**Radishes**

****The word **“radish”** is derived from radix, the Latin word for “root”. Scientifically known as Raphanus sativus, radishes are one of the oldest known harvested vegetables, possibly dating back to prehistoric times in Europe or western Asia. They arrived in Northern America in the early 1600s are now available in many different shapes, sizes and colors.

**Selection:** Red radishes are available in grocery stores year round however they are the most flavorful and of the highest quality from April to June, when they are in season. Other varieties including: French breakfast, watermelon, purple daikon, icicle, and Spanish black radishes are typically available at specialty grocers or farmers markets. When choosing radishes, look for those that are firm, un-cracked and vibrantly colored. Avoid any radishes that looked faded, wrinkled/cracked, or feel soft. If the leaves are attached, they should be a bright green and never wilted.

**Storage:** Radishes will keep well for about a week in the refrigerator crisper drawer, loosely wrapped in plastic. Always wash them right before you use them and trim the greens within an inch of the stem before refrigerating. If your radishes have gone soft in the refrigerator, soak them in ice water for 30 to 60 minutes before using.

**Nutrients/nutrition:** On average, a 1 cup serving of raw radishes has fewer than 20 calories, 4 grams of carbohydrate and nearly 1 gram of protein. They are an excellent source of vitamin C, providing about 28% of your daily value, as well as 8% of the daily value of potassium and 7% of the daily value of folate. They are also considered a low-FODMAP food and one of the most hydrating vegetables with more than a 95% water content. The brightly colored varieties also contain antioxidant properties which help decrease inflammation and cancerous tumor growth while helping to protect from heart disease.

**Preparation:** Younger and smaller radishes tend to be sweeter and have a more tender flesh; older and bigger radishes can mean the radish has dried out or become woody. After washing, most radishes are ready to eat. They add a nice pop of color to salads or sandwiches while adding a subtle peppery bite. Cooking radishes brings out their sweetness while masking their peppery/spicy flavor. Cooking the radishes also changes the texture from a crisp bite to a softness that is similar to a cooked carrot. Sauté or roast radishes and add them into your favorite pasta, rice, or grilled mixed vegetable dish. Radish greens have a similar peppery taste to mustard greens or watercress so sautéing or steaming are the common methods of preparation. They work well in salads, pesto or as a garnish.

***Eat well to be well...connect with good food!***