

Bamboo As Food

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Bamboo shoots of certain species are not only edible and succulent but also nutritious: a 100 g portion contains 0.5 to 0.77 g fiber, 81 to 96 mg calcium, 0.5 to 1.7 mg iron, 3.2 to 5.7 mg vitamin C, 0.07 to 0.14 mg vitamin B1, 1.3 to 2.3g protein, 4.2 to 6.1g carbohydrates, 42 to 59 mg phosphorus and 1.8 to 4.1 g glucose. Some species also have significant amounts of vitamin A and amino acids. Some species produce bitter bamboo shoots. The traditional way of removing the undesirable taste is soaking them in limewater for three to five days. Bamboo vegetable is one of the most favorite dishes in Chinese dinner table. With the popularity of Chinese restaurants, people in areas where Chinese communities are prevalent want quality bamboo shoots---both fresh and canned. There are a lot of recipes available for cooking bamboo shoots.

Bamboo foliage is of the food value for cattle and other livestock. The Japanese and Chinese have utilized bamboo leaves as animal feed for hundreds of years during scarcity. Young leaves and twigs are a delicious meal for elephants and pandas. Chinese people use big bamboo leaves to make zongzi--- pyramid-shaped dumpling made of glutinous rice in bamboo leaves that are usually eaten during the Dragon Boat Festival.