



Eat Smart, Live Better

National Fresh Fruit & Veggie Month



The month of June is here to celebrate the bounty of nutrition fruits and vegetables bring to the table! Let's use this month to learn more about the benefits of these foods through the many resources available on the Web and discover new ways to incorporate fruits and vegetables into one's diet.

So, why fruits and vegetables? Well...

- Adequate consumption of fruits and vegetables has been linked to **stronger immune functioning**. These types of foods are considered to be nutrient-rich and include essentials like antioxidants, fiber, potassium, vitamin C, B-vitamins, folate, and much more.

- Healthy, nutrient-rich diets have also been associated with **reduced risk for certain cancers, stroke and cardiovascular disease**.
- Fruits and vegetables contain **protein**, which is essential for the body to repair itself. Good sources include bananas, avocados, cantaloupe, sweet potatoes, green beans, broccoli, corn and legumes.
- Certain nutrients within these food groups are important for things like **fetal development, eye and skin health, and even staving off gum disease**. For more information on essential nutrients and which foods contain them, visit http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov/benefits/nutrient_guide.htm.
- Fruits and vegetables are a **natural source of energy!**

There is a wealth of resources available online on nutrient information, how to eat healthier, how to incorporate more fruits and veggies into your diet, and eating healthy on a

budget. A variety of informative resources can be found at <http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov/publications/index.html>.

Information obtained and adapted from the following sources:

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
<http://www.eatright.org>

Fruits & Veggies Matter
<http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov/index.html>

This information is provided courtesy of the Wyoming AgrAbility Project.
<http://wyomingagrability.wordpress.com/2012/06/01/june-is-national-fresh-fruit-and-vegetables-month/>

What other foods are celebrated in June? Check the list on page 2!



Better Living for Texans teaches:

- *Comparing Prices*
- *Healthy Menu Choices*
- *MyPlate*
- *Preparing Healthy Meals*
- *Importance of Physical Fitness*

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Quick and Healthy Recipes from Families, Food and Fitness



"Quick and Healthy Recipes", is a user-friendly, attractive, and searchable database featuring recipes submitted by members of the "Families, Food and Fitness Community of Practice" from Land Grant Universities across the country. Users can search recipes based on title, ingredient, meal type, season, low-fat, low-sodium, and low-calorie. Recipes are categorized as "Kid Friendly" to help busy parents easily involve children in meal preparation. The database also features "Quick and Easy" recipes with minimal ingredients, preparation time, and cook time to ensure that even on the busiest weeknight, your family can enjoy a home-cooked meal. The website can be found at <http://www.quickhealthyrecipes.msstate.edu/>.

Users have the option to create a user account. Registered users can rate and comment on recipes. Users can share and save their favorite recipes on popular social networks like Twitter, Facebook, and Delicious. Recipes can be printed in a variety of formats including full page or popular recipe card sizes like 3 by 5 or 4 by 6.

The Easy Fruit Salad recipe listed below and pictured above is from the Quick and Healthy Recipes website.

Easy Fruit Salad

(Total Servings (Yield): 5 cups, 10 servings)
Serving Size: 1/2 cup

Ingredients:

- 2 small bananas, sliced
- 1 (20-ounce) can pineapple chunks in juice, drained
- 1 (8-ounce) low-fat yogurt (try vanilla or lemon)
- 1 (15-ounce) can (2 cups) fruit cocktail in juice, drained

Directions:

1. Wash, peel and slice bananas.
2. Drain pineapple chunks and fruit cocktail.
3. Mix fruits and yogurt together.
4. Cover and chill until ready to serve.
5. For variation use the following fresh fruits, instead of canned: 1 cup grapes, seedless, halved 2 cups cantaloupe, cut into bite size pieces 1 cup strawberries, quartered 1 cup apple, cut into bite size pieces

Note: If the pineapple and fruit cocktail are left out, add a little lemon juice to bananas and apples to prevent browning.



Easy Ways to Eat More Fruits and Vegetables

- Add fruit to your cereal, low-fat or fat-free yogurt, or oatmeal.
- Snack on fruit during the day. Grab an apple, banana, or some grapes on your way out the door.
- Eat a colorful salad at lunch. Try mixed greens with tomatoes, carrots, broccoli, and bell peppers.
- Make fruits and vegetables about half your plate.
- Snack on raw veggies with a healthy low-fat or fat-free dip.
- Enjoy your favorite beans and peas. Add them to salads and low-fat dips.
- Eat at least two vegetables with dinner.
- Have fruit for dessert.

www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov

June is also...

NATIONAL...

- Beef Steak
- Candy
- Frozen Yogurt
- Iced Tea
- Papaya

...MONTH

smart shopping for veggies and fruits



10 tips for affordable vegetables and fruits

It is possible to fit vegetables and fruits into any budget. Making nutritious choices does not have to hurt your wallet. Getting enough of these foods promotes health and can reduce your risk of certain diseases. There are many low-cost ways to meet your fruit and vegetable needs.

1 celebrate the season

Use fresh vegetables and fruits that are in season. They are easy to get, have more flavor, and are usually less expensive. Your local farmer's market is a great source of seasonal produce.



2 why pay full price?

Check the local newspaper, online, and at the store for sales, coupons, and specials that will cut food costs. Often, you can get more for less by visiting larger grocery stores (discount grocers if available).

3 stick to your list

Plan out your meals ahead of time and make a grocery list. You will save money by buying only what you need. Don't shop when you're hungry. Shopping after eating will make it easier to pass on the tempting snack foods. You'll have more of your food budget for vegetables and fruits.

4 try canned or frozen

Compare the price and the number of servings from fresh, canned, and frozen forms of the same veggie or fruit. Canned and frozen items may be less expensive than fresh. For canned items, choose fruit canned in 100% fruit juice and vegetables with "low sodium" or "no salt added" on the label.



5 buy small amounts frequently

Some fresh vegetables and fruits don't last long. Buy small amounts more often to ensure you can eat the foods without throwing any away.

6 buy in bulk when items are on sale

For fresh vegetables or fruits you use often, a large size bag is the better buy. Canned or frozen fruits or vegetables can be bought in large quantities when they are on sale, since they last much longer.

7 store brands = savings

Opt for store brands when possible. You will get the same or similar product for a cheaper price. If your grocery store has a membership card, sign up for even more savings.

8 keep it simple

Buy vegetables and fruits in their simplest form. Pre-cut, pre-washed, ready-to-eat, and processed foods are convenient, but often cost much more than when purchased in their basic forms.



9 plant your own

Start a garden—in the yard or a pot on the deck—for fresh, inexpensive, flavorful additions to meals. Herbs, cucumbers, peppers, or tomatoes are good options for beginners. Browse through a local library or online for more information on starting a garden.



10 plan and cook smart

Prepare and freeze vegetable soups, stews, or other dishes in advance. This saves time and money. Add leftover vegetables to casseroles or blend them to make soup. Overripe fruit is great for smoothies or baking.

Eating on a Budget — The 3 P's

PLAN

- ✓ Plan meals and snacks for the week according to an established budget.
- ✓ Find quick and easy recipes online.
- ✓ Include meals that will “stretch” expensive food items (stews, casseroles, stir-fried dishes).
- ✓ Make a grocery list.
- ✓ Check for sales and coupons in the local paper or online and consider discount stores.
- ✓ Ask about a loyalty card at your grocery store.



PURCHASE

- ✓ Buy groceries when you are not hungry and when you are not too rushed.
- ✓ Stick to the grocery list and stay out of the aisles that don't contain items on your list.
- ✓ Buy store brands if cheaper.
- ✓ Find and compare unit prices listed on shelves to get the best price.
- ✓ Purchase some items in bulk or as family packs which usually cost less.
- ✓ Choose fresh fruits and vegetables in season; buy canned vegetables with less salt.
- ✓ Pre-cut fruits and vegetables, individual cups of yogurt, and instant rice and hot cereal are convenient, but usually cost more than those that require a bit more prep time.
- ✓ Good low-cost items available all year include:
 - Protein — beans (garbanzo, black, cannellini)
 - Vegetables — carrots, greens, potatoes
 - Fruit — apples, bananas



PREPARE

- ✓ Some meal items can be prepared in advance; pre-cook on days when you have time.
- ✓ Double or triple up on recipes and freeze meal-sized containers of soups and casseroles or divide into individual portions.
- ✓ Try a few meatless meals by substituting with beans and peas or try “no-cook” meals like salads.
- ✓ Incorporate leftovers into a subsequent meal.
- ✓ Be creative with a fruit or vegetable and use it in different ways during the week.

