



# Connecting New Jersey Farms to Local Schools

## Pea Shoots are the featured item in our Garden State on Your Plate tastings!

**Our Garden State on Your Plate Pea Shoot Tasting** begins with a sampling of two raw pea shoots — one raised in soil and one raised in a hydroponic system. The students are asked to contemplate any difference in flavor and texture between the two. They then season the pea shoots with a squeeze of fresh lemon and a pinch of lemon-infused salt from SaltWorks. We ask the students to pay attention to how salt and lemon change flavor of the pea shoots. The tasting finishes with a Pea Shoot and Apple Salad that is dressed with a vinaigrette designed by the 8th grade Food Science classes at Princeton Middle School.

**Pea Pods** are the outer coating that protects the pea seeds. The pods of sugar snap peas are edible and have a satisfyingly juicy crunch. Snow pea pods are also edible. Just be sure to check for strings along the seams of snow and snap peas and remove them before eating!

The pods of garden peas (also known as English peas), however, are tough and fibrous and should be removed and composted.

Or, better yet, make pea broth! Simmer the pods in water for 30 minutes, strain out the broth, and *then* put the pods into the compost. Use the broth to make pea soup!

**Peas** are the seed of the pea plant. Peas are best when eaten right out of the garden — or from a local farm — because they begin to lose their sweetness the moment they are picked. Large peas also tend to get starchy, so don't let them hang too long on the vine.



**Pea Sprouts, Shoots, and Tendrils** are delicious when used fresh in salads or when quickly sauteed or added to a stir fry. Pea sprouts are grown in water and have long pale-green stems and tiny leaves. Pea shoots are very young pea plants that are grown in soil or another growing medium, such as peat moss. Pea tendrils are the frilly upper leaves and soft stems — and sometimes flowers — of growing pea plants.

See Garden State on Your Plate photos on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/psgcoop.org](http://www.facebook.com/psgcoop.org)

## Princeton Middle School Vinaigrettes

recipes developed by the 8th grade Food Science class at Princeton Middle School

### Orange Cilantro Vinaigrette

- 2 tablespoons fresh orange juice
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1-1/2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 pinch each salt and pepper
- 1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon hand torn cilantro

In a small bowl, whisk together orange juice, mustard, garlic, salt, and pepper. While whisking rapidly, SLOWLY pour in oil. Stir in cilantro. Taste and adjust seasoning, if needed.

### Lime Mint Vinaigrette

- 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
- 2 teaspoons honey
- 1 pinch each salt and pepper
- 1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1/2 to 1 tablespoon hand torn mint

In a small bowl, whisk together lime juice, honey, salt, and pepper. While whisking rapidly, SLOWLY pour in oil. Stir in mint. Taste and adjust seasoning, if needed.

### Ingredients to add to your pea shoot salad:

baby arugula + toasted hazelnuts + thinly sliced radishes and fennel • thinly sliced cucumbers and radishes + slivered almonds • carrots + mint + Parmesan cheese • spinach + bacon + sauted shiitake mushrooms + radishes + chives • snap peas + toasted sunflower seeds

**Salad:** Toss pea shoots and other ingredients in enough vinaigrette to lightly coat. Taste, adjust seasoning, if needed, and enjoy!

### Ingredients that Go Well with Peas

almonds • asparagus • bacon • basil • bay leaf • butter  
carrots • cashews • celery • chervil • chives • cilantro  
coconut milk • cream • dill • garlic • ginger • ham • leeks  
lemon • lettuce • mint • mushrooms • onions • parsley  
potatoes • rice • sage • savory • scallions • sesame  
shallots • spinach • tarragon • thyme • turmeric • yogurt

### Words that Describe the Flavor, Color, and Texture of Peas

acetone • acid • asparagus • bitter  
caramelized • cardboardy • crisp • earthy  
grassy • green • hay • legummy • metallic  
musty • salty • sour • starchy • sweet  
umami • wrinkled

### GARDEN STATE ON YOUR PLATE PEAS & SHOOTS FACTS

Pea shoots include the top pair of small leaves (the tip), delicate tendrils attached to the young stem, and maybe a few leaves or even blossoms.

Shoots are typically harvested from snow pea vines, although they can be from any type of garden pea. There are three main categories of peas: garden, snow, and snap. Snap and snow peas can be eaten raw and have an edible pod. Garden peas should be shelled before eating.

Peas are in the legume family, which means they produce pods that contain edible seeds. Peas are ready to harvest 45 to 80 days after planting. The peak time for peas in New Jersey is from mid-May to July or until the weather gets too hot.

Pea shoots were traditionally used in the cuisine of the Hmong people of southern Asia, and grew popular in Asia and parts of Africa. Pea shoots are sold in Asian markets as *dou miao*.

Pea shoots can be eaten raw or lightly cooked. Peas can be eaten raw, steamed, roasted, simmered, or sautéed. Pay attention when you are cooking peas because if you overcook them they become mushy!

Pea tendrils are high in vitamin C, vitamin K and antioxidants, which keep our cells strong and healthy. Peas contain protein, calcium, folate, potassium, and vitamin C.

Use pea shoots within one to two days of harvesting. Store them, wrapped in paper towels in the vegetable bin of the refrigerator.

Begin harvesting shoots when pea plants are 6 to 8 inches tall. Cutting off the growing tip will encourage the plants to branch out and continue growing. Harvest the top 2 to 6 inches of the pea plants, flowers, and buds every 3 to 4 weeks.

To cook, place freshly washed pea shoots in an empty saucepan over medium heat or in a small bowl in the microwave. Heat just until wilted.

For a twist on spring greens, stir-fry pea shoots with sautéed garlic. At the end of cooking time, add a squeeze of fresh lemon.



**Garden State on Your Plate** is a series of four school-wide produce tastings in each of the Princeton elementary schools. The emphasis is on a New Jersey produce item, the different ways it can be prepared, and how the flavor can be altered by the chef and the students. Children learn about farming and cooking, and gain flavor power—the ability to personalize their item using salt and citrus. In support of the tastings, children will learn about each farm item through a variety of classroom- and garden-based lessons.



Founded in 2006, Princeton School Gardens Cooperative fosters garden- and food-based education in the classroom, cafeteria and community • PSGCOOP.ORG