

Gomashio

A condiment to be used in small amounts on cooked whole grains

1-1/2 cups sesame seeds

2 level tablespoons sea salt

1. Place sesame seeds in a bowl and cover with tap water. Pour off the seeds that float to the top. Pour the floating seeds into a fine mesh strainer.
2. Repeat covering with water and pouring off the floating seeds until almost all the seeds are in the strainer. Only a few seeds, any sand or pieces of debris should remain in the bottom of the bowl. This may be thrown away,
3. Drain the seeds in the strainer for 30 minutes. A folded towel for the strainer to rest upon will help absorb more water from the sesame seeds. If you have time, the seeds may be drained overnight. (In this case, skip step #6.)
4. Heat a heavy cast iron skillet and roast the salt until dry and loose. This releases chlorine gas. The color will turn slightly gray.
5. Place the roasted salt in a suribachi and grind to a very fine powder.
6. Place the sesame seeds in the cast iron skillet and dry roast stirring continuously for even roasting. Roast until the seeds no longer stick to the wooden spoon used for stirring them.
7. Heat a stainless steel frying pan (not cast iron) over medium high heat.
8. Cover the bottom of the pan with a single layer of sesame seeds. Place the lid on the pot. Shake the seeds in the pan in a back and forth motion similar to popping popcorn. When the seeds begin to pop, test them by crushing a few seeds between the thumb and fourth finger. If they crush easily, the seeds are done. If the seeds begin to smoke, the heat is too high. Quickly remove the pan from the stove and reduce the heat slightly. Pour the finished seeds into the suribachi. Continue roasting the rest of the seeds, one layer at a time, until all the seeds are roasted.
9. Grind the seeds in the suribachi with the sea salt until the seeds are about 2/3 to 3/4 ground. Note that it takes only a light touch to crush the seeds.
10. Serve a sprinkling on grains as a condiment. Gomashio may be successfully stored in an air-tight jar for about two weeks for maximum freshness.