



Family Nutrition In Action

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Celebrate St. Patrick's Day eating your greens!



March 17 is St. Patty's Day. Why not consider adding more green fruits and vegetables to your meals? Here are some tips to help you:

- Make a big batch of split pea soup and freeze leftovers in individual portions.
- Enjoy an all green salad made with lettuce, cucumber, green bell pepper, green onion and avocado.
- Find new ways to serve broccoli - add it to your favorite Waldorf salad or toss it into pasta dishes and soups.
- Add fresh chopped herbs to salads, rice dishes, pasta dishes and soups.
- Toss steamed green beans with toasted sliced almonds and a little olive oil for a delicious vegetable side dish.
- Serve sliced kiwi for dessert. You can also add this colorful fruit to salads, cereal and smoothies.

Excerpted from Communicating Food for Health Newsletter,
<http://www.foodandhealth.com> Web site visited 2-20-01

Let the little ones join in the Irish fun with this recipe.

Lucky Pudding for Kids

Vanilla pudding mix
Green food coloring
Prepare pudding according to packing. Add a couple of drops of green food coloring. Allow children to stir. The pudding "magically" turns green.



March is National Frozen Food Month



Today's active lifestyles demand quick meal alternatives that require little preparation. Frozen fruits, vegetables, and juices offer consumers the flexibility to use the freezer like a "pantry" and stock up on favorite items that can be enjoyed with any meal at any time. Frozen fruits, vegetables, and juices help consumers meet the goal of eating 5 servings of fruits and vegetables every day by having nutritious foods always on hand. Frozen products not only taste good, but they are nutritious and good for you.

Five-A-Day Recipe: Oriental Green Peas

1 tablespoon unsalted butter
1 10-ounce package frozen green peas
2 teaspoons honey
1 8-ounce can sliced water chestnuts, drained
¼ cup chicken stock
2 large green onions, trimmed and sliced
1 teaspoon soy sauce
Salt to taste
Few drops of red pepper oil* (optional)
**To make red pepper oil: In a saucepan, heat 3 tablespoons olive oil and add ½ tsp crushed red pepper. Cook for 2 minutes.*

Directions:

In a medium-size saucepan, combine the butter, honey, stock and soy sauce, and cook on high for 3 minutes.

Stir in the peas and the water chestnuts. Cook uncovered for 4 minutes, or until the peas are just tender and hot, stirring occasionally.

Add the green onions, salt and red pepper oil and cook for 1 minute longer. Serve immediately.

Website: www.5aday.org

April is Florida Tomato Month

Are tomatoes nutritious?



Tomatoes are overflowing with good nutrition. One medium size tomato provides about 50 percent of recommended daily allowance for vitamin C and 20 percent of our vitamin A needs. Tomatoes are also:

- Rich in fiber, carbohydrate, potassium and iron.
- Low in fat and sodium.

The latest nutrition news is that tomatoes also contain a compound called lycopene, an antioxidant that can protect us from developing some types of cancer. Tomatoes and tomato-based products (tomato sauce, tomato juice) are sources of lycopene.

Any special considerations when buying tomatoes?

Fresh tomatoes sold in the supermarkets are firm and not completely ripe because they're usually shipped long distances from the growing area to the supermarket. When buying tomatoes, choose those that are firm, but that give slightly under pressure. Select tomatoes in various stages of ripeness. At home, use first the ripe tomatoes and keep the ones that need ripening at room temperature for a few days. Tomatoes can also be ripened by placing them in a fruit ripening bowl or brown paper bag. Eat them as they ripen.

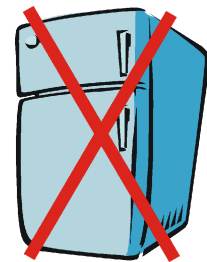
How could I add fresh tomatoes to my family meals?

- Dip thick slices of tomatoes in cornmeal seasoned with chili powder; sauté briefly until golden.
- Top thick slices of red ripe tomatoes with tuna or shrimp salad.
- Place slices on English muffin halves; top with hot pepper Monterey Jack cheese; broil or microwave until cheese melts.

Information from Florida Tomatoes, <http://www.floridatomatoes.org/> Web site visited 2-20-01

Do not refrigerate tomatoes!!

Cold stops tomato's ripening process and kills its flavor. Once fully ripe, a tomato can be refrigerated, but only for a few days.



National Garden Week, April 8-14, 2001

Ready for the spring bug? Gardeners await anxiously for the last freeze to be over and for the coming of mild spring weather to march out to their gardens. Gardening is a hobby that soothes tensions and gets our body moving. Yes! Gardening is a physical activity.

A vegetable garden can help stretch food dollars by providing fresh produce directly to your table. You will save money and your family will enjoy delicious vegetables.

Container gardening

Container gardening doesn't require a lot of space nor a lot of tools. It is a great way of getting started with gardening! The following are some vegetables that work well in container gardening:

- Lima Bean
- Broccoli
- Cabbage
- Carrot
- Cucumber
- Eggplant
- Leaf Lettuce
- Onion
- Green Bell Pepper
- Pumpkin
- Tomato



A wide variety of containers could be used for container gardening. Anything from hanging baskets and flower pots to tubs, beach pails and wagons will do. Any container will work as long as it is durable and large enough to hold the fully-grown plant or plants. Your imagination is the limit!

Pot Herbs, compact varieties of leaf lettuce, and green onions.

Planter Suitable for cherry tomato, romaine. A 3-gallon size is suitable for carrots, spinach, broccoli, Bibb lettuce, and bell peppers.

Basket Ideal for tomato, eggplant, cucumber, pepper, squash, beans, and peas.



This spring give gardening a try. You could end up enjoying the outdoors while eating healthy and stretching your food dollars.

For more information on gardening, contact your local Extension office or visit this web site <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu> for related publications.

Keeping Eggs Safe this Easter

Eggs are frequently handled at Easter time. Too much handling can lead to contamination with bacteria. In keeping eggs safe this Easter season, follow these tips:

- Wash your hands thoroughly before you handle eggs at every step including cooking, cooling and dyeing.
- Refrigerate hard-cooked eggs in their cartons if you won't be coloring them right after cooking and cooling. Refrigerate them again right after you dye them.
- Color only un-cracked eggs. Use food coloring or specially made food-grade egg dyes if you plan on eating the eggs.
- Discard eggs that have been out of refrigeration for more than 2 hours.

Safe Egg Hunt

If you hide eggs, consider hiding places carefully. Avoid areas where the eggs might come into contact with dirt, pets, wild animals, birds, reptiles, insects or lawn chemicals. Consider 'hiding' plastic, hollow eggs filled with jelly beans, stickers, and other trinkets instead of hard-cooked, dyed eggs.



L o c a l F a m i l y N u t r i t i o n P r o g r a m :