



Welcome to Choose Health!

We are very excited for you to be part of this pilot program, and hope you take advantage of the many benefits of the program.

This binder is full of information on cooking basics, recipes, preservation, health tips and more. We think you'll find it both interesting and useful in your journey towards a healthier you.

We look forward to working with you through the Choose Health program and encourage you to share your thoughts and questions with us at any time!

Be well,

Your Choose Health partners



COOKING WORDS

Cooking and Heating:

<i>Term</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>Example</i>
Al dente	To cook food such as pasta so its texture is still somewhat firm, not soft or overdone.	Pasta or macaroni
Boil	To heat a liquid until bubbles break the surface (which occurs at 212 degrees F for water at sea level). A "full rolling boil" is when a liquid or mixture is boiling vigorously enough that it will continue to boil even as you stir it.	Water for preparing pasta, vegetables, cooked cereals, other
Braise	Quickly brown meat over high heat with a small amount of oil, then cook slowly (low heat) in a covered container with a small amount of liquid.	Meat in a sauce or gravy.
Broil	To cook by direct heat, usually done in an oven or broiler.	Meat, fish, or vegetables
Grill	To cook on a metal rack over hot coals	Meat or vegetables
Poach	To cook in hot liquid	Eggs
Sauté	To cook in a small amount of fat.	Vegetables
Simmer	To cook liquid at a low temperature so that bubbles rise slowly to the top.	Spaghetti sauce
Steam	To cook over a pot of boiling or simmering water in a covered pan. Food is placed in a steamer bucket or rack over the pot of hot water and is cooked by the hot steam.	Fish, vegetables, rice

Mixing Ingredients:

<i>Term</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>Example</i>
Beat	To stir quickly in a circular motion.	Eggs
Cut	To add fat to dry ingredients with a pastry blender or two knives.	Baking powder biscuits



Fold	To stir ingredients by gently turning over and over from the sides and bottom of a bowl.	Cake batter
Knead	To mix by hand using the sides and bottom of a bowl.	Baking bread
Whip	To beat ingredients such as egg whites or cream rapidly, using a form or wire whisk, incorporating air into them and increasing their volume until they are light and fluffy.	Egg whites or cream

Cutting Ingredients:

<i>Term</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>Example</i>
Grate	To grind foods and spice into small pieces.	Shredded mozzarella cheese for pizza topping
Dice	To cut with a knife into small cubed pieces.	Parmesan cheese
Mince	To cut into very small pieces.	Garlic and onion

Miscellaneous:

<i>Term</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>Example</i>
Marinate	To allow food to soak in liquid or spices to absorb flavor and tenderize. Oil, soy sauce, honey, vinegar, lemon juice, and cooking wines are the most common liquids. Onion, garlic, peppers, ginger, and spices are other common marinade ingredients.	Marinated chicken with vegetables
Thicken	Add a small amount of flour or cornstarch	Sauces, gravies
Preheat	Allow oven to heat to the desired temperature before placing food in the oven.	Baked goods



SIMPLY GOOD COOKING

MEASURING BASICS

Here is a basic guide to measuring coming ingredients:

Flour: Stir flour in the storage container or bag to fluff up. Using a large spoon, lightly spoon flour from the container into the measuring cup. Do not shake the cup and do not pack the flour. Using the back of a knife or flat blade spatula, level off the flour even with the top of the measuring cup. Don't use the measuring cup to scoop the flour out of the container. You can end up with 150% of the correct measurement if you do this! No need to sift unless recipe calls for it, but if so, sift over waxed paper, measure.

Baking powder and soda: Stir in the container to fluff and break up lumps. Using the measuring spoon, lightly scoop out of the container. Use a knife to level off even with the top edge of the measuring spoon or use the straight edge of the container.

Brown sugar: This needs to be lightly packed into the measuring cup. The sugar should retain the shape of the cup when it is dropped into the other ingredients.

Liquid ingredients: Liquids need to be measured at eye level. Using the liquid measuring cup, pour the liquid into the cup. Then bend over so you are on the same level with the measuring marks. The liquid should be right at the mark, not above or below. **Eggs** should be cracked separately into small clear bowl, checked for shell, and then poured into mixture.

Shortening and solid fats: Butter & margarine have measuring amounts marked on the sides of the paper wrapping. One quarter pound stick of butter or margarine equals $\frac{1}{2}$ cup. You can also use the liquid displacement method for measuring solid fats: For $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of shortening, fill a liquid measuring cup with $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of cold water; add shortening until the water level reaches 1 cup when you look at it at eye level. Pour out the water and use the shortening.

Liquid ingredients in spoons: Be sure not to measure small amounts of liquid ingredients over the mixing bowl. It's just too easy to spill, and you don't want 2 teaspoons of almond extract when the recipe only calls for 1 teaspoon!

Chopped ingredients: Pay close attention to whether or not an ingredient is to be chopped, diced or minced, and whether that is measured before chopping or after. Then the foods are placed in the measuring cup so the top is level with the surface. In a recipe, if listed after the food item, it is chopped after measuring; if listed before, then chop first. For ex: $\frac{1}{4}$ c. nuts, chopped vs. $\frac{1}{4}$ c. chopped nuts.



STOCK YOUR SHELVES

The foods listed below are suggestions to help you stock your shelves. Add or cross out items to meet your needs.

Breads/Cereals/Grains

Bread
Cereal
Cornmeal
Crackers
Flour
Graham crackers
Grits
Macaroni/pasta
Popcorn
Rice/wild rice
Spaghetti
Tortillas

Dairy

Cheese
Milk
Yogurt

Fruit/Vegetables

Canned vegetables & fruits
Canned tomatoes
Fruit juice
Onions
Potatoes
Tomato paste
Tomato sauce

Meats/Eggs/Legumes

Dried beans
Dried peas
Eggs
Group beef
Lentils
Peanut butter
Tuna

Seasonings

Bay leaves
Bouillon
Chili powder
Cinnamon
Italian seasoning
Onion or garlic powder
Pepper
Poultry seasoning
Sage
Salt

Other

Baking powder
Baking soda
Ketchup
Margarine
Mustard
Sugar white & brown
Vegetable oil & shortening



Handling Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Safely

Suzanne Driessen, Extension Educator — Food Safety

Reviewed 2013 by Kathy Brandt, Extension Educator — Food Safety.

Fresh produce may become contaminated with bacteria, viruses, and parasites at any point during its farm to table journey.

Wash All Fresh Produce Under Running, Drinking Water Before Peeling, Cutting or Eating

- Wash hands with hot soapy water, for at least 20 seconds, before and after handling fresh produce, or raw meat, poultry, or seafood, as well as after using the bathroom, changing diapers, or handling pets.
- Wash all fresh produce under running, drinking water before peeling, cutting or eating. The wash water temperature should be 10° F warmer than the temperature of any produce being washed to prevent thermal shock and absorption of water and bacteria to the inside cells.
- Scrubbing with a clean brush is only recommended for produce with a tough rind or peel (i.e. carrots, potatoes, cucumbers, and squash) that will not be bruised or scratched by the brush bristles.
- Throw away outer leaves of leafy vegetable like lettuces and cabbage before washing.
- Do not wash fruits and vegetables with bleach or soaps – it can absorb into the product and change the taste.
- Wax coatings are used on some produce to keep in the moisture and keep good quality. These are safe to eat or you can cut it off.



What about pesticide residues left on fruits and vegetables?

Keep in mind that the health benefits of eating fruit and vegetables outweigh the possible presence of pesticides. The FDA, USDA and EPA strictly control pesticides. If there is any pesticide residue on the fruit or vegetable, it should be under the regulations and safe to eat. A lot of the pesticides are water-soluble and will come off with water, which is another reason to wash fruit and vegetables before you eat them.

Safe Preparation

- Wash cutting boards, dishes, utensils, and counter tops with hot soapy water and sanitize after cutting fresh produce, or raw meat, poultry, or seafood. Sanitize after use with a solution of 1 teaspoon of chlorine bleach in 1 quart of water.
- Don't cross-contaminate. Use clean cutting boards and utensils when handling fresh produce. If possible, use one clean cutting board for fresh produce and a separate one for raw meat, poultry, and seafood.

Safe Storage

- Refrigerate fresh produce within two hours of peeling or cutting. Throw away leftover cut produce if left at room temperature for more than two hours.

Soaking Produce is Not Recommended

The Food and Drug Administration does not recommend soaking produce or storing it in standing water. Instead:

- Fragile items and soft fruits like strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, and blueberries can be washed using a sink sprayer. Place fruit in a colander and gently turn the fruit as you spray with water.
- If you do not have a sink sprayer, place fragile fruit in a colander and put into a stock pot of warm water. Lift the basket in and out of the water several times. Change the water and repeat until the water remains clear. Do this quickly because if the fruit absorbs too much water, it will lose flavor, texture and its aroma. Be sure to rinse fruit with fresh water after washing it.

Is it necessary to dry produce after washing it?

Drying produce with a paper towel may further reduce bacteria that may be present. Drying is not necessary for items that will be cooked. Greens like spinach, chard, kale and collards should be cooked wet as drying them may affect the quality of the cooked product.



Cleaning Products for Produce: To use or not to use that is the question?

- Fruit and vegetables are very absorbent and will absorb any detergent or bleach used to wash them. Detergent was not made to be eaten and is not approved for use on food by the Food and Drug Administration.
- While chlorine bleach is used in commercial produce processing facilities, it is not recommended for home or food service use. If too much is used, it can be toxic (poisonous). It can also be absorbed into the product and change the flavor.
- Sprays or solutions available to clean produce do remove dirt, but do not remove unwanted bacteria. If a spray or product says it is antibacterial, the Environmental Protection Agency considers this a pesticide. None of these vegetable products are registered with EPA.

What about washing produce with baking soda, vinegar or produce washes?

- Baking soda contains sodium which may affect the flavor of the produce. The strength of baking soda and water mixtures affects its cleaning ability.
- Vinegar may leave an aftertaste.
- Many produce washes include surfactants, which are cleaning agents. They work by attaching to oil and dirt and loosen water-resistant substances like wax. To use on food they need to be registered with the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency). For the average consumer research has shown that washing produce with tap water is just as effective as washing produce with any produce wash solutions that are on the market.

Do you need to wash sealed in bags?

- Leafy green salads in sealed bags labeled "washed", "triple washed", or "ready-to-eat" do not need additional washing at the time of use unless specially directed on the label.
- Additional washing of ready-to-eat leafy green salads is not likely to increase safety. The risk of cross-contamination from you and food contact surfaces used during washing outweigh any safety benefits.



© 2014 Regents of the University of Minnesota. All rights reserved. University of Minnesota Extension is an equal opportunity educator and employer. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this material is available in alternative formats upon request. Direct requests to 612-626-6602.

♻️ Printed on recycled and recyclable paper with at least 10 percent postconsumer waste material. This material is funded in part by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). SNAP provides nutrition assistance to people with low income.

SIMPLY GOOD COOKING

Kitchen Jobs by Age

Babies – Although babies can't help with the cooking, they enjoy being with their parent or caregiver and experiencing the sights, sounds and smells of the kitchen.

Talk to them about what you're doing as you move around the kitchen. Tell them about the foods you're preparing and the utensils you're using.

Leave babies in their highchair or another safe place, even after they begin to crawl. Give them a separate bowl and spoon and let them mix foods that are safe for them to eat.

Age 2 – Two-year-olds are learning to use the large muscles in their arms and can help with these activities:

- Wiping table tops
- Moving premeasured ingredients from one place to another
- Playing with utensils
- Snapping fresh green beans
- Breaking cauliflower or bread for stuffing
- Rinsing and tearing lettuce and salad greens
- Scrubbing and dipping vegetables and fruits

Age 3 – This age level is learning to use their hands and can manage all of the above plus jobs such as:

- Pouring liquids into a batter
- Mixing ingredients such as muffin batter (use an extra large bowl to contain the mess)
- Shaking a milk drink in a covered container (over the sink in case it drips)
- Spreading soft spreads, such as peanut butter on firm bread (this may be messy)
- Kneading dough and simple shaping
- Wrapping potatoes in foil for baking
- Putting trash in the garbage can (and vegetable scraps in the compost pile)





Age 4 – 5 – Kids in this age group are learning to control smaller muscles in their fingers so offer experiences such as:

- Setting the table
- Mashing soft fruits (bananas) and cooked vegetables with a fork
- Rolling bananas in cereal for a snack
- Forming round shapes with hands
- Measuring dry and liquid ingredients
- Peeling loose-skinned oranges and hard-cooked eggs
- Beating eggs with an eggbeater or whisk
- Cutting parsley, green onions or dried fruits with blunt – end scissors
- Cutting soft items such as fruit with a blunt knife

Age 6 – 8 – This age level has mastered all of the previous jobs and is ready to learn tasks such as:

- Cleaning surfaces before and after use
- Gathering utensils and ingredients
- Light chopping
- Greasing or spraying baking pans
- Peeling onions and garlic
- Grating cheese
- Opening cans
- Washing fruits and vegetables
- Advanced measuring (measuring liquids and spooning dry ingredients into measuring cup and leveling off)
- Kneading dough
- Breaking eggs
- Melting butter
- Crushing crackers in a bag with a rolling pin
- Washing dishes and putting away ingredients and utensils

Ages 9-12 – Children at this level still need adult supervision, but they can manage jobs such as,

- Planning and preparing simple meals and snacks
- Following a recipe, measuring accurately and preparing a product
- Reading and interpreting ingredient and food labels
- Operating small appliances like blenders, mini-choppers, juicers, and microwave ovens
- Moderate chopping, dicing and cutting
- Sautéing and pan frying
- Steaming, boiling, broiling and baking
- Handling and storing ingredients and finished products safely

- Cleaning up, knowing how and what to hand wash or wash in the dishwasher

Teens – By adolescence, kids are making most of their own decisions about food and are capable of:

- Performing tasks that require multiple preparation steps or close timing
- Creating new flavor combinations, shapes or decoration
- Planning and preparing whole menus for meals or entertaining
- Making shopping lists and shopping for ingredients
- Helping younger children learn about food and how to prepare it
- Enjoying cooking with peers.



© 2014 Regents of the University of Minnesota. All rights reserved. University of Minnesota Extension is an equal opportunity educator and employer. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this material is available in alternative formats upon request. Direct requests to 612-626-6602.

♻️ Printed on recycled and recyclable paper with at least 10 percent postconsumer waste material. This material is funded in part by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). SNAP provides nutrition assistance to people with low income.

APPLE CABBAGE SALAD

SERVES 6



INGREDIENTS

- 2 apples, chopped into small pieces*
- ½ head cabbage, green or red, or a combination of both
- 1 or 2 carrots, peeled and grated
- 6 green onions, sliced using both white and green parts of onion
- ½ cup canola oil
- ¼ cup cider vinegar
- 1 tablespoon sugar or honey
- ½ teaspoon salt
- Pepper to taste
- ½ cup of walnuts, optional
- ½ cup dried cranberries, optional

DIRECTIONS

1. Whisk together oil, vinegar, sugar, salt and pepper to make dressing. Set aside
2. Slice cabbage very thinly
3. Chop green onions
4. Peel and grate carrots
5. Core and chop apples, leaving peel on.
6. Toss chopped fruits and vegetables in a bowl, adding nuts and dried cranberries, if using.
7. Pour dressing over salad and toss so that dressing is distributed evenly.



TIP

*If chopped apples are not going into dressing immediately, squeeze or pour a little lemon juice (about 1 tablespoon) over them. This will prevent the apples from turning brown. The lemon juice will only enhance the flavor of the salad.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT SIMPLY GOOD EATING, VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT www.extension.umn.edu/nutrition

SIMPLY GOOD EATING

www.extension.umn.edu/Nutrition

 UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA | EXTENSION



Viva Asparagus

Enjoy asparagus as often as possible in the spring and early summer – it is quick to cook and simple seasonings can really enhance the flavor. The most important thing to remember when cooking asparagus is to not overcook it.

General Instructions

- Select asparagus with firm, sturdy stalks with tight heads. Cut ends should not be dry or woody.
- Wrap cut ends in a damp paper towel and put in moisture-proof wrapping. Eat fresh asparagus as soon as possible, but it can be refrigerated for 2 – 3 days.
- Rinse thoroughly with cold water when ready to use.
- To trim, snap off stem ends. Stalks will naturally break where the woody part ends and tender part begins. Or, for fat stalks, peel bottom 1/3 of stalk with vegetable peeler to remove tough skin.
- Steam, microwave, roast, or grill (see below).
- Do not overcook! Asparagus should be tender but maintain a crunch. Use the “bite test” to best determine when it’s done.
- If you plan to serve asparagus cold or add it to a salad, shock in ice water after cooking to stop cooking process. Drain and chill immediately. Refrigerate for up to two days.

Cooking Instructions

Steamed Asparagus:

- Wash and trim asparagus.
- Bring an inch of water to a boil in a pan with a steamer insert in the bottom.
- Cover pan. Steam just until the thickest stalks can be pierced with a sharp knife.
- This takes about 2 – 5 minutes depending on the thickness of the stalks.
- Season (see suggestions below) and serve immediately.



Microwaved Asparagus:

- Lay asparagus on microwave-proof plate or shallow dish with about 2 Tablespoons water; cover with lid or plate.
- Microwave on high for 2 – 3 minutes, shake the container, and continue to microwave at 1 – minute intervals or just until thickest stalks can be pierced with a knife (or use the bite-test).
- Season (see suggestions below) and serve immediately.

Roasted Asparagus:

- Pre-heat oven to 400 degrees.
- Line baking sheet with foil if desired.
- Lay asparagus in a single layer on baking sheet and sprinkle with olive oil, salt and pepper. Toss with hands until evenly coated.
- Roast for 5 – 10 minutes, or just until the thickest stalks can be pierced with a knife (or use the bite-test).
- Season (see suggestions below) and serve immediately.

Grilled Asparagus:

- Best cooking method in the summer since it keeps the heat out of the kitchen and adds a wonderful flavor.
- Arrange in rows on wooden or metal skewers if desired. Brush with olive oil.
- Grill on hot grill, turning once or twice, just until the thickest stalks can be pierced with a sharp knife (or use the bite-test). This takes about 2 – 5 minutes, depending on the size of the stalks and the temperature of the grill.

Seasoning Suggestions:

- Asparagus with Soy Sauce and Green Onions
- Asparagus with Sesame Oil and Sesame Seeds
- Asparagus with Parmesan Cheese
- Asparagus with Lemon Juice

Note: You can expect a change in odor and color of your urine when you eat asparagus. It is normal and temporary.



Rhubarb

You know that summer is on its way in Minnesota when the rhubarb stalks are large enough to gather. This tart stalk, colored deep red and topped with broad, bright-green leaves, grows in backyards and around farm buildings without much attention. The plants can usually be ignored until it is time to pick a few stalks for sauce, a springtime treat, or a tart rhubarb pie. The brightly colored stalks can be found in supermarkets as well as in farmer's markets during the season. Some children even like to chew the stalks freshly picked.

Nutrition Information

Rhubarb, a spring tonic for vitamin C and calcium, is an easy and versatile fruit to use, although it provides only a moderate source of fiber. One of the drawbacks is that because it is so tart, most recipes call for more sugar than most other desserts. As with other fruits, 1/2 cup cooked rhubarb is considered a serving. A serving without sugar is only 29 calories, but with sugar it is 139 calories. By combining the stalks with sweeter fruits, like strawberries, the sugar content can be lowered quite a bit.

Selection

Choose stalks that are well-colored, good-sized, straight, and firm. Sometimes, rhubarb is sold with the leaves attached; they should be fresh-looking and crisp. Avoid stalks that are wilted or flabby.

Storage

After cutting off the leaves, wash the stalks. Store them in a plastic bag in the crisper of the refrigerator. Use within one week. (Caution: Rhubarb leaves contain a toxic substance that makes them poisonous. Be sure the leaves are removed before using the stalks. Discard them without cooking or eating.)

Preparation

Before cooking, trim stalks at the top and bottom. Trim any bruised spots. Wash stalks. For sauces or stewing, cut the rhubarb into one- to two-inch chunks. If the stalks are fresh, the fibers can be cut easily and will soften when cooked.



The two popular cooking methods include baking and stewing for sauces. Rhubarb sauce is made by placing the cut pieces in a saucepan. A stainless steel or Teflon™-coated pan is preferred. Rhubarb is highly acidic and may react to some metals such as aluminum. Add 2/3 cup of water to the pan, and bring to a boil. Add 4 cups of cut rhubarb (six to eight stalks). Reduce heat, and simmer over low heat for about five minutes, or until rhubarb is tender. Add sugar to taste; between 3/4 and one cup is sufficiently sweet for most people. If you like less sugar, start with a smaller amount and taste-test the fruit before serving. Cold rhubarb sauce will not taste as sweet.

Freeze rhubarb by cutting in 1/2 inch chunks and put in freezer bags.

Rhubarb-Strawberry Topping

Serves 5 (1/3-cup servings)

4 cups rhubarb, cut in one inch chunks
1/2 cup sugar
1/3 cup water
2 1/2 teaspoons cornstarch
1 tablespoon water
3 cups strawberries, sliced
1 teaspoon vanilla flavoring

Combine first three ingredients in a medium saucepan, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer uncovered for 5 minutes or until the rhubarb is tender. Combine 1 tablespoon water and cornstarch; stir well, and add to rhubarb mixture. Bring to a boil, stir constantly, and cook 1 minute or until thickened. Remove from heat; stir in strawberries and vanilla. Serve warm or chilled over custard, low-fat ice cream, or angel food cake.

1 serving = 130 calories & 31.6 total carbohydrates

ASPARAGUS & BASIL FRITTATA

SERVINGS: 6



INGREDIENTS

- 2 Tablespoons olive oil
- ½ cup finely diced onion
- 4 cloves of garlic, minced or ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- 10-12 asparagus spears, trimmed and cut into 1 inch pieces (about 3 cups)
- ½ cup basil (julienned)
- 8 eggs, lightly beaten
- ½ cup freshly grated parmesan cheese, or other cheese that you prefer
- Salt and pepper

DIRECTIONS

1. Heat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Heat oil in an oven-safe skillet and sauté onions and garlic for 1 minute on medium-low heat. Add asparagus, sauté for 30 seconds and then add basil. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
3. Mix eggs and cheese together and briefly mix with the asparagus. Place in oven for 8-10 minutes or until done.
4. Remove skillet from oven and run a knife around the edges of frittata. Place plate on skillet and invert frittata onto plate. Garnish with basil.
5. Cut into wedges and serve.



Tips & Variations

A frittata can be made with leftover vegetables, potatoes or rice (wild rice is especially good). Try substituting the asparagus for kale, Swiss chard, spinach or broccoli. Add leftover meat, seafood or poultry. Try different cheeses.

Fillings should be cooked and not raw prior to adding the eggs. The filling should be cut fairly small and well-drained.

For fewer or more servings adjust the filling, seasonings and pan size accordingly. For 2 eggs use a 6-inch pan; for 6 eggs an 8-inch pan and for 8 eggs an 8-10-inch pan. Be sure the pan is oven safe. If it has a plastic handle, wrap the handle well with aluminum foil prior to putting in the oven.

Recipe adapted from incredibleegg.org



CHICKEN & PAK CHOI STIR FRY

SERVINGS: 4



INGREDIENTS

- 1 package ramen noodles, throw out seasoning packet
- 2 cups cooked chicken, chopped or shredded
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 red bell pepper, chopped
- 6 cups Pak Choi, coarsely chopped
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder, optional
- 2 Tablespoons soy sauce
- 1 Tablespoon olive oil

DIRECTIONS

1. Begin by boiling 2 cups of water in a sauce pan. Add ramen noodles and cook for three minutes. Remove from heat, drain and set aside.
2. Meanwhile, bring a wok or large frying pan to medium high heat. Add olive oil. Then add the onion and bell pepper, and cook until the onion is translucent (about a minute or two).
3. Add cooked chicken, ramen noodles, Pak Choi, garlic, ginger and soy sauce. Cook another few minutes until the chicken has heated through and the Pak Choi has wilted. Don't overcook.
4. Remove from heat and serve.



Pak Choi

Pak Choi is a tasty and versatile vegetable from the East. This tender and sweet green can be used in stir-fries, as a salad green or added to soups and stews. The whole plant is edible. Chop up the stems to use in coleslaw or to add to a salad.

PAK CHOI & RAMEN NOODLE SALAD



INGREDIENTS

- Pak Choi, torn into bite sized pieces
- 1 package ramen noodles, crumbled, throw out seasoning packet
- 1 bunch green onions, chopped
- ¼ cup sunflower seeds, more or less to taste
- ¼ cup slivered almonds, more or less to taste
- 2 Tablespoons soy sauce
- 3-4 Tablespoons white vinegar
- 2 Tablespoons sugar
- 1/3 cup olive oil

DIRECTIONS

1. Toast sunflower seeds and almonds in a little olive oil until lightly browned, stirring to prevent burning. Place on a paper towel.
2. In a large salad bowl combine Pak Choi, ramen noodles, green onions, sunflower seeds and almonds.
3. In a small bowl, prepare the dressing by mixing soy sauce, white vinegar, sugar and olive oil together.
4. Pour dressing over salad. Toss and serve immediately. Enjoy!



Tip

If you want some leftovers, it is best to keep the dressing separate because the salad can get soggy over time.

What to do with English Peas

English peas — also known as shell peas and garden peas — enjoy a short-lived season during late Spring and early Summer, and are at their best in May. For peas that are sweet and crisp, start by looking for shiny, firm, brightly colored pods that feel swollen and heavy. When cooking with English peas, buy much more than you think you will need, as one pound of peas will only equate roughly one cup of shelled peas. While it's ideal to eat garden peas as soon as they're picked, they can keep for up to three days when wrapped tightly and placed in the coolest part of the refrigerator.



Unlike sugar snap peas or snow peas, the fibrous pods of English peas cannot be eaten (although they can be used to enhance the flavor of vegetable stock). Shell English peas immediately before they're to be cooked: Break off the stem and pull the fibrous string down the length of the pod. Press each pod between your thumbs and forefingers to open, pushing out the individual peas. Rinse and drain the peas, discarding pods, stems, and strings. Prepare them in a multitude of ways:

- Boil peas in 1/4 inch of simmering water for 3 to 4 minutes until crisp and tender, then toss into your favorite warm pasta.
- Dress them up the Michelle Obama way: with leek, shallot, and lemon for [a light and bright salad](#).
- Make a delicious [pasta salad](#).
- Add variety to a springtime salad by tossing in a handful of just-boiled peas.

Source: [Shutterstock](#)

GREEN BEAN SALAD

Serves 6



Ingredients

- 1 ½ pounds trimmed green beans, cut into 2-3 inch long pieces
- 1-2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 Tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 4 Tablespoons olive oil
- ¾ cup chopped fresh basil leaves
- ¾ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese (about 1 ½ ounces)
- Salt and pepper to taste



TIPS

Blanch: This term means to plunge foods into boiling water for a few seconds or a few minutes, then remove and place in ice water. This process sets the color of vegetables and lets you easily peel fruits or slip the skins off nuts. The food does not cook all the way through, so crisp texture is preserved.

Directions

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. While the water is heating up, prepare a large bowl of ice water (you will add the beans to the ice water after they have been in the boiling water for 2 minutes).
2. Add the green beans to the boiling water and blanch for about 2 minutes, until the beans are just barely cooked through, but still crisp. Younger beans take less time to cook than older beans.
3. When the beans are ready, remove from the boiling water with a slotted spoon and place directly into the ice water to stop the cooking. Drain the green beans.
4. Add the garlic, basil, dressing and Parmesan cheese to the beans. Toss to combine. Season to taste with salt and pepper.
5. Chill until ready to serve.

SIMPLY GOOD EATING

www.extension.umn.edu/Nutrition

 UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA | EXTENSION

© 2011 Regents of the University of Minnesota. All rights reserved. University of Minnesota Extension is an equal opportunity educator and employer. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this material is available in alternative formats upon request. Direct requests to 612-625-8260.

♻️ Printed on recycled and recyclable paper with at least 10 percent postconsumer waste material.

LEMON VINAIGRETTE



Ingredients

- 1 teaspoon grated lemon peel
- 2 Tablespoons minced fresh basil
- 2 Tablespoons minced fresh parsley
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon black pepper
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup olive oil
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup lemon juice (freshly squeezed)
- 1 Tablespoon red wine vinegar

Directions

Whisk together all ingredients.

Makes about $\frac{3}{4}$ cup

Use this Dressing to Make Lemon Vinaigrette Potato Salad

Ingredients

- 2 pounds red potatoes, scrubbed and peeled if needed
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup finely chopped red onion
- Lemon Vinaigrette Dressing

Directions

Place scrubbed potatoes in a large pot of cold water. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat. Simmer, covered, for about 30 minutes, or until potatoes are just getting tender. Test with a fork. Do not overcook.

While potatoes are cooking, chop the onion and prepare dressing.

When the potatoes are tender, remove from heat and drain. Rinse quickly with cool water. When potatoes are cool enough to touch, chop into 1 inch cubes. Add onions and pour dressing over. The warm potatoes will soak up the dressing nicely. Serve warm or chilled.



VARIATIONS

Chop potatoes into 1-inch cubes before cooking. Reduce cooking time to 10 or 15 minutes.

Add dill instead of basil.

SIMPLY GOOD EATING

www.extension.umn.edu/Nutrition

 UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA | EXTENSION

© 2011 Regents of the University of Minnesota. All rights reserved. University of Minnesota Extension is an equal opportunity educator and employer. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this material is available in alternative formats upon request. Direct requests to 612-625-8260.

♻️ Printed on recycled and recyclable paper with at least 10 percent postconsumer waste material.

MAKE YOUR OWN SALAD DRESSINGS



Homemade vinaigrettes are less expensive and a flavorful option for salad dressings. Canola oil is a good source of unsaturated fat and less expensive than other oils!

BUTTERMILK DRESSING

Ingredients

½ cup buttermilk

¼ cup reduced fat mayonnaise or low-fat sour cream

2 Tablespoons cider or white wine vinegar

1 or 2 cloves minced garlic (or ¼ teaspoon garlic powder)

½ teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon pepper

1/3 cup chopped fresh herbs, like chives, dill, basil and parsley

Directions

1. Whisk buttermilk, mayo or sour cream, vinegar, garlic, salt and pepper in a small bowl until smooth. Stir.

Makes 1 cup

BASIC VINAIGRETTE

Ingredients

½ cup canola oil

¼ cup cider vinegar

1 Tablespoon sugar or honey

½ teaspoon salt

Pepper to taste

Directions

1. Whisk together all ingredients.

Makes about ¾ cup



TIPS & VARIATIONS

Use Buttermilk Dressing as a salad dressing or a dipping sauce!

You can make variations to your vinaigrette by adding ingredients:

Fresh Dill
Fresh Basil
Fresh Parsley
Fresh Mint

Mash up some fresh or frozen fruit (strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, peach, etc.)

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT SIMPLY GOOD EATING, VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT www.extension.umn.edu/nutrition

SIMPLY GOOD EATING

www.extension.umn.edu/Nutrition

 UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA | EXTENSION

BALKAN CUCUMBER SALAD

Serves 6



A delicious, refreshing, very easy salad made without oil!

Ingredients

- ½ cup very thinly sliced red onion (other types are fine also)
- 4 medium cucumbers (6 to 7 inches long)
- 1 teaspoon salt
- Freshly ground pepper
- 1 ½ cups yogurt
- 1 or 2 small cloves garlic
- 1 to 2 teaspoons honey
- 2 Tablespoons freshly minced mint leaves
- ¼ cup packed finely minced parsley
- 1 to 2 Tablespoons freshly minced dill or 1 to 2 teaspoons dry
- 1 cup chopped walnuts, lightly toasted
- Other herbs: basil/cilantro (optional)

Directions

1. Soak the onions in cold water while you prepare everything else. Drain thoroughly and pat dry before adding to salad.
2. Cut cucumbers into thin rounds (remove seeds if desired). Place them in a medium bowl.
3. Add remaining ingredients except walnuts, and mix well. Cover and refrigerate until serving time.
4. Sprinkle with walnuts just before serving.

Recipe from "Moosewood Cookbook" by Mollie Katzan



TIPS & VARIATIONS

Balkan Cucumber Salad

- Use other herbs as they are available and experiment with new flavors
- Replace walnuts with any other nut you may prefer.
- Use maple syrup in place of honey
- If cucumbers are waxy, it is preferable to peel them first

To reduce bitterness in cucumbers, cut off the vine end and rub on cut end until bubbles cease. Rinse well, then chop as desired.

Visit the website for more recipes: www.extension.umn.edu/nutrition

SIMPLY GOOD EATING

www.extension.umn.edu/Nutrition

 UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA | EXTENSION

BLUEBERRIES



BLUEBERRY BREAKFAST PARFAIT

Ingredients

- 2 cans chopped pineapple, canned
- 1 cup frozen blueberries
- 1 cup non-fat yogurt (any flavor)
- 1 sliced banana
- 1/3 cup raisins
- 1 cup granola

Directions

1. In glasses or bowls, layer pineapple, berries, yogurt, banana and raisins with granola or other crunchy whole grain cereal.

Serves 4

Nutritional Info per Serving: Calories: 190; Fat: 1g; Saturated Fat: 0.5g; Trans Fat: 0g; Cholesterol: 5mg; Carbohydrates: 44g; Dietary Fiber: 3g; Protein: 4g; Sodium: 40mg; Vitamin A: 2%; Calcium: 15%; Vitamin C: 45%; Iron: 6%



Tip

Freeze your fresh blueberries if you do not have a chance to eat them right away.

BLUEBERRY SMOOTHIE

Ingredients

- 1 cup of non-fat vanilla yogurt
- 1 medium banana
- ¼ cup frozen blueberries

Directions

1. Place yogurt, banana and frozen berries in a food processor or blender and blend until smooth.

Serves 2

Nutritional Info per Serving: Calories: 161; Fat: 2.3g; Saturated Fat: 1.3g; Trans Fat: 0g; Cholesterol: 7mg; Carbohydrates: 30g; Dietary Fiber: 2.8g; Protein: 4g; Sodium: 87mg; Vitamin A: 3%; Calcium: 23%; Vitamin C: 19%; Iron: 2%

SIMPLY GOOD EATING

www.extension.umn.edu/Nutrition

 UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA | EXTENSION

Cabbage and Hamburger Casserole

Serves 9



Ingredients

- Nonstick cooking spray
- ½ pound ground beef
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 1 head (2 pounds) cabbage, chopped (8 cups)
- 1 can (10 ¾-ounces) condensed tomato soup

Equipment

- Medium fry pan
- Sharp knife
- Cutting board
- Measuring spoons
- Large baking dish with lid
- Medium bowl
- Can opener

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
2. Spray baking dish with nonstick cooking spray.
3. Brown ground beef in fry pan. Drain fat. Add onion and cook until golden brown. Sprinkle with pepper.
4. Put half of cabbage in baking dish. Add browned meat and onion.
5. Add rest of cabbage. Pour soup (undiluted) over top of mixture.
6. Cover and bake 1 hour.
7. Serve. Refrigerate leftovers.

Preparation time: 30 minutes

Bake time: 1 hour

Nutritional Info per Serving: Calories: 130; Fat: 6g; Sodium: 380mg; Fiber: 3g;
Excellent source of Vitamin C



BRIGHT IDEAS

- Add garlic for more flavor
- Add brown sugar for some sweetness
- Use shredded or cubed beef instead of ground beef

MENU IDEAS

- Cabbage and Hamburger Casserole
- Corn bread
- Fruit gelatin
- Milk

This recipe is currently being revised. For more information on the Simply Good Eating curriculum, visit

www.extension.umn.edu/distribution/nutrition/DJ8020.html

SIMPLY GOOD EATING

www.extension.umn.edu/Nutrition

 UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA | EXTENSION

© 2011 Regents of the University of Minnesota. All rights reserved. University of Minnesota Extension is an equal opportunity educator and employer. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this material is available in alternative formats upon request. Direct requests to 612-625-8260.

♻️ Printed on recycled and recyclable paper with at least 10 percent postconsumer waste material.

CHICKEN & VEGGIES with TOMATO-BASIL DRESSING

Serves 4



INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup chopped fresh tomatoes
- 1 Tablespoon red wine vinegar
- 5 sprigs basil
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 pound boneless, skinless chicken breast
- 2 red or yellow bell peppers, quartered lengthwise
- ½ pound small zucchinis, quartered lengthwise
- 1 bunch scallions, trimmed

DIRECTIONS

1. Combine the tomatoes, vinegar, basil, salt and oil in a blender or food processor. Process into a smooth dressing. Transfer to a large bowl.
2. Put the chicken into a zip-lock bag and pound to ½ thickness. On a hot, clean grill, grill the chicken for 3-5 minutes per side, and the peppers, zucchini and scallions until well marked and tender-crisp (3-8 minutes). Remove to a cutting board.
3. Cut the chicken and vegetables into bite-sized pieces and toss with the dressing.

Nutritional Info per Serving: Calories: 300; Total Fat: 17g; Saturated Fat: 2.5g; Sodium: 380mg; Carbohydrate: 9g; Fiber: 3g; Protein: 27g;



Tip

No grill? No problem! Just sauté the chicken and vegetables.

Recipe courtesy of NutritionAction.com



CHOPPED SALAD

Serves 8



Preparation time: 30 minutes

Ingredients

- 1 clove garlic, peeled and minced
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 2 Tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil or canola oil
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
- 1 large-sized head romaine lettuce, washed and dried
- 4 carrots, peeled
- 4 celery stalks
- ½ small red onion, skin removed
- 1 cucumber, peeled
- 4 plum tomatoes, halved widthwise, cored and seeded
- 1 can garbanzo beans (chickpeas), drained, rinsed and dried

Directions

1. To prepare dressing, whisk together garlic, Dijon mustard, red wine vinegar and oil until combined. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Refrigerate until ready to serve the salad.
2. To prepare salad: Wash vegetables. Chop lettuce and vegetables to desired size. When ready to serve, toss all vegetable ingredients together.
3. Drizzle salad mixture with dressing, one spoonful at a time, making sure not to over-dress.



Tips & Variations

For quick preparation roll romaine lettuce leaves together and chop with a chef's knife.

Older children can practice chopping celery and cucumbers during salad preparation.

SIMPLY GOOD EATING

www.extension.umn.edu/Nutrition

 UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA | EXTENSION

© 2011 Regents of the University of Minnesota. All rights reserved. University of Minnesota Extension is an equal opportunity educator and employer. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this material is available in alternative formats upon request. Direct requests to 612-625-8260.

♻️ Printed on recycled and recyclable paper with at least 10 percent postconsumer waste material.

GREEK SALAD



INGREDIENTS

DRESSING:

2 Tablespoons dried oregano	¼ cup vinegar
1 cup olive oil	2 Tablespoons lemon juice
2 large cloves garlic, mashed	Salt
Freshly ground black pepper	

SALAD:

2 teaspoons salt
1 medium red onion, halved and thinly sliced
8-10 cherry tomatoes, halved
1 cucumber, peeled and cut into chunks
¼ cup chopped basil
½ cup pitted and halved Kalamata olives, optional
2 Tablespoons chopped parsley
6 ounces feta cheese, crumbled
6 lemon wedges

DIRECTIONS

For Dressing:

1. Combine all the ingredients in a jar, shake well and let stand for 30 minutes.

Makes 1 ¼ cups

For Salad:

1. In a bowl combine salt with 2 cups water and add the red onion slices. Let the onions soak for 15 minutes, then rinse and drain well.
2. In a large bowl toss the tomatoes, cucumbers, basil and enough of the dressing to coat vegetables well. Adjust the seasonings. Garnish with olives, parsley, feta and lemon wedges and serve.



Tip

Leftover dressing can be stored in the refrigerator for up to five days.

KALE & RED CABBAGE SALAD

Serves 4-6



Ingredients

- 1 ½ cups kale, finely chopped
- 1 ½ cups red cabbage, finely chopped
- 1 ½ cups carrots, finely chopped
- Variation: try adding some finely chopped kohlrabi

Dijon Dressing:

- ¼ cup olive oil
- 3 Tablespoons lemon juice
- 2 Tablespoons honey
- 1 teaspoon Dijon-style mustard
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- ½ teaspoon salt
- Pinch of black pepper

Directions

1. Wash vegetables. Remove stem from kale. Core cabbage. Peel carrots.
2. Chop vegetables very finely. You can also shred them.
3. Combine dressing ingredients and whisk together. Add to chopped vegetables.



VARIATION

For a salad with Asian flavors, try this dressing:

Sesame Ginger Dressing

- ¼ cup olive oil
- 3 Tablespoons lemon juice
- 2 Tablespoons honey
- 1 Tablespoon soy sauce
- ¼ teaspoon dark sesame oil
- ¼ teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- ¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes (optional)

SIMPLY GOOD EATING

www.extension.umn.edu/Nutrition

 UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA | EXTENSION

© 2011 Regents of the University of Minnesota. All rights reserved. University of Minnesota Extension is an equal opportunity educator and employer. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this material is available in alternative formats upon request. Direct requests to 612-625-8260.

♻️ Printed on recycled and recyclable paper with at least 10 percent postconsumer waste material.

KALE & WILD RICE SALAD

Serves 4



Ingredients

- 1 cup cooked & cooled wild rice or brown rice
- 3 Tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 garlic clove, minced or ¼ teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon mustard
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 4 cups kale, torn into pieces
- ½ cup shredded carrots
- ½ cup shredded red or green cabbage
- 2 Tablespoons dried cranberries or raisins or raisins

Directions

1. Make the dressing: Combine minced garlic clove, lemon juice and mustard in a bowl. Slowly whisk in the olive oil. Whisk for a few moments until the dressing comes together. Season with a pinch of salt and pepper. Set aside.
2. In a large salad bowl combine the kale, carrots, cabbage and cranberries.
3. Toss well with the dressing and let sit for 10 minutes.
4. Add the wild rice and toss once more.



Nutritional Info per Serving

Calories: 190
Calories from fat: 100
Total fat: 11g
Saturated fat: 1.5g
Cholesterol: 0g
Sodium: 70mg
Total carbohydrates: 21g
Dietary fiber: 3g
Sugars: 6g
Protein: 5g

Vitamin A: 187% DV
Vitamin C: 152%
Calcium: 11%
Iron: 8%

SIMPLY GOOD EATING

www.extension.umn.edu/Nutrition

 UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA | EXTENSION

© 2011 Regents of the University of Minnesota. All rights reserved. University of Minnesota Extension is an equal opportunity educator and employer. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this material is available in alternative formats upon request. Direct requests to 612-625-8260.

♻️ Printed on recycled and recyclable paper with at least 10 percent postconsumer waste material.

KOHLRABI SAUTE

Serves 4



Ingredients

4 medium kohlrabies (about 1 ½ pounds without leaves, 2 pounds with leaves)

2 teaspoons olive oil

1 teaspoon minced, fresh ginger or ¼ teaspoon powdered ginger

2 Tablespoons chopped shallot or onion

1/8 teaspoon salt

1/8 teaspoon pepper

Directions

1. Remove kohlrabi leaves if present and save for another use.
2. Peel kohlrabi globes and shred or julienne.*
3. Heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat.
4. Toss kohlrabi with ginger and shallots and heat until tender-crisp, 3-5 minutes
5. Sprinkle with salt and pepper and serve hot.

**Julienne means to cut food into short, thin strips.*

Recipe courtesy of Fruits and Veggies-More Matters ®

www.FruitsAndVeggiesMoreMatters.org

Nutritional Info per Serving: Calories: 55; Fat: 2.4g; Sodium: 96mg; Protein: 2g



SIMPLY GOOD EATING

www.extension.umn.edu/Nutrition

 UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA | EXTENSION

© 2011 Regents of the University of Minnesota. All rights reserved. University of Minnesota Extension is an equal opportunity educator and employer. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this material is available in alternative formats upon request. Direct requests to 612-625-8260.

♻️ Printed on recycled and recyclable paper with at least 10 percent postconsumer waste material.

GREEN BEANS



LEMON GREEN BEANS

INGREDIENTS

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 pound green beans, trimmed | 1 Tablespoon olive oil |
| 1 Tablespoon lemon juice | 1 teaspoon grainy mustard |
| ½ teaspoon garlic powder | ¼ teaspoon salt |
| Black pepper | |
| 2 Tablespoons fresh basil, chopped | |

DIRECTIONS

1. Put beans in a pot with enough water to submerge. Steam, covered, over medium heat for about 10 minutes.
2. In a small bowl combine remaining ingredients. Pour over cooked green beans and let sit for 5 minutes before serving.



Tip

Beans cook quickly. They store well in the refrigerator for 2-3 days.

SESAME GREEN BEANS

INGREDIENTS

- 1 pound green beans, trimmed
- 2 Tablespoons olive oil
- 1-2 Tablespoons soy sauce
- 1 Tablespoon toasted sesame oil
- 1 clove garlic, minced or ¼ teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 Tablespoon sesame seeds

DIRECTIONS

1. Heat skillet with olive oil. Add green beans, garlic and sesame oil, stir to coat. Cook 8-10 minutes until beans are bright green and crisp.
2. Add soy sauce and stir for additional 5 minutes. Add sesame seeds. Remove from heat and let sit for 5-10 minutes for flavors to combine.

SUNSHINE SALAD

Serves 6



Ingredients

5 cups spinach leaves, packed, washed and dried well
½ red onion, sliced thin
½ red pepper, sliced into strips
1 cucumber, sliced
2 oranges, peeled and chopped into bite-sized pieces,
or 1 11-ounce can of mandarin oranges, drained
1/3 cup vinaigrette dressing (“lite”, around 15 calories per
Tablespoon or less)

Directions

1. Toss first five ingredients together in a large bowl.
2. Add dressing and toss again.
3. Serve immediately.



DID YOU KNOW?

Cucumbers are 96% water!

Nutrition Benefits of Cucumbers:

- Sodium free
- Low-calorie
- Good source of vitamins C and K, and Potassium

Nutritional Info per Serving: Calories: 70; Total Fat: 0g; Cholesterol: 0mg; Sodium: 180mg; Total Carbohydrate: 16g; Dietary Fiber: 3g; Sugars: 9g Protein: 2g

Recipe courtesy of SNAP-Ed Connection, <http://recipefinder.nal.usda.gov/>

SIMPLY GOOD EATING

www.extension.umn.edu/Nutrition

 UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA | EXTENSION

© 2011 Regents of the University of Minnesota. All rights reserved. University of Minnesota Extension is an equal opportunity educator and employer. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this material is available in alternative formats upon request. Direct requests to 612-625-8260.

♻️ Printed on recycled and recyclable paper with at least 10 percent postconsumer waste material.

BAKED POTATO FRIES



Serves 4

Preparation time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 20-30 minutes

Ingredients

4 medium white potatoes (peeling optional)

2 Tablespoons vegetable oil or canola oil

Salt and pepper to taste

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 450 degrees F. Lightly oil a 9x13-inch pan.
2. Cut potatoes into long, thick strips and pat dry.
3. Toss potatoes with vegetable oil.
4. Spread coated strips in one layer in pan.
5. Bake for 20-30 minutes, turning frequently, until potatoes are golden brown and tender.
6. Season with salt and pepper.



TIPS & VARIATIONS

- **Use sweet potatoes instead** for a highly nutritious sweet alternative. Peeling the sweet potato is optional. Bake for 20 minutes.
- **Use seasonings** such as garlic powder, onion powder or Italian seasoning.

Nutritional Info per Serving: Calories: 221; Total Fat: 7g; Polyunsaturated Fat: 2g; Monounsaturated Fat: 4g; Saturated Fat: 1g; Trans Fat: 0g; Cholesterol: 0mg; Sodium: 308mg; Potassium: 926mg; Carbohydrate: 37g; Fiber: 4g; Sugar: 2g; Protein: 4g; Vitamin D: 0µg (0%); Calcium: 26mg (3%); Vitamin A: 2RE (0%); Vitamin C: 16mg (28%); Iron: 2mg (10%)

SIMPLY GOOD EATING

www.extension.umn.edu/Nutrition

 UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA | EXTENSION

© 2011 Regents of the University of Minnesota. All rights reserved. University of Minnesota Extension is an equal opportunity educator and employer. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this material is available in alternative formats upon request. Direct requests to 612-625-8260.

♻️ Printed on recycled and recyclable paper with at least 10 percent postconsumer waste material.

BROCCOLI

Serves 4



Serve hot or cold.

Ingredients

- 3 cups broccoli, chopped
- 1 medium bell pepper
- 1 Tablespoon olive oil (or canola oil)
- 2 Tablespoons sesame seeds

Directions

1. Wash broccoli and cut into 1 inch pieces.
2. Wash pepper and slice into ¼ inch wide slices.
3. Heat oil over medium heat, add broccoli, and sauté for 2 minutes.
4. Add sesame seeds and continue to sauté for another minute.
5. Add pepper slices and sauté for 1 more minute keeping them crisp.



NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION

Calories: 87
Fat: 6.0g
Saturated Fat: 0.8g
Trans Fat: 0g
Cholesterol: 0mg
Carbohydrates: 7.2g
Dietary Fiber: 2.9g
Protein: 3.0g
Sodium: 24mg
Vitamin A: 27%
Calcium: 8%
Vitamin C: 161%
Iron: 7%

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT SIMPLY GOOD EATING, VISIT OUR WEBSITE
AT www.extension.umn.edu/nutrition

SIMPLY GOOD EATING

www.extension.umn.edu/Nutrition

 UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA | EXTENSION

BROCCOLI OMELET

Serves: 4



This omelet is lower in fat and cholesterol than a traditional omelet and stuffed with a vibrant mix of broccoli florets, red bell pepper, mushrooms and topped with melted reduced-fat cheese.

Ingredients

- 3 cups broccoli florets
- 1 large red bell pepper, cut into strips
- 16 button mushrooms, sliced
- Cooking spray
- 4 eggs
- 8 egg whites from 8 eggs
- ¼ cup fat-free milk
- ½ cup ricotta cheese
- 2 Tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper

Directions

1. Cut vegetables as desired
2. Whisk eggs and milk in a medium mixing bowl.
3. Spray 10-inch non-stick skillet with cooking spray; heat.
4. Add broccoli, peppers and mushrooms; sauté about 3-5 minutes, then remove from pan.

To cook each omelet:

1. Use cooking spray as needed.
2. Add ¼ of the egg-milk mixture to hot skillet and let spread to cover bottom of pan.
3. When egg begins to thicken on top, sprinkle with ¼ of the Parmesan cheese.
4. Dab ½ of the omelet with ricotta cheese and spread a portion of the vegetable mixture.
5. Fold the other ½ of omelet over the vegetables and let cook about 1 more minute.
6. Slide onto plate. Season lightly with salt and pepper.
7. Repeat steps 1-6 to cook all omelets.
8. Garnish omelets with remaining vegetable sauté mix.

Serving Suggestions: Serve with melon and whole-wheat toast.

Recipe courtesy of What's Cooking? USDA Mixing Bowl:

www.whatscooking.fns.usda.gov



NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION

Calories: 190
Total Fat: 7g
Protein: 22g
Carbohydrates: 12g
Dietary Fiber: 3g
Saturated Fat: 2g
Sodium: 350mg

BROCCOLI RED PEPPER STIR FRY



Serves 4

Bright in color, lively in taste, and fast to fix.

Ingredients

- 2 teaspoons canola oil
- 2 large cloves garlic (peeled and finely chopped)
- 3 cups broccoli florets
- 2 Tablespoons water
- 1 large red bell pepper (washed, cored and cut into short strips)
- 1 medium onion (peeled and cut into slivers)
- 1 Tablespoon lemon juice
- ½ teaspoon salt

Directions

1. Prepare all ingredients before starting to cook.
2. Heat oil in large skillet over high heat.
3. Add garlic and sauté only until slightly cooked; do not brown.
4. Immediately add broccoli.
5. Stir fry continuously until all broccoli has turned into a bright green color.
6. Add 2 tablespoons water, cover and remove from heat for 2 minutes.
7. Return skillet to high heat. Add red pepper and onion.
8. Continue to cook, stirring for another 2-3 minutes. Vegetables will be crisp and brilliant in color when properly cooked.
9. Toss with lemon juice and salt and serve.



NUTRITION FACTS

Serving Size: ¼ of recipe
Calories: 61
Total Fat: 2.7g
Cholesterol: 0mg
Sodium: 308mg
Total Carbohydrate: 9g
Dietary Fiber: 3g
Protein: 2g

Recipe courtesy of Fruits & Veggies—More Matters®
www.FruitsAndVeggiesMoreMatters.org
<http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/>

Visit the website for more recipes: z.umn.edu/therecipebox

SIMPLY GOOD EATING

www.extension.umn.edu/Nutrition

 UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA | EXTENSION

CANTALOUPE COOLER

Serves: 8



Ingredients

- 1 cantaloupe (ripe)
- 2 ½ cups orange juice (cold)
- 2 Tablespoons sugar (granulated)
- Ice (crushed)

Directions

1. Cut melon in half. Scoop out seeds, remove rind and discard. Cut melon into 1-inch cubes.
2. In a blender or food processor, blend melon cubes with ½ cup orange juice until smooth.
3. Pour puree into pitcher and stir in the remaining orange juice and the sugar. Stir until sugar is dissolved.
4. Pour into glasses filled with crushed ice.

For a new twist, try other melons or strawberries in place of the cantaloupe.

Recipe courtesy of What's Cooking? USDA Mixing Bowl:
www.whatscooking.fns.usda.gov



NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION

Calories: 70
Total Fat: 0g
Protein: 1g
Carbohydrates: 18g
Dietary Fiber: 1g
Saturated Fat: 0g
Sodium: 15mg

CUCUMBER SALAD WITH TOMATOES

Serves: 4



Ingredients

- 2 cups cucumber (diced)
- 1 cup tomato (seeded and diced)
- ¼ cup onion (chopped sweet)
- 2 cups couscous or rice, cooked
- 2 teaspoons dill weed (chopped dried or fresh)
- ½ cup Italian salad dressing, low-fat

Directions

1. Wash hands.
2. Toss together the cucumbers, tomatoes, onions, couscous (or rice), dill and salad dressing.
3. Chill for 1 hour.
4. Serve.

Recipe courtesy of What's Cooking? USDA Mixing Bowl:
www.whatscooking.fns.usda.gov



NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION

Calories: 150
Total Fat: 3.5g
Protein: 4g
Carbohydrates: 25g
Dietary Fiber: 2g
Saturated Fat: 0.5g
Sodium: 280mg

FLUFFY MASHED POTATOES



Serves 4

Preparation time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 15-20 minutes

Ingredients

4 large potatoes, peeled and cubed

2 Tablespoons butter or low trans-fat margarine

½ cup skim milk or 1% milk

Salt to taste

Freshly ground pepper (use white pepper if you have it)



TIPS & VARIATIONS

For extra nutrition:

- Leave the skins on
- Add cooked cauliflower to the potatoes before mashing.
- Add cooked carrots to the potatoes before mashing.
- Bake a winter squash and mash instead of potatoes.

Directions

1. Put cubed potatoes in a large saucepan and cover with salted water. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to medium and cook 15-20 minutes, until tender.
2. Drain tender potatoes, and then put back in saucepan.
3. Add butter and stir and mash until it melts completely.
4. Add milk and continue to stir and mash until potatoes are fluffy.
5. Season with salt and pepper. Serve hot.

Nutritional Info per Serving: Calories: 208; Total Fat: 6g; Polyunsaturated Fat: 0g; Monounsaturated Fat: 2g; Saturated Fat: 4g; Trans Fat: 0g; Cholesterol: 16mg; Sodium: 26mg; Potassium: 916mg; Carbohydrate: 35g; Fiber: 5g; Sugar: 4g; Protein: 5g; Vitamin D: 0µg (4%); Calcium: 1mg (6%); Vitamin A: 72RE (5%); Vitamin C: 42mg (70%); Iron: 1mg (6%)

SIMPLY GOOD EATING

www.extension.umn.edu/Nutrition

 UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA | EXTENSION

© 2011 Regents of the University of Minnesota. All rights reserved. University of Minnesota Extension is an equal opportunity educator and employer. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this material is available in alternative formats upon request. Direct requests to 612-625-8260.

♻️ Printed on recycled and recyclable paper with at least 10 percent postconsumer waste material.

KALE CHIPS



Ingredients

- Approximately ½ bunch of kale leaves
- ½ Tablespoon extra virgin olive oil or melted coconut oil
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- ¾ teaspoon chili powder
- ½ teaspoon onion powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt – or less
- 1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper (optional)



Directions

1. Preheat oven to 300F. Line a large rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Remove leaves from the stems of the kale and roughly tear it up into large pieces. Compost the stems or freeze for smoothies. Wash and spin the leaves until thoroughly dry.
3. Place kale leaves in a large bowl. Massage in the oil until all the nooks and crannies are coated in oil. Now sprinkle on the spices/seasonings and toss to combine.
4. Spread out the kale onto the prepared baking sheet into a single layer, being sure not to overcrowd the kale.
5. Bake for 10 minutes, rotate the pan, and bake for another 12-15 minutes until the kale begins to firm up. The kale will look shrunken but this is normal.
6. Cool the kale on the sheet for 3 minutes before digging in! This really makes all the difference! Enjoy immediately, as they lose their crispiness with time.
7. Repeat this process for the other half of the bunch.

KALE AND WILD RICE SALAD

Serves 4



Ingredients

- 1 cup cooked & cooled wild rice OR brown rice
- 3 Tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 garlic clove, minced OR ½ tsp garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon mustard
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 4 cups kale, torn into pieces
- ½ cup shredded carrots
- ½ cup shredded red or green cabbage
- 2 Tablespoons dried cranberries OR craisins OR raisins

Directions

1. Make the dressing: Combine minced garlic clove, lemon juice and mustard in a bowl. Slowly whisk in the olive oil. Whisk for a few moments until the dressing comes together. Season with a pinch of salt and pepper. Set aside.
2. In a large salad bowl combine the kale, carrots, cabbage and cranberries.
3. Toss well with the dressing and let sit for 10 minutes.
4. Add the wild rice and toss once more.

Visit the website for more recipes: www.extension.umn.edu/nutrition



NUTRITION INFO

Serving size: ¼ of recipe

Calories: 190

Calories from fat: 100

Total fat: 11g

Saturated fat: 1.5g

Cholesterol: 0g

Sodium: 70mg

Total carbohydrates: 21g

Dietary fiber: 3g

Sugars: 6g

Protein: 5g

Vitamin A: 187% DV

Vitamin C: 152%

Calcium: 11%

Iron: 8%

SIMPLY GOOD EATING

www.extension.umn.edu/Nutrition

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA | EXTENSION

© 2011 Regents of the University of Minnesota. All rights reserved. University of Minnesota Extension is an equal opportunity educator and employer. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this material is available in alternative formats upon request. Direct requests to 612-625-8260.

♻️ Printed on recycled and recyclable paper with at least 10 percent postconsumer waste material.

SALVADORAN COLE SLAW

Serves 10



Ingredients

- 4 cups cabbage, shredded (any combination of varieties)
- 1 medium onion, finely sliced
- 2 tomatoes, chopped
- 1 cup cucumber, chopped
- ½ cup fresh parsley, finely chopped
- 2 Tablespoons cilantro, finely chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 teaspoons salt
- Black pepper to taste
- Lemon juice (3-4 lemons)
- Lime juice (3-4 limes)

Directions

1. Wash everything.
2. Shred the cabbage as this as possible.
3. Chop the onion and add to cabbage. Also add tomatoes, cucumber, parsley, cilantro and garlic.
4. Juice 3 or 4 lemons and 3 or 4 limes. Add the juice (approximately ¾ cup combined lemon and lime juice) to the cabbage mix and toss thoroughly.



NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION

Calories: 23
Fat: 0.1g
Saturated Fat: 0g
Trans Fat: 0g
Cholesterol: 0mg
Carbohydrates: 5.8g
Dietary Fiber: 1.5g
Protein: 1.0g
Sodium: 474mg
Vitamin A: 10%
Calcium: 3%
Vitamin C: 41%
Iron: 3%

SIMPLY GOOD EATING

www.extension.umn.edu/Nutrition

 UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA | EXTENSION

© 2011 Regents of the University of Minnesota. All rights reserved. University of Minnesota Extension is an equal opportunity educator and employer. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this material is available in alternative formats upon request. Direct requests to 612-625-8260.

♻️ Printed on recycled and recyclable paper with at least 10 percent postconsumer waste material.

BASIC SCALLOPED POTATOES

Serves 4



It's easy to add extra ingredients like cubed ham or cheese to this basic potato dish.

Ingredients

- 4 potatoes
- 1 medium onion (optional), thinly sliced or diced
- 4 Tablespoons flour
- 3 Tablespoons butter
- Salt
- Pepper
- 1 cup low fat milk

Directions

1. Peel the potatoes if desired; it is fine to leave the skins on. Slice potatoes about 1/8-1/4 inch thick.
2. In a casserole dish, lay down a single layer of potato slices.
3. Layer some onion on top.
4. Sprinkle lightly with some of the flour, salt and pepper.
5. Cut up the butter into little chunks. Place about 1/3 of the butter chunks on top.
6. Repeat the layers of potatoes, onion, flour, salt, pepper and butter until potatoes are gone.
7. Pour the milk over the top of the potatoes until the dish is about 2/3 full.
8. Bake at 375 degrees F for 1 hour.

Nutritional Info per Serving: Calories: 260; Total Fat: 9g; Polyunsaturated Fat: <1g; Monounsaturated Fat: 2g; Saturated Fat: 6g; Trans Fat: <1g; Cholesterol: 26mg; Sodium: 110mg; Potassium: 658mg; Carbohydrate: 39g; Fiber: 3g; Sugar: 6g; Protein: 6g; Vitamin D: <1µg (9%); Calcium: 93mg (9%); Vitamin A: 116RE (8%); Vitamin C: 20mg (33%); Iron: <1mg (5%)



TIPS & VARIATIONS

- Use no or low fat milk to lower fat.
- Add other ingredients like chopped peppers, cubed ham, diced chicken or shredded cheese.
- Children can help by layering ingredients in casserole dish.

SIMPLY GOOD EATING

www.extension.umn.edu/Nutrition

 UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA | EXTENSION

GREEK SALAD



Ingredients

- 2-3 cucumbers, sliced or chunked
- 1 red onion, thinly sliced
- 1 pint of cherry tomatoes, halved
- ½ cup chopped fresh parsley
- 1/3 cup crumbled feta cheese

Dressing:

- ¼ cup lemon juice
- ¼ cup balsamic vinegar
- 2 Tablespoons Dijon mustard
- 2 Tablespoons honey
- 2 Tablespoons chopped fresh oregano
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- Black pepper
- ½ cup olive oil
- 1 ½ cups plain Greek yogurt



TIP:

Make the dressing ahead of time. It can be stored in the refrigerator for up to four days.

Directions

1. Combine cucumbers, onion, tomatoes, parsley and feta cheese in a large bowl.
2. Prepare the dressing: Combine lemon juice, vinegar, mustard, honey, oregano, salt and pepper in a blender. Blend and slowly drizzle in the olive oil until emulsified and thick like mayonnaise. Transfer to a small bowl and whisk in the yogurt.
3. Pour dressing over salad and enjoy!

PICO DE GALLO – FRESH SALSA

Makes 3 cups



Ingredients

- 3-4 cups fresh tomatoes, finely chopped
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 1-2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1-2 jalapeño peppers, finely chopped
- 2-4 Tablespoons chopped cilantro
- 3 Tablespoons lime juice (fresh squeezed tastes best)
- ½ teaspoon salt

Directions

1. Combine finely chopped tomatoes, onions, lime juice and salt in mixing bowl.
2. Add desired amounts of jalapeños and cilantro. Start with lesser amounts and add more to taste.
3. After salsa sits for a bit, it will become very juicy – this is normal.
4. Serve with eggs, tacos, or other Southwestern dishes.



VARIATIONS

- If you don't have fresh tomatoes, you can substitute a 28-ounce can of diced tomatoes. Leave as-is, or blend before adding to other ingredients.
- Add some chopped bell peppers or cucumbers.
- Add a clove or two of minced garlic.
- Take care when working with jalapeños or other hot peppers. Wear plastic gloves and don't touch your eyes or other parts of your face.

SIMPLY GOOD EATING

www.extension.umn.edu/Nutrition

 UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA | EXTENSION

© 2011 Regents of the University of Minnesota. All rights reserved. University of Minnesota Extension is an equal opportunity educator and employer. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this material is available in alternative formats upon request. Direct requests to 612-625-8260.

♻️ Printed on recycled and recyclable paper with at least 10 percent postconsumer waste material.

TOMATO CUCUMBER SALAD WITH FETA CHEESE

Serves 6



Ingredients

- 3 cups coarsely chopped cucumbers
- 4 large tomatoes, coarsely chopped
- 1 bunch scallions, chopped (or ½ cup chopped red or yellow onion)
- 1 – 7-ounce package feta, crumbled, divided
- ½ cup coarsely chopped fresh mint
- 6 Tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- ¼ cup fresh lemon juice
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions

1. Combine cucumbers, tomatoes, scallions or onions, half of feta and mint in a large bowl.
2. Whisk oil and lemon juice in a small bowl; season dressing with salt and pepper. Pour dressing over salad; toss to coat.
3. Sprinkle remaining half of feta over and serve.



VARIATIONS

- Use different varieties and colors of tomatoes to create a beautiful, colorful and flavorful salad!
- Add pitted Kalamata olives
- Try cherry tomatoes cut in half
- Add chopped bell peppers

SIMPLY GOOD EATING

www.extension.umn.edu/Nutrition

 UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA | EXTENSION

SWEET CORN

Serves 10



Ingredients

- 10 medium ears of white, yellow or bi-color sweet corn
- 2 gallons of water



Directions

1. Put water in a large covered pot and bring to a boil over high heat.
2. Husk the corn. If needed, run your hand down each ear to remove extra silk,
3. Carefully add ears of corn to boiling water. Return to a boil and turn down heat to low.
4. Cover pot and cook for 5 to 10 minutes or until corn kernels are just tender.
5. Serve with margarine and salt, if desired.

SIMPLY GOOD EATING

www.extension.umn.edu/Nutrition

 **UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA | EXTENSION**

© 2011 Regents of the University of Minnesota. All rights reserved. University of Minnesota Extension is an equal opportunity educator and employer. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this material is available in alternative formats upon request. Direct requests to 612-625-8260.

♻️ Printed on recycled and recyclable paper with at least 10 percent postconsumer waste material.



DRYING HERBS

By Marilyn Herman, Extension Educator — Food Safety

Reviewed 2012 by Suzanne Driessen, Extension Educator — Food Safety.

Most herbs are at peak flavor when flower buds first appear, before they are fully open. Pick herbs in the morning, just after the dew evaporates and before the sun is hot. Discard bruised, soiled, or imperfect leaves and stems. With the leaves on the stems, lightly wash in cool running water. Gently shake to remove excess water. Let them drain on paper towels.

The time it takes in ovens or food dehydrators varies with the herb and appliance used. Herbs are dry when leaves crumble off the stem. Don't crush leaves until using them – they'll lose their flavor more quickly.

Air drying in Minnesota is difficult because of the weather. Ideal conditions are consistent temperatures above 85 degrees F. and humidity below 60%.

To microwave small amounts, place herbs on a paper towel and cover with a second. Set control on high and dry them 1-3 minutes. Check, and if more time is needed, check every 30 seconds. Pay attention, because paper towels can catch fire if hot spots occur.

Dried herbs keep their flavor and color three months in cupboards and up to one year in refrigerators or freezers.

To oven dry, spread a layer on a shallow baking pan. The pilot light on a gas oven or the light of an electric oven (with or without minimal heat of 110 – 130 degrees F) works. Higher temperatures cook herbs. You might use a preheated oven with the oven light on. Stir herbs periodically until thoroughly dry.

Place them in airtight containers or jars with tight-fitting lids. Glass keeps aromas in. Herbs must be completely dry or they mold. Store in a cool, dry, dark area, away from light and heat. Dried herbs keep their flavor and color three months in cupboards and up to one year in refrigerators or freezers. To substitute dried herbs, use a generous quarter teaspoon ground or one teaspoon crumbled dried leaves for every tablespoon of fresh chopped herbs.

FREEZING HERBS



By Marilyn Herman

Reviewed 2010 by LouAnn Jopp, Extension Educator — Food Safety.

Frozen herbs can work for cooking, though they are usually not suitable for garnish as they become limp when thawed.

Most herbs are at peak flavor when flower buds first appear, before they are fully open. Pick herbs in the morning, just after the dew evaporates and before the sun is hot. Discard bruised, soiled, or imperfect leaves and stems.

With the leaves on the stems, lightly wash in cool running water. Gently shake to remove excess water. Let them drain on paper towels.

Then choose one of these methods:

1. Place a few sprigs or leaves in freezer wrap or in an airtight, freezer container.
2. Spread on a tray or cookie sheet and place in the freezer. When frozen solid, pack into airtight containers.
3. To use in soups or stew, dice washed herbs and pack into freezer ice cube trays. Fill the spaces with water. Freeze and pop out cubes and put in airtight containers.

For cooked dishes, use the same proportion as fresh ones.



FREEZING FRUIT

William Schafer, Food Technologist — Department of Food Science and Nutrition, and Shirley T. Munson Extension Educator — Food Safety

Reviewed 2011 by LouAnn Jopp, Extension Educator — Food Safety; reviewed 2012 by Suzanne Driessen, Extension Educator — Food Safety.

When harvested, fresh fruit continues to undergo chemical changes which can cause spoilage and deterioration of the product. Therefore, these products should be frozen as soon after harvest as possible and at their peak degree of ripeness.

Fresh produce contains chemical compounds called enzymes which cause the loss of color, loss of nutrients, flavor changes, and color changes in frozen fruit. In fruit, these enzymes can cause brown colors and the loss of vitamin C. The most common control chemical is ascorbic acid (vitamin C). Ascorbic acid may be used in its pure form or in commercial mixtures with sugars.

To maintain top quality, frozen fruit should be stored at 0 degrees F or lower. Most frozen fruit maintains high quality for 8 to 12 months. Unsweetened fruit loses quality faster than fruit packed in sugar or sugar syrups.

Use high quality containers which are moisture and vapor proof so that moisture can be kept in the product and air kept away from it. Rigid containers made of plastic are suitable for all packs and are especially good for liquid packs.

There are three ways to pack fruit for freezing: sugar pack, syrup pack, and unsweetened pack.

Sugar pack: sprinkle the required amount of sugar over the fruit. Gently stir until the pieces are coated with sugar and juice.

Sugar syrup: dissolve the needed amount of sugar in cold water. Stir the mixture and let stand until the solution is clear.

To Freeze Fruit

1. Wash and sort fruit carefully and discard parts that are of poor quality.
2. Prepare fruit as you will use it.
3. Check the **chart** for fruit being frozen to see if an anti-browning treatment is suggested. Use ascorbic acid preparation as recommended in the chart or in the manufacturer's instructions.
4. Use dry sugar, or sugar syrup in proportions suggested in the chart. Dissolve sugar

needed in cold water. Stir. Allow to stand until sugar is completely dissolved. Do not heat. You may hold sugar syrup 2 days in the refrigerator. If you are preparing a sugarless pack of fruit that browns, be sure to treat with ascorbic acid or other anti-browning agents.

5. Pack into plastic freezer bags, freezer containers, or freezer jars. Allow ½ inch headspace for expansion. Pack fruit, such as peaches, that tends to darken, in rigid containers and under the syrup by placing crumpled wax paper between lid and fruit.



Tips for Freezing Berries

By Deb Botzek-Linn, Extension Educator — Food Safety

Reviewed 2012 by Suzanne Driessen, Extension Educator — Food Safety.

Food preservation season begins with preserving berries: frozen, canned, dried, or jams and jellies. The freezing of berries is a great place for a "new" food preserver to develop their skills.

Preserve fruits as soon as possible after harvest and at their peak of ripeness.

Do not soak berries in water. To clean, place the berries in a colander, dip into cool water, and gently swish, drain.

Fruit can be frozen with sugar, in a sugar water syrup, or unsweetened. Unsweetened fruits lose quality faster than those packed in sugar or sugar syrups.



© 2014 Regents of the University of Minnesota. All rights reserved. University of Minnesota Extension is an equal opportunity educator and employer. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this material is available in alternative formats upon request. Direct requests to 612-626-6602.

♻️ Printed on recycled and recyclable paper with at least 10 percent postconsumer waste material. This material is funded in part by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). SNAP provides nutrition assistance to people with low income.



HOW TO PREPARE FRUITS FOR FREEZING

William Schafer, Food Technologist – Department of Food Science and Nutrition

Reviewed 2012 by Suzanne Driessen, Extension Educator — Food Safety.

FRUITS	PREPARATION
<p>Apples Most firm-fleshed cooking varieties, especially apples suitable for pies or sauces.</p>	<p>Wash in cold water, peel, core, and cut into pie slices. An ascorbic acid powder sold in supermarkets to prevent browning of fruit may be used. Follow package directions. Fill container, seal, label, date and freeze. OR: Soak apple slices in brine solution (½ cup salt to 1 gallon water) for 15 minutes. Drain. Pack in sugar syrup using 2 cups sugar and ½ teaspoon ascorbic acid to 1 quart water. OR: Wash whole apples, drain and dry. Place in freezer bags. Freeze. To use for pie, sauce or other cooked dessert, run cold water over each frozen apple just before peeling. Peel, slice and use immediately.</p>
<p>Apricots Well-ripened fruits of uniform golden-yellow color. Apricots are better canned than frozen.</p>	<p>Wash in cold water and sort. Dip six fully-ripened apricots into boiling water until skins loosen, about 15 to 20 seconds. Chill, peel, halve and remove pits. Fill containers one-third full of syrup—3 cups sugar to 1 quart water with ½ teaspoon ascorbic acid. Pack apricots in syrup. OR: Halve soft ripe fruit, steam 4 minutes, crush and pack with 1 cup sugar to 8-9 cups fruit</p>
<p>Blackberries, Boysenberries, Dewberries, Loganberries, Youngberries and Nectarberries</p>	<p>Wash in cold water and sort. Pack in sugar syrup using 3 cups sugar to 1 quart water. OR: Crush and pack in sugar using 1 cup sugar to 7-8 cups fruit. For pies, pack berries dry without sugar.</p>
<p>Blueberries Any good quality berry, cultivated or wild.</p>	<p>Wash in cold water and sort. For desserts, pack in sugar syrup using 3 cups sugar to 1 quart water. OR: Pack in sugar using 1 cup sugar to 8-9 cups fruit. For</p>



	pies, pack dry without sugar or sugar syrup.
Pie cherries Any good quality cherry.	Wash in cold water, stem and pit. For pies, use 1½ to 2 cups sugar to 4 cups cherries for 9-inch pie. To improve color, add ¼ teaspoon ascorbic acid.
Sweet cherries Choose bright, fully ripe cherries.	Wash in cold water, sort, stem, and pit. Pack in syrup using 2 cups sugar to 1 quart water, ½ teaspoon ascorbic acid, and either 1 teaspoon citric acid or 4 teaspoons lemon juice.
Citrus Fruit Mixes Available citrus fruits	Wash, peel, section or slice fruit. Sprinkle sugar over each layer of citrus fruit, sweetening to taste. Let stand in refrigerator until fruit forms its own juice. If you wish to keep the mix 3-4 months, add ¼ teaspoon ascorbic acid to the sugar used for each 2 pints fruit.
Cranberries Any good quality fruit.	Wash in cold water, sort and pack without sugar.
Currants Red Lake and similar large fruit varieties.	Wash in cold water and sort. Pack in sugar using 1 cup sugar to 8-9 cups fruit. For cooking, pack dry without sugar.
Gooseberries Any good cooking variety.	Wash in cold water and sort. Pack without sugar or syrup or mix berries and sugar called for in pie recipe.
Ground Cherries Any available varieties.	Wash in cold water and sort. Husk, then scald cherries for 2 minutes. Pack in sugar syrup, 3 cups sugar to 1 quart water.
Muskmelons-Cantaloupes Use firm-fleshed fruit.	Wash in cold water. Cut flesh into ½- to ¾-inch cubes or balls. Cover with sugar syrup, using 2 cups sugar to 1 quart water. You can add whole seedless grapes. Serve partially frozen.
Nectarines Any good quality fruit.	Same as apricots for preparation and packing.
Peaches Choose well ripened fruit of good quality.	Wash in cold water and sort. Dip 3 or 4 peaches into boiling water until skins loosen—15-20 seconds. Chill and peel. Freeze in a sugar syrup following directions for apricots. You may halve, quarter, or slice peaches. See steps 4 and 5 under To Freeze Fruits. OR: Freeze non-browning varieties with dry sugar using ½ teaspoon ascorbic acid and 4 cups sugar



	with 8 pounds fruit (about 4 quarts).
Pineapple Any fruit of bright appearance, dark orange-yellow color.	Peel and core. Dice, slice or cut into wedges. Cover with syrup, 3 cups sugar to 1 quart water. OR: pack in dry sugar, 1 cup sugar to 8-9 cups fruit. Do not use uncooked pineapple in gelatin molds.
Raspberries Red or purple fruit of good quality.	Wash in cold water and sort. Pack raspberries in syrup, 3 cups sugar to 1 quart water. OR: Pack in dry sugar, 1 cup sugar to 7-8 cups fruit. Handle gently. Pack purple raspberries for jam without sweetening.
Rhubarb Select stalks that are crisp and tender and of good red color in early spring. Do not pick after July 1.	Remove leaves and woody ends, wash in cold water and cut in 1-inch lengths. Do not blanch. For sauce, pack in sugar syrup using 3½ cups sugar to 1 quart water. For pies, pack in dry sugar using 1 cup sugar to 4 cups rhubarb, or pack without sugar for a few months' storage.
Strawberries Choose firm, ripe berries of bright red color, or rich aromatic flavor.	Wash in cold water, sort and stem. Pack whole, sliced (preferred), or crushed berries in 1 cup sugar to 7- 8 cups fruit. OR: Pack whole berries in syrup, 3-4 cups sugar to 1 quart water.



© 2014 Regents of the University of Minnesota. All rights reserved. University of Minnesota Extension is an equal opportunity educator and employer. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this material is available in alternative formats upon request. Direct requests to 612-626-6602.

♻️ Printed on recycled and recyclable paper with at least 10 percent postconsumer waste material. This material is funded in part by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). SNAP provides nutrition assistance to people with low income

THREE WAYS TO FREEZE FRESH RAW TOMATOES

By Suzanne Driessen, Extension Educator — Food Safety

Revised 2011 by Suzanne Driessen, Extension Educator — Food Safety; reviewed by Carol Ann Burtness, Extension Educator — Food Safety.



Whole tomatoes tend to crack and collapse when they thaw. To successfully freeze fresh raw tomatoes, you can:

- Slice tomatoes into at least one-half inch slices. Put slices on a cookie sheet and freeze for two hours. Remove slices and put them into freezer bags or containers.

OR

- Slice tomatoes into at least one-half inch slices. Package in a rigid airtight container and fast freeze.

OR

- Wash tomatoes. Dip whole tomatoes in boiling water for 30 seconds to loosen skins. Core and peel. Freeze whole or in pieces. Pack into containers, leaving 1-inch headspace. Seal and freeze. Tomatoes will not be solid when thawed and are best used in cooking.

Frozen sliced tomatoes should be eaten in a near-frozen state for fresh taste.



How to Freeze Homemade Stewed Tomatoes

By Suzanne Driessen, Extension Educator — Food Safety

Reviewed 2012 by author.

1. Wash, remove stem. Peel and quarter tomatoes before stewing.
2. Heat rapidly until tender (10 to 20 minutes).
3. Simmer five to ten minutes.
4. Cool tomatoes quickly.
5. Place container of tomatoes in ice cold water.
6. When steam is gone, cover tightly, label and freeze. Use frozen tomato products within 12 to 18 months. Longer storage is safe but decreases overall quality.

How to Freeze Tomato Sauce in 6 Easy Steps



By Suzanne Driessen, Extension Educator — Food Safety

1. Select three large or four medium firm, ripe raw tomatoes with deep red color.
2. Peel and core.
3. Place them in a blender.
4. Add one-half medium onion, one seeded, green pepper, one teaspoon salt or one tablespoon sugar and blend. You can add celery and carrots. The water and pulp will separate. For better blending and less separation, heat tomato mixture to a simmer.
5. Cool sauce.
6. Package in freezer containers. For best quality, use frozen tomato products within 12 to 18 months.



© 2014 Regents of the University of Minnesota. All rights reserved. University of Minnesota Extension is an equal opportunity educator and employer. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this material is available in alternative formats upon request. Direct requests to 612-626-6602.

♻️ Printed on recycled and recyclable paper with at least 10 percent postconsumer waste material. This material is funded in part by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). SNAP provides nutrition assistance to people with low income.

Making Pickled Peppers

Fact Sheet No. 9.314

Food and Nutrition Series | Preparation

by M. Hill and P. Kendall*

Pickled peppers and mixed vegetable-pepper home-canned products are commonly prepared by many Colorado households. These products also have been implicated in botulism deaths due to the use of untested recipes, under-acidified products, addition of too much oil, or lack of processing.

Ingredients

Peppers. A variety of peppers can be used to make home canned pickled peppers. Common varieties are Cubanelle, Hungarian, yellow wax, sweet cherry, sweet banana and sweet bells. Thick-fleshed peppers with firm waxy skins and bright, glossy color, free from defects, give the best pickled products. Avoid peppers that are soft, shriveled or pliable, and dull or faded in color. As with all pickled products, the shortest time from pick to pack offers the highest quality pickled product.

Cut large peppers (Cubanelle or bells) into jar-size pieces. Remove seeds and white inner core. Smaller varieties may be packed whole but must be slit to allow the vinegar solution to enter the hollow portion of the pepper. Make two small slits through the flesh of each whole pepper.

Caution: Wear plastic or rubber gloves when handling hot peppers. Hot pepper juice can be caustic to eyes or skin.

Other vegetables. For vegetable-pepper blends, follow a recipe with tested proportions. Select fresh, tender but firm vegetables. If the vegetables and peppers cannot be canned within one or

two hours after harvesting, refrigerate without washing. Thoroughly wash all vegetables in cold water before pickling.

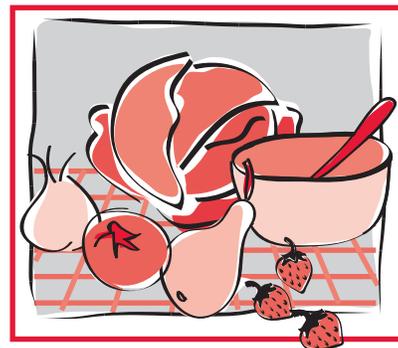
Salt. Use noniodized canning or pickling salt. Noncaking materials added to table salt may make the solution cloudy.

Vinegar. Use a high grade cider or white distilled vinegar of 5 percent acidity (50 grain). White vinegar may be preferred with light-colored peppers or vegetables to retain color or if clear liquid is desired. Do not use vinegars of unknown acidity. For a less acidic flavor, add a small amount of sugar. This offsets the sharp acid flavor without affecting the pH or acidity of a product.

Caution: The acidity in a pickled product is as important to its safety as it is for taste and texture. There must be a minimum, uniform amount of acid throughout the mixed product to prevent growth of botulinum bacteria. Use only recipes with tested proportions of ingredients. **Do not alter vinegar/water proportions** in the recipe.

Garlic. If desired for flavor, use mature, fully-dried, white-skinned garlic, free of blemishes. Garlic contains a water-soluble pigment that may turn blue or purple during pickling. Immature garlic, garlic that is not fully dry, or red-skinned varieties are most prone to turning blue, purple or blue-green. Except in the case of a bright blue-green color resulting from abnormally high concentrations of copper-sulfate, such color changes do not indicate the presence of harmful substances.

Oil. Specific problems exist when canning pickled peppers in oil. Use the recommended amount of oil (2 tablespoons per pint) and allow proper headspace. Peppers in oil need additional processing time over recipes not



Quick Facts

- Use only fresh, blemish-free vegetables and up-to-date, research-based recipes when pickling peppers and pepper blends.
- Use pure, granulated, non-iodized canning or pickling salt, high grade vinegar of 5 percent acidity, and fresh spices.
- Process pickled peppers in a boiling water bath for the altitude-adjusted length of time specified in a tested recipe.
- For pickled peppers marinated in oil, use only fresh vegetable oil in the amounts specified in tested recipes.

© Colorado State University Extension. 9/98. Revised 8/12.

www.ext.colostate.edu



*M. Hill, C.H.E., former Colorado State University Extension agent, family and consumer sciences, Pueblo County; and P. Kendall, associate dean for research, food science and human nutrition. 8/2012

containing oil. If peppers to be home-canned contain oil, take care that no ingredients touch the jar rim or flat lid. The oil tends to soften the natural rubber-based lining found in some brands of home-canning lids and may result in loosening of the seal over time.

Spices. Spices lose their flavor quickly. For best results, always use fresh spices in home canning.

Colorado Mix (Pickled Pepper Vegetable Blend)

- 2 1/2 pounds peppers, mild or hot as desired
- 1 pound cucumbers, cut into 1/2-inch chunks
- 2 to 4 carrots, cut into 1/2-inch chunks
- 1/2 pound cauliflower, cut into 1-inch flowerettes
- 1 cup peeled pickling onions
- 7 to 14 garlic cloves, as desired
- 6 cups vinegar
- 3 cups water
- 2 tablespoons pickling salt
- 2 tablespoons sugar, if desired

Yield: Makes 7 to 8 pints

Procedure: Wash and prepare vegetables. Slit small peppers. Core large peppers and cut into strips. Remove blossom end of cucumbers and cut into chunks. Peel and chunk carrots. Break cauliflower into flowerettes. Pack vegetable medley into hot, **sterilized** jars, leaving 1/2-inch headspace.

In 3-quart saucepan, bring vinegar, water, salt and sugar to a boil. Pour hot solution over mix in jars, leaving 1/4-inch headspace.

Remove air bubbles. Add liquid to bring headspace to 1/4 inch. Wipe jar rims. Add pretreated lids and process in boiling water bath for the time specified below for your altitude and jar size. For best flavor, store jars five to six weeks before opening.

Jar size	Boiling water bath processing time Altitudes of:	
	6,000 ft. or less	Above 6,000 ft.
Half-pints or pints	10 min	15 min
Quarts	15 min	20 min

Pickled Peppers

- 2 pounds Hungarian or banana peppers*
- 2 pounds sweet peppers (in strips)*
- 1 pound cherry peppers*
- 1 Jalapeno per jar (if desired for hotness)
- 1 clove garlic per jar
- 6 cups vinegar
- 2 cups water
- 1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon pickling salt
- 1 tablespoon sugar, if desired

***Note:** May use a variety of peppers to equal 5 pounds (4 quarts).

Yield: Makes 7 to 8 pints

Procedure: Wash peppers. Small peppers may be left whole with two small slits in each pepper. Core and cut large peppers into strips. Pack one clove garlic and a variety of peppers tightly into clean, hot, **sterilized** jars, leaving 1/2-inch headspace.

Combine vinegar, water, salt and sugar. Bring to boil and reduce to simmer. Pour hot pickling solution over peppers, leaving 1/4-inch headspace.

Remove air bubbles. Readjust headspace to 1/4 inch. Wipe jar rims. Add pre-treated lids and process in boiling water for the time specified for your altitude and jar size. For best flavor, store jars five to six weeks before opening.

Jar size	Boiling water bath processing time Altitudes of:	
	6,000 ft. or less	Above 6,000 ft.
Half-pints or pints	10 min	15 min
Quarts	15 min	20 min

To review the steps of packing, sealing and processing pickled products, see fact sheet 9.304, *Making Pickles at Home*. For information on canning chili, pimentos or other pepper products see 9.348, *Canning Vegetables*.

Hot Peppers Marinated in Oil

- 3 pounds hot peppers (Jalapenos or other varieties)
- 7 to 14 cloves garlic
- 7 tablespoons dried oregano
- 5 cups vinegar
- 1 cup water
- 1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon pickling salt
- 3/4 cup vegetable or olive oil

Yield: Makes 7 to 8 pints

Note: Improper procedures when canning vegetables in oil can result in **risk of botulism**. Read the section on oil and follow **exactly** the recommended procedures and tested recipe below.

Procedure: Wear rubber gloves when handling hot chilies. Do not touch the eyes or face. Wash peppers. Make two small slits in each whole pepper. Pack one or two garlic cloves and one tablespoon oregano into each clean, hot, **sterilized** pint jar. Pack peppers tightly into jars, leaving 1-inch headspace.

Combine vinegar, water, salt and oil and bring to a boil. Simmer 5 minutes. Pour hot solution over peppers, leaving 1-inch headspace. Make sure oil is equally distributed across jars. There should be no more than two tablespoons of oil per pint. Carefully wipe the jar lip so it is free of all oil. Add pretreated lids. Process in boiling water bath for the time specified below for your altitude and jar size. For best flavor, store jars five to six weeks before opening.

Jar size	Boiling water bath processing time Altitudes of:	
	6,000 ft. or less	Above 6,000 ft.
Half-pints or pints	15 min	20 min
Quarts	20 min	25 min

Marinated Refrigerated Peppers

Remember, all pickled pepper products stored at room temperature must be processed, to avoid the risk of botulism toxin development during storage. The boiling water-bath processing step can be omitted **if pickles are stored in the refrigerator**. Use the following procedure.

Wash peppers. Small peppers may be left whole with two small slits in each pepper. Core and cut large peppers into strips.

Sterilize jars, lids and screwbands. Pack peppers tightly into sterilized jars, leaving 1/2-inch headspace.

For each 6 cups of brine, combine 5 cups vinegar, 1 cup water and 1 tablespoon pickling salt. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer five minutes.

Pour vinegar solution over peppers, leaving 1/8-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles. Adjust headspace so that brine covers all peppers. Wipe rims.

Place sterilized flats on jars. Do not put on screwbands. Allow jars to cool. Put on screwbands and wipe jars. Refrigerate six to eight weeks for the pickled flavor to fully develop. Keep refrigerated and use within six months. This pepper product allows the peppers to marinate in a high acid solution, at a cold temperature, and in the presence of air. These conditions are not favorable for botulism toxin formation. It **does not** ensure against other types of spoilage.

Home Canned Salsa Recipes

Most salsa recipes are a mixture of low-acid foods, such as onions and peppers, and acid foods, such as tomatoes. Use tested recipes to ensure proper acidification.

Use the amounts of each vegetable listed in the recipe. If desired, green tomatoes or tomatillos may be substituted for part or all of the tomatoes. Add the amount of vinegar listed. If desired, you may safely substitute an equal amount of lemon juice for vinegar in a recipe using

vinegar. **However, do not substitute vinegar for lemon juice.** This substitution will result in a less acid and potentially unsafe salsa.

Spices do not affect acidity or safety and may be adjusted as desired. Do not thicken salsas with flour or cornstarch before canning. After you open a jar to use, you may pour off some of the liquid or thicken with cornstarch.

Chili Salsa

- 12 cups peeled, cored, chopped tomatoes (choose a meaty variety or squeeze out extra juice)
- 6 cups seeded, chopped chili peppers*
- 1 1/2 cups finely chopped onions
- 1/4 cup finely chopped garlic
- 1 cup vinegar
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper

*Use mixture of hot and mild peppers to suit taste.

Yield: Makes 6 to 8 pints

Procedure: Combine ingredients in large saucepan. Heat to a boil and simmer 10 minutes. Ladle hot into clean pint jars, leaving 1/2-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles, wipe jar rims. Adjust lids and process in a boiling water bath for the time specified below for your altitude.

Jar size	Boiling water bath processing time Altitudes of:	
	6,000 ft. or less	Above 6,000 ft.
Half-pints or pints	20 min	25 min

Tomato Salsa (Using Paste Tomatoes)

Note: Paste tomatoes, such as Roma, are recommended for salsa because they have firmer flesh and produce thicker products. Slicing tomatoes will require a much longer cooking time to achieve a desirable consistency.

- 7 quarts peeled, cored, chopped tomatoes
- 5 cups seeded, chopped long green chilies
- 4 cups finely chopped onion
- 1/4 cup seeded, finely chopped Jalapeno peppers

- 6-12 cloves garlic, finely chopped
 - 2 cups bottled lemon juice
 - 2 tablespoons salt
 - 1 tablespoon black pepper
 - 2 tablespoons ground cumin*
 - 3 tablespoons oregano leaves*
 - 2 tablespoons fresh cilantro*
- *Optional; use only for desired flavor

Yield: Makes 13 pints

Procedure: Combine all ingredients except cumin, oregano and cilantro in a large pot and bring to a boil, stirring frequently. Reduce heat and simmer 10 minutes. Add spices, if desired, and simmer for another 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Ladle hot into clean pint jars, leaving 1/2-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles. Add pretreated lids and process in a boiling water-bath canner for the time specified for your altitude.

Jar size	Boiling water bath processing time Altitudes of:	
	6,000 ft. or less	Above 6,000 ft.
Half-pints or pints	20 min	25 min

Source: *Salsa Recipes for Canning*; PNW395, a Pacific Northwest Extension Publication. Washington, Oregon, Idaho.

Credits

Recipes included in this publication were developed and tested by Colorado State University Extension, with the assistance of Master Food Preservers from Pueblo, El Paso, Elbert and Boulder counties.

The recipes were tested at altitudes below and above 5,000 feet, with pH samples conducted in the food science laboratory at Colorado State University. Recipes also were tested for flavor, texture and overall quality to offer a high quality and safe product.

Colorado State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture and Colorado counties cooperating. CSU Extension programs are available to all without discrimination. No endorsement of products mentioned is intended nor is criticism implied of products not mentioned.



FREEZING SWEET CORN

By Deb Botzek-Linn, Extension Educator — Food Safety

Revised 2012 by Suzanne Driessen, Extension Educator — Food Safety.

Freezing is a quick and convenient way to preserve vegetables at home, and sweet corn is a popular, easy vegetable to freeze. If you have the freezer space, corn is an excellent vegetable to store frozen.

If you harvest corn, do it early in morning before it gets hot. Husk ears and remove silk, then bring six to eight quarts of water to a boil and submerge several ears at a time. Blanch the ears for four minutes. Cool promptly in ice water, drain and cut the kernels from the cob.

An electric knife is a handy tool for cutting off the kernels. Package the corn in freezer containers, leave one-half inch headspace. Seal and freeze at 0 degrees F or below for best quality.

Blanching, followed by chilling in ice water, are critical processes for producing quality frozen corn. The natural enzymes in corn need to be inactivated before freezing to prevent both loss of color and nutrients, and flavor and texture changes. These enzymes are inactivated by a hot blanch treatment. The chilling process prevents the corn from becoming mushy due to overcooking the starch.

An electric knife is a handy tool for cutting off the kernels.

During sweet corn season, we get questions on freezing corn on the cob. Yes, it can be done, but with mixed results. Corn lovers are often disappointed with the mushy, rubbery texture and the cobby taste. It also takes up more space in the freezer

You can enjoy the great taste of summertime sweet corn all year long by following the simple, basic procedures for freezing vegetables.



SIMPLY GOOD COOKING

Making a Weekly Meal Plan

What's For Dinner?

If you are like many people, you wait until the last minute to decide. By then, it is probably too late to run to the grocery store, or too late to thaw something from the freezer. You are tempted to run through the drive-thru, call for take-out, or make the same thing you make every other night.

To provide a healthy, delicious meal for your family, there is no getting around the fact that you need to plan ahead. If planning ahead is a habit that you don't currently have, then it may take some extra effort in the beginning until it does become a habit.

Planning, shopping for, and preparing healthy meals every day, day after day, can feel overwhelming. Start small by planning ahead a day or two and work up to planning for a week of menus.

Planning not only helps you plan healthy, tasty meals, it can also help you stretch your food dollars because it uses foods you have on hand, helps prevent food waste, and saves you time.

Think, "next week." Seven dinners, one trip to the supermarket. Use the menu planning chart to begin.

Planning meals ahead requires a small investment of time, but can reap great rewards. Take a vow. "I hereby promise not to visit the supermarket again until I've made a menu plan!"

Use menu planning cards to begin compiling a 'menu' library for your family. You don't have to complete these all at once. If you do one or two a week, you soon will have a library of menu choices that you can choose from when you sit down to make your menu plan and grocery list.

We can provide tools for you to use, but if you find other tools that work better for you, that is fine. You may even find that developing your own works best. The key is to plan ahead.

Here's the overview of the menu planning process:

- Look at the grocery store ads for specials and sales. Draft a rough menu plan: seven dinner entrees that can be made from weekly specials, side dishes and salads. Plan for leftovers to use in another meal. Stretch that chicken to last for two meals.
- Check your pantry and refrigerator to check for food that you already have on hand. Start your menu planning using any ingredients that won't last. Review your shopping list and note needed items.
- Ready, set, shop – but shop with an open mind. Be ready to substitute if you find a great deal.
- Return from shopping. As you put away groceries, match your menu plan with your family's calendar, it won't work to plan on roasting a whole chicken if you have a family commitment that same evening.
- Post the menu plan on the refrigerator door. Refer to it during the coming week as you prepare meals.





Living a Well-Balanced Life

Balance, peace, and joy are the fruit of a successful life. It starts with recognizing your talents and finding ways to serve others by using them. - *Thomas Kinkade*

Tips for Living a Well-Balance Life:

A well-balanced life is essential for personal effectiveness, peace of mind, and living well. Whether we work, go to school, are retired or not, we all have responsibilities.

1. *Take care of and nurture yourself* – You cannot accomplish anything if you are unhealthy. Get plenty of rest, exercise, and eat properly. Many people think that they can burn the candle at both ends, eat junk food, get very little exercise, and still function adequately. You may want to set aside time each day for activity that you enjoy such as walking, working out, or listening to music. Or, allow yourself to unwind after a hectic day by reading, meditating, or taking a nice hot bath.
2. *Know what your priorities are* – Balance does not mean do everything you can. Examine your values and decide what is important to you, then set your boundaries. You may be in the process of building a career, starting a family, or going to school. Depending on what stage you are at in your life, your focus and energies will be different. Try not to become overwhelmed by juggling too many big projects in your life at once.
3. *Create an efficient mindset* – Be organized and plan ahead. Take time at the beginning of each week to assess what needs to be done. Make a to-do list in a planner or calendar for upcoming appointments, exams to



write or study for, or meetings to attend. Be sure to assign recreation and quality time for yourself and your family as well. Taking time to connect with family and friends will recharge your batteries and make you more efficient in the long-run.

4. *Expect the unexpected* – Rather than get stressed and upset, allow yourself to roll with the punches when something you have no control over happens. You may be stuck in traffic, your computer could crash, or your child could get sick with the chicken pox. Stuff happens. We've all experienced the unexpected. If you accept that anything can happen at any time, it is less likely it will throw you off your stride when it does. Be able to adjust your game plan.
5. *Maintain a positive mental attitude* – Begin each day with the intention of making the best and most of it. It may not always go as planned, but it can go more smoothly if you put it in perspective. Part of living a well-balanced life is learning how to deal with adversity, unforeseen events, and uncertainty. If you practice not letting things get to you, you will not only learn to live a well-balanced and less stressful life, you will learn to live in and savor the moment. Once you've done everything you can within your control, let your life unfold. Be prepared for the future, but don't worry about it.

Mission:

To promote the health, economy, and self-reliance of Central Minnesota by facilitating the availability of fresh, locally produced food in the region.

Vision:

SPROUT MN is the backbone of a regional sustainable food system, expanding market opportunities for small family farmer producers in Central Minnesota; is creating sustainable food systems by working with Farm to School and Farm to Institution initiatives in Central Minnesota and helping the community live happier and healthier lives through providing wholesale buyers and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) customers with the freshest, tastiest, and most nutritious local products.

How?

SPROUT MN, is a food hub located in Brainerd, Minnesota. A regional food hub is a business or organization that actively manages the aggregation, distribution, and marketing of source-identified food products primarily from local and regional producers to strengthen their ability to satisfy wholesale, retail, and institutional demand.

Regional food hubs are increasingly filling a market niche that the current food distribution system is not adequately addressing—the aggregation and distribution of food products from small and mid-sized producers into local and regional wholesale market channels (retail, restaurant, and institutional markets).

Whether you're a farmer/producer, an institutional buyer or executive chef, interested in purchasing a CSA, know someone who should know about us, or just want additional information, contact us at:



Why is this important for institutional buyers?

At the core of a food hub is a business management team that actively coordinates supply chain logistics. Food hubs work to coordinate efforts with other distributors, processors, wholesale buyers, and even consumers to ensure they can meet the growing market demand for source-identified, locally or regionally grown products. Collaboratively working with a food hub allows institutional buyers the ease of one stop bulk ordering with the convenience of one business transaction.

Why do food hubs matter?

Institutions wishing to procure local and source identified foods often face barriers in accessing local farmers, and assurances regarding food safety and liability issues.

Additionally, many farmers and ranchers are challenged by the lack of distribution and processing infrastructure of appropriate scale that would give them wider access to retail, institutional, and commercial foodservice markets, where demand for local and regional foods continues to rise.

Regional food hubs are an effective foodservice management tool to overcome these infrastructural and market barriers.

Going the next step:

SPROUT MN works with its farmer network to continue to build food safety into Good Agricultural Practices. Each farmer has received individual one-to-one training on food safety, post-harvest handling and packaging.

SPROUT MN also holds appropriate licensing and insurance liability according to MN Department of Agriculture standards.

SPROUT MN Customers

ISD #181

ISD #484

ISD #2170

Central Lakes College, Brainerd and Staples Campuses

Lakewood Healthcare System

Riverwood Healthcare System

Prairie Bay Grill and Restaurant

Grand View Lodge

Sunshine/Moonshine

Crow Wing Food Co-op

Seeds of Summer

Farm Market Café

Your neighbors through a Community Supported Agriculture market share program

Any produce which is not marketed through institutional or restaurant outlets and is within its shelf life, is donated to the local food shelf. SPROUT MN donated approximately 3,000 pounds of food to our neighbors in 2013.



The Region Five Development Commission is one of ten Regional Development Organizations in the state and is classified as a local unit of government. We serve the counties of Cass, Crow Wing, Morrison, Todd and Wadena and work with private, public and non-profit sectors. **We specialize in lending, planning and project management in the areas of Economic Development, Community Development and Transportation.** More information about our programs can be found on our website at www.regionfive.org.



The Resilient Region plan is a regional plan crafted by over 600 people from the Region Five area to improve rural economic prosperity while we honor collective commitments to environmental stewardship in a way that improves the quality of life for all people. The inclusive approach taken by the multitude of agencies working on the Resilient Region plan implementation is unlike any other Minnesota planning initiative. The Champions who practice “distributed leadership” have leveraged over \$21 million implementation dollars to date and through collective action they are accomplishing amazing outcomes. Learn more at www.resilientregion.org



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA EXTENSION'S SNAP-ED

About Us

University of Minnesota Extension's SNAP-Ed program makes the healthy choice the easy choice for Minnesotans with limited financial resources.

As part of the University of Minnesota, we bring proven, effective solutions for healthful living that individuals, families and organizations can use right away. We empower individuals and families to make healthy food and physical activity choices by working at many levels:

- Demonstrating quick, easy, fun ways to prepare great-tasting and healthful meals
- Strengthening local economies by teaching participants how to shop for healthy foods at area stores and farmers markets
- Building local capacity by growing farm to school programs
- Identifying active lifestyle choices for people of all ages where they live, work and play
- Helping communities create and sustain environments that support and promote healthy choices