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# IT WORKED FOR ME

Simple DIY projects to save you money and make life on the homestead more enjoyable.

## Nettle Recipes

Nutrition-packed gems you'll want to keep close-by in the kitchen!

In this day and age of “clean and shiny” convenience shopping, nettles are probably one of the last things many people would consider eating on a regular basis. Their prickles are a decided deterrent. The good news is that the prickles do lose their “sting” when cooked. However, consider trying the pesto recipe included here, since the fresh, green leaves of nettles are extremely high in chlorophyll. Chlorophyll is rich in digestive enzymes, which can assist in the digestion of heavier foods like starches and proteins. To get the full effect, fresh is best, since cooking destroys these enzymes.

### Harvesting Nettles

When collecting nettles, be careful. There are those who falsely claim that if you grasp the nettle firmly you won't get stung. I've tried; it doesn't work. The little blighters sting you right up to the time they are cooked. Go forth with sturdy gloves and garden snips.

Greater or broadleaf plantain (*Plantago major*) is your friend if you have an encounter with nettles where you come off the worst. Scrunch up a leaf or two and pulverize it between your fingers until the juice begins to flow. Coat the affected area to obtain instant relief.

### Not-Prickly Pesto

Makes about 1½ cups

#### INGREDIENTS:

- 1 gloveful of fresh nettles
- 2 big handfuls of parsley, mint, coriander or rocket leaves
- ½ cup extra virgin olive oil
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup roasted peanuts/sunflower seeds/pumpkin seeds/almonds/cashews or pine nuts
- 1 tablespoon Parmesan or feta cheese (optional)
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 3-5 large cloves of garlic, depending on taste

**DIRECTIONS:** Put all ingredients into a food processor and thoroughly mix. You don't need to blanch the nettles beforehand, just process them well; the blades chop up the stingers, and the vinegar and oil will soften them. You can start eating the pesto immediately, but the flavors blend more the longer it sits. Not-Prickly Pesto will last for up to two months if refrigerated. Pressing the herbs down under the level of the oil will help to keep them fresh and tasty.

### Nettle Pie

Serves 5-6

#### INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups of cooked rice
- 6-7 cups of nettle tops/leaves minus stalks
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 cloves of garlic, chopped
- 1 heaping teaspoon cumin powder
- A handful of fresh herbs, finely chopped (marjoram, basil, thyme, parsley, oregano)
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 3 eggs
- Phyllo pastry, short pastry, or your own homemade version, at room temperature.
- ½ block of crumbled feta cheese and/or ½ cup of grated Parmesan cheese (optional)

**DIRECTIONS:** For filling, sauté onions and garlic in olive oil and curry powder until translucent. Take off heat and add fresh herbs. Steam nettles for 20 minutes or until tender. Cool and chop finely. Combine cooked rice, onion mixture, nettles, cheeses and eggs in a large bowl. Season to taste.

For crust, butter the bottom and sides of a 9-inch quiche or pie plate. Line dish with pastry and pour filling into base. Bake at 350 °F for about 50-60 minutes, or until lightly browned on top.—*Kristina Jensen*

**Editor's note:** If you have wise weed advice, please do send us an e-mail via [newpioneer@harrismag.com](mailto:newpioneer@harrismag.com) and include contact information.

PHOTO BY KRISTINA JENSEN

## Go Cuppow!

Cuppow has come up with two clever ways to use those mason jars languishing on the pantry shelf, waiting for next year's canning season. The first is a plastic drinking lid made to fit both regular and wide-mouth jars. Just remove the lid and screw cap, fill the jar with water or juice, insert the plastic lid and attach it with the screw cap. Presto! You have a spill-proof mug for car, tractor or field.

Cuppow's BNTO turns a Mason jar into a mini-bento box. The BNTO is a plastic cup



that fits inside a wide-mouth mason jar, turning it into a container that can hold two different kinds of food in separate compartments—dip and celery sticks, coleslaw and chicken slices, etc. You can even pack a couple of hot snacks. After filling

the bottom of the jar, fill the cup and then screw on the jar's lid and screw cap.

Both items are made from BPA/BPS-free rigid plastic. The suggested retail for each is \$8.99. For more information, visit [cuppow.com](http://cuppow.com) or call 617-702-2878.—*TNP Staff*

