boost to salad or mixed vegetables.
- Edamame is a good addition to stir-fry dishes.
- Add to soups, such as minestrone or stew.
- For recipe cards, contact the Cooperative Extension office or Web site listed on the back panel.

Herbed Edamame

Any fresh herbs turn edamame into a delightful side dish. Try these for starters. Recipe adapted from Mauny’s Kitchen Table recipes: www.maunyskitchen.com.

2 cups cooked and shelled edamame
1 tablespoon olive oil
½ tablespoon chopped fresh parsley
½ tablespoon chopped fresh tarragon
½ tablespoon chopped fresh chervil
1 tablespoon chopped fresh chives
Salt and black pepper to taste

Toss edamame beans with remaining ingredients over medium heat for about one minute. Variation: try different fresh herb combinations from your garden. Makes 4 side-dish servings.

How Nutritious is Edamame ?

Very! Their protein is abundant and high quality – approaching that of meat in their amino acid balance. A one-half cup serving of edamame contributes 11 grams of protein towards the average adult requirement of 46-63 grams per day.

Here are some nutrient highlights of what you will find in half a cup of these great tasting, versatile soybeans:

- Calcium not only builds strong bones and teeth, but also helps prevent heart disease and colon cancer: 130 mg, nearly as much as half a cup of milk.
- Iron carries oxygen throughout the body, so brain and muscles work optimally, preventing fatigue: 22% of a man’s RDA for iron, and 15% of a woman’s.
- Potassium makes for a regular heartbeat and normalizes blood pressure: 485 mg.
- Folate is a B-vitamin that helps fight heart disease and prevent certain birth defects: 25% of the adult RDA.
- Phytoestrogens are abundant – see the back panel for details.



Enjoying Edamame

Nothing is more satisfying on a hot summer day than a cool vegetable salad, crisp and full of the fresh flavors of summer. Try this salad as a delicious introduction to edamame – your family will ask for more!

Edamame and Corn Salad

The traditional Asian flavors of ginger, sesame oil, rice vinegar and soy sauce set the stage for edamame and corn in this chilled salad. Adapted from a recipe in The Complete Soy Cookbook by Paulette Mitchell, Macmillan 1998.

1 cup cooked and shelled edamame
1 cup frozen sweet corn, thawed
2 medium tomatoes, diced
4 green onions, sliced
1-2 cloves of garlic, minced
1 tablespoon coarsely chopped fresh cilantro
(If fresh is not available, substitute fresh basil or parsley, not dried.)
2 tablespoons freshly squeezed limejuice
2 tablespoons olive oil

Mix all ingredients in medium bowl. Cover and refrigerate for at least one hour for flavors to blend. Makes about 4 cups.

At lunch

Spoon generously over tossed salad. Serve with your favorite bread.

At dinner

Serve as a vegetable with any main dish such as pasta, fish or chicken, and a tossed salad.

Phytoestrogens

Edamame contain phytoestrogens, which are estrogens that plants produce. Three commonly researched ones are the isoflavones called genistein, daidzein and glycitein. Numerous research studies show that phytoestrogens play an important role in good health:

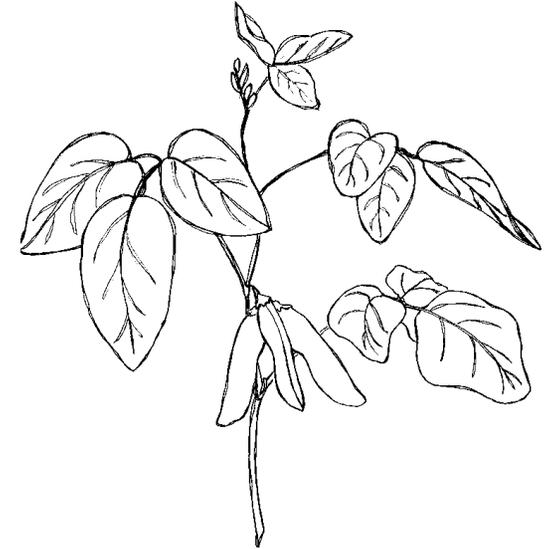
- Help fight heart disease by increasing “good” HDL cholesterol and lowering “bad” LDL cholesterol levels.
- Help prevent breast cancer in premenopausal women.
- Lower the risk of heart disease and osteoporosis in post-menopausal women without raising cancer risk.
- Promote prostate health, possibly preventing cancer.
- Act as an antioxidant, protecting cells from damage.

This research was supported with funds from the WSU IMPACT Center in cooperation with Washington State University Cooperative Extension. By Gayle Povich Alleman, M.S. R.D. and Carol Miles, Ph.D., with artwork by Leslie Zenz. 1999. For more information contact WSU Vancouver Research and Extension Unit (360) 576-6030, or visit our Web site <http://agsyst.wsu.edu>.

Cooperative Extension programs and employment are available to all without discrimination.



This brochure has been adapted from Washington State University and King County Agricultural Commission materials by Log House Plants, 2005.



Edamame

A delicious, fresh soybean, also called vegetable soybean or sweet beans.

Food from the Field Series