

# Broccoli

Broccoli is a flower—a bunch of flowers, to be exact. All those tiny little buds just haven't opened up yet. If we were to let our broccoli plants keep growing in the fields without harvesting them, they would erupt into a bouquet of tiny yellow flowers.

## Broccoli and Tofu with Peanut Sauce

Served over brown rice, this dazzling, nutty dish makes for a wonderfully tasteful, healthful, and complete meal. To drain tofu, place it on a towel, place a baking sheet on top of it, and weight the baking sheet down with a heavy pot or pan. *Angelic Organics Kitchen* (adapted from *From Asparagus to Zucchini*).

Serves 4

- 1/4 cup unsalted cashews
- 3 tablespoons peanut oil, divided
- 1 large onion, chopped (about 1 cup)
- 1 red or yellow bell pepper, chopped
- 1–2 cloves garlic, minced (1/2–1 teaspoon)
- 1/2 teaspoon dried red pepper flakes
- 1 pound herbed firm tofu, well drained, cubed
- 3 tablespoons tamari or soy sauce, divided, plus more to taste
- 1/2 cup peanut butter (preferably chunky)
- 1/2 cup vegetable or chicken stock or water
- 2 teaspoons rice wine vinegar
- 1 teaspoon toasted sesame oil
- 4 cups chopped broccoli, including peeled stalks

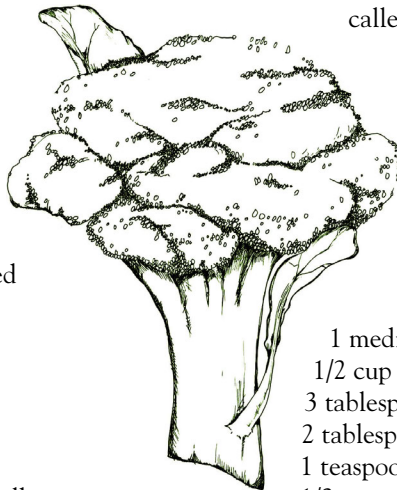
1. Toast the cashews in a dry, heavy skillet (preferably cast iron) over high heat until they start to brown in spots and become fragrant. (Be careful not to overtoast them, as they burn very quickly once toasted.) Let cool and then roughly chop.

2. Heat 2 tablespoons of the peanut oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the onion, bell pepper, garlic to taste, and pepper flakes; sauté until soft, about 5 minutes. Transfer the mixture to a bowl.

3. In the same pan, heat the remaining 1 tablespoon peanut oil over medium-high heat. Add the tofu and 1 tablespoon of the tamari; sauté until the tofu starts to brown in spots, 8 to 10 minutes. Transfer the tofu to the bowl with the onion and bell pepper mixture.

4. In the same pan, mix the peanut butter, stock, rice vinegar, and remaining 2 tablespoons tamari. Heat over medium heat, stirring, until the mixture reaches a gravy-like texture and comes to a boil. Immediately turn off the heat and stir in the tofu mixture and sesame oil. Season to taste with more tamari.

5. Place the broccoli in a steamer basket set over 1 1/2 inches boiling water and cover. Steam for 5 minutes. Transfer the broccoli to the pan with the peanut butter mixture and mix well. If necessary, heat through before serving. Garnish with toasted cashews.



## STORAGE

Wrap broccoli loosely in a plastic bag and keep it in the vegetable bin of your refrigerator for up to a week.

## HANDLING

Immediately before cooking, soak broccoli, head down, in cold, salted water (1 teaspoon salt to a 8 cups of water) for 5 minutes. Any [organic] critters will float to the top where you can rescue them or allow them to suffer a salty death. (Note: If you soak broccoli in salt water before storing, it will become too rubbery and wilted to enjoy.)

Slice the juicy, edible stems and use them wherever florets are called for. Peel particularly thick skin before using.

## Broccoli with Asian-Style Dressing

Be careful—this can be addictive. You may not want your broccoli any other way after trying this recipe. For variety, try adding matchstick-size strips of steamed carrots or daikon. *Angelic Organics Kitchen*.

Serves 2 to 4

- 1 medium head broccoli
- 1/2 cup rice wine vinegar
- 3 tablespoons peanut oil
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- 1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger
- 1/2 teaspoon minced garlic
- 1/2 teaspoon toasted sesame oil
- 1/2 teaspoon hot chili oil (optional)

1. Separate the florets from the stalk; break into smaller florets. Cut the stalk into 1-inch lengths and then into matchstick-size strips.

2. Place the broccoli in a steamer basket set over 1 1/2 inches boiling water and cover. Steam for 5 minutes. Transfer the broccoli to a bowl.

3. Combine the remaining ingredients in a small bowl; stir until well combined. Pour the dressing over the broccoli and mix well.

## The Crop

You know how some wine connoisseurs can take a sip and say, “The grapes must have experienced a dry summer along the Rhine . . .”? While picking broccoli yesterday, I mused that you shareholders have the opportunity to develop a similar weather-reading ability when you gaze at your broccoli. Now that we've picked many of the main heads from our broccoli plants, little side shoots have begun to form. These shoots grow so quickly that each shoot describes the weather in the single week that it developed. Broccoli forms tight beads in cool weather, loose beads in warm weather.

Excerpted from *Farmer John's Cookbook: The Real Dirt On Vegetables: Seasonal Recipes and Stories from a Community Supported Farm* by Farmer John Peterson & Angelic Organics (Gibbs Smith Publisher). Check with your local farm or bookstore for availability. Additional recipes, charts, individual copies of this book, and quantity discounts available at [www.AngelicOrganics.com/cookbook](http://www.AngelicOrganics.com/cookbook).

