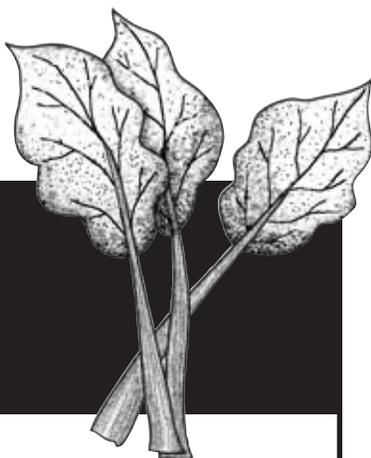


# Kentucky Rhubarb



**Season:** Late spring to early summer.

**Nutrition Facts:** Rhubarb is low in calories (26 calories for a 1-cup serving). It is very acidic and is most often eaten with added sugar to offset the tartness. It is 95 percent water and contains potassium, a small amount of vitamin C, and fiber.

**Selection:** Choose crisp, medium sized, firm stalks. The deeper the red, the more flavorful the stalks will be. **Warning:** Only the stalks are edible. The leaves of the plant are poisonous.

**Storage:** Freshly harvested stalks can be kept in the refrigerator unwashed and wrapped tightly in plastic for up to three weeks.

**Preparation:** Wash well, trim the ends, and use in your favorite recipe. Because of its tartness, it is most often teamed up with strawberries and baked into pies and tarts. It is also used in jam and other desserts.

When cooking fresh rhubarb, always use a non-reactive pan, such as stainless steel, for cooking this high acid plant.

*To freeze:* Chop into ½-inch pieces, spread them on a baking sheet, and place in the freezer. Once frozen, place in a plastic freezer bag. Packed this way, it will keep for up to six months.

## Rhubarb Strawberry Topping

This sauce is excellent as a topping for ice cream, pancakes, waffles, pound cake, and over a bowl of fruit, gingerbread, or yogurt. It will keep in the refrigerator for four days.

5 stalks rhubarb, trimmed and cut into 1-inch pieces

2 cups sliced strawberries

¾ cup sugar

½ cup orange juice

1 teaspoon lemon zest

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In a heavy saucepan, combine all ingredients and stir well. Bring to a boil over medium high heat. Reduce heat and simmer for 10 to 12 minutes, skimming off foam. Remove from heat and allow to cool to room temperature. Cover and refrigerate. Serve warm or cold.

**Yield:** 8 ½-cup servings.

*Nutritional Analysis (per ½ cup): 100 calories, 1 g protein, 1 g fiber, 24 g carbohydrate, 0 g fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 0 mg sodium.*

Prepared by Sarah Ball Brandl, Family and Consumer Sciences, Limited Resource Audience Coordinator.

References: Kentucky Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, "The Market Basket," Kentucky Department of Agriculture, and "Watch Your Garden Grow," University of Illinois Extension Web site <[www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/veggies](http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/veggies)>.

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For more information, contact your county's Extension agent for Family and Consumer Sciences or visit the Web site for Family and Consumer Sciences, College of Agriculture, University of Kentucky, at <[www.ca.uky.edu/agcollege/fcs](http://www.ca.uky.edu/agcollege/fcs)>.