Farmers’ Market Favorites: Strawberries

“Doubtless God could have made a better berry, but doubtless God never did.” - Dr. William Butler

Nutrition
Strawberries are a delight for all folks, both young and old. Not only are they tasty, strawberries are packed with nutrients, such as vitamin C and folic acid, while being low in calories (only about 45 calories per cup). Looking for a cool dessert for the warmer weather? Strawberries are sure to please all picky eaters.

Selection
- Look for plump, well-rounded berries with fresh green caps.
- Select fully ripe, red berries. Once strawberries are picked, they will not continue to ripen.
- If you're picking your own strawberries, leave a half-inch stem on the berry. They will keep better this way.
- If you're purchasing pre-packaged strawberries, check the container to be sure it's free of moisture.

Amounts
- 1 pint strawberries equals about 3 1/4 cups whole berries
- 1 pint strawberries equals about 2 1/4 cups sliced berries
- 1 pint strawberries equals about 1 2/3 cup pureed berries
- 1 cup whole strawberries equals about 4 ounces
- 1 pint strawberries yields about 12 very large berries to about 36 smaller berries

Storage
- Spread the strawberries in a shallow container. Discard any bruised or damaged fruit.
- Do not remove caps or wash the berries until you are ready to use them. Cover loosely and store in the refrigerator.
- Enjoy within a day or two. Strawberries lose their flavor after a few days.

Preparation
- Just before use, wash under a gentle spray of cool water. Dry on paper towels.
- Remove the cap after washing.

Serving Suggestions
- Serve fresh sliced strawberries with chocolate pudding - your kids will love it!
- Instead of candy, choose fresh strawberries as a great snack food.
- Jazz up your cereal or yogurt cup with sliced strawberries.
- Make a strawberry-mango salsa. Coarsely chop strawberries and mix with chopped fresh mango, a little grated ginger and thinly sliced green onion. Season with brown sugar and balsamic vinegar.
- Serve with grilled chicken or fish.
- Add fresh strawberries to your favorite muffin recipes.
- For breakfast make thin, six-inch pancakes. Fill with halved strawberries and roll up. Place on a plate seam side down. Top with strawberry yogurt and sprinkle with powdered sugar.

Strawberry Recipes
**Strawberry Tossed Salad**
3 tablespoons unsweetened orange juice
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
1 teaspoon vegetable oil
2 1/2 cups torn leaf lettuce
2 cups torn Bibb lettuce
1 cup sliced fresh strawberries
2 tablespoons thinly sliced green onions
1 tablespoon sesame seeds, toasted

1. Combine first three ingredients in a small bowl; stir well.
2. Combine lettuces, strawberries, green onions and sesame seeds in a large bowl; toss well.
3. Add orange juice mixture and toss gently. Serve immediately.
Yields six 1-cup serving. Per serving - Calories: 36, Fat: 2 grams, Carbs: 4 grams

**No Sugar Strawberry Pie**
3 cups water
4 Tbsp. cornstarch
8 individual packets of NutraSweet or Splenda
2 small boxes strawberry gelatin sweetened with NutraSweet
1 quart fresh strawberries
2 (8-inch) pie shells, baked

Slice strawberries, sprinkle with NutraSweet or Splenda. Mix cornstarch and water in saucepan. Bring to boil and cook until thickened; add gelatin. Combine mixture with strawberries. Pour into pie crust. Chill at least three hours. Yields 12 servings.
(Per serving – Calories 38, Fat: 8 grams)

**Strawberry Pudding Cake**
2-1/2 cups angel food cake (torn into little pieces)
1 large box vanilla instant pudding
milk for pudding
3 cups fresh strawberries, sliced
8-oz. container Cool Whip

Place cake in the bottom of a 7 x 9 inch dish. Mix pudding according to directions on box; pour over cake. Spread fresh strawberries over pudding mixture. Top with Cool Whip. Refrigerate if not served immediately.

**Fresh Strawberry Sauce**
1 pint fresh strawberries, hulled
1/3 cup sugar
1 teaspoon fresh lemon or lime juice
1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract

In a food processor, combine strawberries, sugar, lemon or lime juice and vanilla. Puree, then chill. Serve sauce over custard, ice cream or pound cake. Makes 2 cups.