



June 2 Secrets of the Dawning of the Age of Asparagus.MP3

Gary Crawford: [00:00:00] And now we use this great piece of music to introduce our food for today. Yes there is for example online there's a video of a father holding his baby. And whenever the man holds up a piece of asparagus this is what happens. [Baby Laughing]

Gary Crawford: [00:00:20] But besides asparagus being somehow innately funny.

Laura Popielski: [00:00:24] There are so many reasons to like asparagus.

Gary Crawford: [00:00:27] And we're going to find out a few reasons from Laura Popielski here with the Agriculture Department's Marketing Service we're here once again at the department's Farmers Market in Washington and the Vegucation tent with Laura who's the head Vegucator today. She says one reason to like asparagus of course is the nutritional content.

Laura Popielski: [00:00:43] So asparagus has vitamin C and it's good for your immune system vitamin K which is good for blood clotting and full weight which is important for expectant mothers reducing the risk of birth defects.

Gary Crawford: [00:00:55] So those are a few reasons to like asparagus. But Laura there are folks who just do not like asparagus. I mean they really don't like it.

Laura Popielski: [00:01:02] That's unfortunate they just haven't had their asparagus epiphany yet.

Gary Crawford: [00:01:06] OK a lot of people say to me asparagus doesn't have any taste to it.

Laura Popielski: [00:01:11] It's a very tasty item. It pairs very well with butter and garlic so if you do a little sautee or if you roast it with balsamic vinegar. Or grilled just a little salt and pepper.

Gary Crawford: [00:01:21] Laura says the worst thing is to overcook asparagus especially steaming it to within an inch of his life.

Laura Popielski: [00:01:26] So I'm sure you've had it as a kid where it was steamed or boiled and it was just an mush.

Gary Crawford: [00:01:31] That could turn you against asparagus forever so Laura is urging folks here to give asparagus another chance by only the very firm ones. When you get them home, stand them up straight and some water in the fridge.

Laura Popielski: [00:01:42] And that'll make them last a lot longer than if you just toss them in the fridge.

Gary Crawford: [00:01:46] And maybe up to maybe a couple of weeks. Now if you don't want to eat some will there's other things that you can do with asparagus. There's a woman in England Jemima Packington done she claims to use asparagus spears to predict the future.

Voiceover Jemima : [00:02:02] I would ask you to cast this asparagus onto a flat surface and then from the patterns that it reveals. I'd make some predictions for you.

Gary Crawford: [00:02:09] But why asparagus?

Voiceover Jemima : [00:02:11] There's something about this earthy vegetable that just picks up all

the good vibrations.

Gary Crawford: [00:02:19] OK and speaking of good vibrations if this next item doesn't bring you the asparagus epiphany nothing will.

Gary Crawford: [00:02:26] So Laura go ahead. Open up this can of worms.

Laura Popielski: [00:02:29] During the Renaissance, asparagus was thought to be an aphrodisiac.

Gary Crawford: [00:02:33] I wonder if it's really true. Research doesn't show.

Laura Popielski: [00:02:36] You may need to do some personal research.

Gary Crawford: [00:02:39] OK well if you would like to do some research on some tasty asparagus recipes go online to what's cooking USDA what's cooking USDA and type in Asparagus. This is Gary Crawford reporting for the U.S. Department of Agriculture Washington.