



What Incredible Choices

Montana WIC Program

1-800-433-4298

5-A

Delicious Ways to Serve Leafy Greens

When it comes to vegetables, experts agree: Enjoying ½ to 1 cup of leafy greens every day is a super smart nutrition decision. Greens are nutrient-rich – and they help reduce your risk of heart disease and certain cancers.

Toss leafy greens into a salad.

All the best salads begin with greens: the darker the color the more nutrients in the leaf. Start your salad with Romaine or red leaf lettuce, baby spinach, or some arugula. Then, mix-and-match a variety of chopped fruit and vegetables on top.

Chop leafy greens into a stir-fry.

All vegetables work in a stir-fry – combined with thin slices of lean meat or tofu. Chopped leafy greens, such as spinach, kale, and various Chinese cabbages, cook in just a minute or two. For tasty results, add them at the very end of cooking.

Steam or sauté leafy greens as a side dish.

Steam and season with lemon juice; sauté with garlic; or microwave for 2 to 3 minutes and top with a little olive oil. For additional flavor, sprinkle lightly with cheese (feta, blue, or Gorgonzola) or chopped nuts (almonds, pecans, or walnuts).

Stir leafy greens into casseroles or stews.

Some dishes are perfect for ‘sneaking’ greens in to. Try chopping just a little spinach or kale into your family’s favorite casserole or crock pot dish. Chances are no one will even notice. Each time you make the dish you can add a little more.

Roll leafy greens into a sandwich wrap.

Start with a tortilla or pita bread. Choose some protein (tuna or chicken salad, sliced turkey, or roast beef, low-fat cheese, etc.). Then, add a layer of leafy greens. Romaine lettuce, baby spinach, and arugula are great greens for any sandwich.

How would you like to enjoy leafy greens today?



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CHERRIES: Sweet and Sour



Montana produces 3-4 million pounds of Flathead cherries yearly.

HOW TO CHOOSE

- Select firm red or yellow cherries with stems that are still attached and bendable.
- Avoid cherries that are soft, shriveled, or blemished.

HOW TO STORE

- Cherries can be stored in the refrigerator for up to 10 days.
- Wash cherries only when ready to serve, prepare, or freeze.

NUTRITION FACTS

- Cherries are a homegrown “super” fruit, containing many antioxidants that help to prevent heart disease and some cancers.

Fun ways for your family to enjoy the sweet taste of cherries



- The easiest, sweetest way to enjoy cherries is straight from the tree to your mouth. Just wash and eat!
- For cherries in the morning, pit fruit and add to vanilla yogurt or cooked oatmeal.
- For delicious dinner salads, add pitted cherries to greens and sprinkle with cheese.
- When sour cherries are ripe, freeze pitted fruit on a cookie sheet. Store in plastic bags for pies and cobblers.

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SPINACH and Other Dark Leafy Greens



Baby spinach and other greens are tender enough for salads.

HOW TO CHOOSE

- For greens in a bag or plastic box, pick one with the farthest away buy-by date on the package.
- Select bunches with crisp leaves no insect holes.

HOW TO STORE

- There's no need to rewash bagged or boxed greens.
- Wash bunched greens; wrap in paper towels.
- Store in crisper drawer for 3-4 days.

NUTRITION FACTS

- Spinach and all dark leafy greens are nutrient-rich.
- Excellent sources of fiber, iron, and vitamins A and C, they are also high in folate.

Easy ways for your family to enjoy more spinach and dark leafy greens, like arugula, kale, and collards



- Toss tender greens in salads. Kids go for a spinach salad with sliced fruit, like pears, apples, or berries.
- Chop fresh spinach into small pieces and stir a ¼ cup or so into your favorite dip.
- Microwave spinach or other greens for 1-3 minutes, chop coarsely, and add to lasagna or other pasta dishes.
- Sauté greens quickly in a little oil, minced garlic, and a squeeze of lemon juice.

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WASHING YOUR HANDS

Washing your hands properly is the most important way to fight bacteria and other illness that can be transmitted through food. Here's how kids and adults need to wash before preparing, cooking, or eating:

1. Wet hands with warm water.
2. Apply soap.
3. Rub hands together for 20 seconds.
4. Be sure to rub between fingers and around fingernails.
5. Rinse soap, dirt, and germs away with warm water.
6. Dry with a paper or clean towel.



Keeping Fresh Produce Safe To Eat

Here is the latest and best advice from food safety experts.

- **Wash produce just before serving, not storing.**

Washing produce before storing in the refrigerator or in a cupboard can actually cause it to spoil faster.

- **Wash hands properly and clean all surfaces areas.**

To avoid getting new germs onto fruits and vegetables, wash hands and clean all counters, cutting boards, and knives.

- **Use cold running water – and a brush, if necessary.**

Hold produce under running tap water and wash all surfaces. Items with a hard surface or rind may be scrubbed with a small brush.

- **Do not wash produce with bleach or detergent.**

Since some fruits and vegetables can absorb these liquids, it is better to use plain running water.

- **Discard outer leaves before washing.**

When ready to serve lettuce, leafy greens, cabbage, or vegetables in heads, take off and throw away the outer leaves before washing.

- **Always wash skin or rinds before cutting into produce.**

Even if you do not eat the skin or rind (like on a melon), germs can be transferred inside when you slice an item with a knife.

Should I wash pre-bagged salads and other greens?

This is an excellent question, since many packaged salads say that they are 'triple washed.' Here's what food safety experts say:

- **There is no need to wash prepackaged salads before serving.**

Washing these products may actually introduce new germs into the mix, if hands and surfaces are not completely clean.

DO wash salad greens purchased from open bins or those in bunches and heads.

Follow the instructions above, making sure that hands and surfaces are clean. Place clean greens into a colander or bowl and blot dry with a clean paper towel.

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