



What Incredible Choices

Montana WIC Program

1-800-433-4298

8-A

Preparing Vegetables with Maximum Flavor

No one (especially a young child) likes to eat over-cooked or mushy vegetables. Here are some hot tips for maintaining flavor and texture, so you can increase the vegetable variety in your family meals.

Crunch into raw vegetable power.

The key to safe and tasty fresh vegetables is storage and cleaning. Buy good quality items without bruises at the store or farmers' market. Keep wrapped in fridge crisper drawer. Wash thoroughly under running water just before eating.

Steam vegetables quickly on stove top.

Steaming keeps them tender crisp, with a natural bright color. The time it takes to steam vegetables (after the water has boiled) varies with the type and size of pieces. Steaming takes as little as 4 to 5 minutes for fresh green beans and broccoli florets.

Cook vegetables rapidly in microwave.

Microwaving vegetables is a convenient way to keep their nutrient value. It is because microwaving is done quickly (3-8 minutes on HIGH per pound of vegetables) and with minimal amounts of water (a few drops to a couple of teaspoons).

Stir-fry vegetables in just a few minutes.

Stir-frying with a little oil (or in a non-stick pan) is a very easy way to cook fresh vegetables. Thin slices, small pieces, and leafy greens take only 1-3 minutes. Carrots, onions, snow peas, and whole green beans may take a bit longer, like 4-6 minutes.

Roast vegetables in a hot oven.

Roasting is convenient when you are cooking meat or whole poultry in a hot oven (about 400 F). It takes 45-50 minutes to roast root vegetables (beets, carrots, parsnips, whole garlic, and small or quartered potatoes) that are drizzled with oil.

How will you cook your vegetables for dinner tonight?



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8-B

Apricots, Peaches, Plums, and Nectarines



There are now many crosses of these summer fruits, like plumcots.

HOW TO CHOOSE

- Choose fruits that are plump and firm but not rock hard.
- Look for uniform coloring with no blemishes or soft spots.

HOW TO STORE

- Store summer fruit at room temperature until fully ripe.
- Refrigerate ripe whole fruit in a plastic bag for 3-5 days.

NUTRITION FACTS

- All these fruits are good sources of vitamin C, potassium, and fiber. They all are also sodium-, cholesterol-, and fat-free.

Fun ways for your family to enjoy the fabulous flavors of summer tree fruits



- Enjoy a juicy, ripe tree fruit as a snack by itself – maybe outside near a hose so you can wash off afterward.
- Chop ripe apricots, peaches, plums, and nectarines into a fruit or green salad.
- These summery fruits are also delicious as toppings – chopped with a little juice and served on pancakes or low-fat yogurt.
- Blend up a smoothie with summer fruit plus yogurt and milk.

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8-C

SUMMER SQUASH:



Zucchini, Crookneck, and More

Squash belong to the same family as melons and cucumbers.

HOW TO CHOOSE

- Pick summer squash with glossy, intact skin and no bruising.
- Choose small to medium squash that feels heavy for its size.

HOW TO STORE

- Refrigerate summer squash for use within 3-4 days.
- Wash thoroughly under running water just before cooking.

NUTRITION FACTS

- Excellent sources of vitamins C, summer squash are also good sources of fiber. Bright yellow types have more vitamin A.

Easy ways for your family to enjoy the versatile flavors of summer squash varieties



- For the most tender summer squash, select vegetables that are as small as possible.
- Very tender varieties can be eaten raw – by themselves or chopped into a salad with a light dressing.
- Due to its soft flesh and high water content, summer squash is best when cooked quickly (sautéed or stir-fried). Onions, tomatoes, garlic, and Parmesan cheese all go great with these tender squash.

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8-D

Zesty Zucchini and Tomatoes



NUTRITION ANALYSIS

Serving Size: ½ cup

Calories: 100

Total Carb: 10 g

Dietary Fiber: 2 g

Protein: 2 g

Total Fat: 6 g

Calories from Fat: 61%

Saturated Fat: 0.0 g

Trans Fat: 0.0 g

Calcium: 30 mg

Sodium: 200 mg

Iron: 0.6 mg

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 tablespoons margarine, or olive oil
- ¼ cup onion (chopped)
- 1 clove garlic (diced)
- 1 pound zucchini or other summer squash (cut into bite sized pieces or 'coins')
- 2 medium tomatoes (chopped into small pieces)
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 1 teaspoon sugar

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Melt margarine in saucepan over medium heat.
2. Add onions and garlic.
3. Cook until tender, about 5 to 7 minutes.
4. Add zucchini, tomatoes, and seasonings.
5. Reduce heat.
6. Cook until vegetables are tender without overcooking, about 5 to 10 minutes.
7. Serve as aside dish or as a topping for pasta.

YIELD: 4 servings, ½ cup each

IDEAS/SUBSTITUTIONS:

- This is an easy way to use the 'rush' of squash and tomatoes from summer gardens. Once cooked, it can be frozen for reheating later.
- For garden-fresh flavor, add a teaspoon or two of chopped fresh herbs, such as basil, oregano, or chives as the vegetables cook.
- For a zestier mix, season with fresh or dried chili peppers.
- As a topping for pasta, add cooked ground beef or chopped leftover chicken or turkey.

SOURCE:

Permission granted through Pennsylvania Nutrition Education Network (PA NEN) at <http://panen.psu.edu/>



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