

Cooking Smart with Fall Foods



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Selecting the Right Apple

The following is a general guide to help in selecting the best apple for your cooking and baking needs:

Key: **E** = excellent
G = good
N = not recommended



















	Snacking	Salads	Pies	Sauce	Baking	Freezing
 Braeburn	E	G	G	G	G	G
 Cameo	E	E	E	E	E	G
 Cortland	E	E	E	E	E	G
 Empire	E	E	G	G	G	G
 Fuji	E	E	G	G	G	E
 Gala	E	E	G	E	G	E
 Ginger Gold	E	E	G	G	G	N
 Golden Delicious	E	E	E	E	E	E
 Granny Smith	E	E	E	E	E	E
 Honey Crisp	E	E	E	E	G	E
 Idared	G	G	E	E	E	G
 Jonagold	E	E	G	E	E	G
 Jonathan	G	G	E	G	E	G
 McIntosh	E	G	E	E	N	G
 Newtown Pippin	G	G	E	E	G	G
 Cripps Pink	E	E	E	E	G	G
 Red Delicious	E	E	N	N	N	N
 Rome Beauty	G	G	E	E	E	G

Chart taken from <http://www.usapple.org/consumers/appleguide/variety.cfm>

Apples

Selection

- Look for firm, crisp, well-colored apples. The color should be bright and appropriate for the variety.
- The surface should be smooth, firm, and free from bruises, blemishes and skin breaks.
- Surface russeting - brownish areas on the skin are generally caused by the weather . This does not affect the quality or flavor.

Storage

- Always refrigerate fresh apples as cold as possible without freezing them.
- Apples will ripen and turn soft ten times faster at room temperature and nearly five times faster at 40°F.

Morning Glory Muffins

1-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
¼ cup of honey
2 tsp baking powder
2 cups grated carrots
1 cup raisins
2 egg whites
1/4 cup canola oil
2 tbsp chopped walnuts

1/2 cup whole wheat flour
1 tbsp ground cinnamon
1/2 tsp baking soda
1 apple - cored, and chopped
1 egg
1/2 cup apple butter
1 tbsp vanilla extract
2 tbsp toasted wheat germ

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F (190 degrees C). Lightly oil 18 muffin cups, or coat with nonstick cooking spray.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together eggs, egg whites, apple butter, oil and vanilla.
3. In a large bowl, stir together flours, sugar, cinnamon, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Stir in carrots, apples and raisins. Stir in apple butter mixture until just moistened. Spoon the batter into the prepared muffin cups, filling them about 3/4 full.
4. In a small bowl, combine walnuts and wheat germ; sprinkle over the muffin tops.
5. Bake at 375 degrees F (190 degrees C) for 15 to 20 minutes, or until the tops are golden and spring back when lightly pressed.

Apple Pumpkin Soup

2 cups, finely chopped peeled tart apples
2 tbsp butter
4 cups chicken broth
1/4 cup packed brown sugar
1 cup unsweetened apple juice
1/4 tsp black pepper

1/2 cup finely chopped onion
1 tbsp all-purpose flour
3 cups canned pumpkin
1/2 tsp each: ground cinnamon, nutmeg, and ginger
1/2 cup milk

1. In a large saucepan, sauté apples and onion in butter for 3-5 minutes or until tender. Stir in flour until blended. Gradually whisk in broth. Stir in pumpkin, brown sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg, and ginger. Bring to boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 25 minutes. Cool slightly.
2. In a blender, cover and process soup in batches until smooth. Pour into a bowl; cover and refrigerate for 8 hours or overnight.
3. Just before serving, transfer soup into a large saucepan. Cook over medium heat for 5-10 minutes. Stir in apple juice, milk, and black pepper; heat through. Makes about 12 servings.

Apple Squash Soup

1 large onion, chopped
2 tbsp butter
3/4 cup water
1 package (12-oz) frozen mashed squash, thawed
1/2 cup milk

1/2 tsp rubbed sage
1 can (14-oz) chicken or vegetable broth
2 medium tart apples, peeled and finely chopped
1 tsp ground ginger

1. In a large saucepan, sauté onion and sage in butter for 3 minutes or until tender. Add broth, water, and apples; bring to boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 12 minutes. Add squash and ginger; return to boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered for 10 minutes. Cool until

1. lukewarm.
2. Blenderize (using blender or food processor) soup in batches until smooth; return to pan. Add milk; heat through. Do not boil. Makes ~ 5 servings.

Cranberry Filled Apples

6 baking apples	1 cup orange juice
3/4 cup chopped cranberries	2 tbsp honey
1/4 cup sugar	1 tbsp melted margarine
1/2 tsp grated orange peel	

1. Peel top third of each apple and remove core to within 1/4 inch of bottom.
2. Place in shallow baking dish. Combine cranberries, sugar, and orange peel. Spoon equal amounts into each apple.
3. Combine orange juice, honey and melted margarine. Pour over apples.
4. Cover and bake at 350°F for 30 minutes.
5. Uncover and bake about 35 minutes longer or until tender, basting frequently. To microwave place apples in microwave safe dish.
6. Cover and microwave at on high for 11 to 14 minutes or until tender.
7. Allow to stand 5 minutes before serving. Yield: 6 servings

Honey-Baked Apples & Pears

2 apples, cored and sliced into 8 wedges	1 pear, cored and sliced into 8 wedges
2/3 cup honey	2 tbsp water
1-1/2 tsp cinnamon	1-1/2 tsp margarine, sliced

1. Arrange apples and pears in a greased large baking dish; set aside.
2. Combine honey, water and cinnamon; pour over apple mixture. Dot with margarine.
3. Bake at 350 degrees for 25 minutes or until fruit is tender.

Pumpkin

Nutrition

Pumpkin is packed with an important antioxidant, beta-carotene, which is converted to vitamin A in the body. Beta carotene performs many important functions such as good vision, a healthy immune system, and cell growth.

Selection

- When selecting a pumpkin for cooking, the best selection is a "pie pumpkin" or "sweet pumpkin." These are smaller than the large jack-o-lantern pumpkins and the flesh is sweeter and less watery. However, you can substitute the jack-o-lantern variety with fairly good results.
- Look for a pumpkin with 1 to 2 inches of stem left. If the stem is cut down too low the pumpkin will decay quickly or may be decaying at the time of purchase.
- Avoid pumpkins with blemishes and soft spots. It should be heavy, shape is unimportant. A lopsided pumpkin is not necessarily a bad pumpkin. Figure one pound of raw, untrimmed pumpkin for each cup finished pumpkin puree.

Storage

Puree can be refrigerated in a tightly sealed container up to 3 days or stored in the freezer up to 6 months. To freeze, measure cooled puree into one cup portions, place in ridged freezer containers, leaving 1/2-inch headspace or pack into zip closure bags. Label, date and freeze at 0°F for up to one year.

Preparation

Spread newspaper over your work surface. Start by removing the stem with a sharp knife. If you are planning to roast the pumpkin seeds, smash the pumpkin against a hard surface to break it open. If not, cut in half with a sharp knife. In any case, remove the stem and scoop out the seeds and scrape away all of the stringy mass.

Microwave Method: Cut pumpkin in half, place cut side down on a microwave safe plate or tray. Microwave on high for 15 minutes, check for doneness. If necessary continue cooking at 1-2 minute intervals until fork tender.

Oven Method: Cut pumpkin in half, scraping away stringy mass and seeds. Rinse under cold water. Place pumpkin, cut side down on a large cookie sheet. Bake at 350°F for one hour or until fork tender.

Puree preparation after heating: When the pumpkin is cool enough to handle, remove the peel using a small sharp knife and your fingers. Put the peeled pumpkin in a food processor and puree or use a food mill, ricer, strainer or potato masher to form a puree.

Fifteen ounces of canned pumpkin is almost just shy of 2 cups (16 ounces would be 2 cups). A 3-pound pie pumpkin will likely give you enough puree for your recipe. Here are some good tips for using fresh pumpkin:

Pumpkin math

After cooking and draining, this is about what to expect from a typical cooking pumpkin:

2 ½ lb. pie pumpkin = 1-3/4 cups puree

3 ½ lb. pie pumpkin = 2-1/2 cups puree

6-lb. carving pumpkin = 2-3/4 cups puree

5-lb. round pumpkin = 3-1/3 cups puree

Pumpkin Recipes

Fresh Pumpkin Puree

Fresh whole pumpkin

1. Preheat oven to 375°F.
2. Scrub pumpkin thoroughly. Cut pumpkin into 5-inch-square pieces, discarding stems.
3. Remove seeds and fibrous strings (save seeds for roasting, if desired). Arrange pumpkin pieces in a single layer, skin side up, in a foil-lined shallow baking pan.
4. Roast, covered, for 1 to 1-1/2 hours or until tender.
5. When cool enough to handle, scoop pulp from rind. Place, in batches if necessary, in a blender container food processor bowl. Cover and blend or process until smooth (or for a chunkier puree, blend or process until slightly chunky).
6. Place puree in a 100% cotton cheesecloth-lined fine mesh sieve (use a double thickness of cheesecloth). Allow to stand for 1 hour to drain (in refrigerator) . Press lightly to remove any additional liquid (discard liquid).

Pumpkin Cranberry Muffins

(Makes 12 servings)

2 cups all-purpose flour	3/4 cup sugar <i>(decrease by 3 TBSP if using dried cranberries)</i>
1 tsp baking soda	1 tsp cinnamon
1/2 tsp ginger	1/4 tsp nutmeg
1 cup pumpkin puree	1 large egg, lightly beaten
1/4 cup canola oil	1 cup nonfat milk
1 cup fresh cranberries, chopped or 3/4 cup dried	

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Coat a muffin pan with nonstick cooking spray.
2. In a large bowl, combine flour, sugar, baking soda, cinnamon, ginger and nutmeg. Combine pumpkin, beaten egg, oil and milk in a medium bowl.
3. Make a well in dry ingredients; add pumpkin mixture and stir until just combined. Fold in chopped cranberries or dried.
4. Fill muffin cups and bake for 22-25 minutes.

Pumpkin Baked Oatmeal

(Makes 1 serving)

1/2 cup rolled oats, uncooked	1/4 tsp vanilla extract
1/2 tsp cinnamon	1/8 tsp nutmeg
1 TBSP maple syrup, honey or brown sugar	1/4 cup canned pumpkin
1/4 cup low-fat milk	Optional: raisins, nuts, brown sugar

1. Preheat oven to 380 degrees.
2. Combine raw oats, vanilla extract, cinnamon, nutmeg, syrup, pumpkin, and milk. Pour into a greased 1-cup ramekin (or two 1/2-cup ramekins) or a mini-loaf pan.
3. Cook for 20 minutes or more, until it firm.
4. Finally, set your oven to “high broil” for 3 more minutes, or until it reaches desired crispy-ness (or simply just bake longer, but broiling gives it a nice crust).

Pumpkin Soup

(Makes 8 servings)

6 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth	1 cup chopped onion
4 cups pumpkin puree	1/2 tsp chopped fresh or 1/8 - 1/4 tsp dried thyme
1 clove garlic, minced	1-2 TBSP heavy cream
black pepper, to taste	

1. Heat broth, onion, pumpkin, thyme, garlic, and black pepper. Bring to a boil, reduce heat to low and simmer for 30 minutes uncovered.
2. Puree soup using hand blender (or in small batches using a food processor or blender).
3. Return to pan and bring to a boil again. Reduce heat to low and simmer for another 30 minutes, uncovered. Stir in heavy cream (gradually to prevent curdling).

Pumpkin Cheesecake Pudding

(Makes 8 servings)

1 packet unflavored gelatin	1/2 tsp cinnamon
1/2 cup cold water	1/2 tsp ground ginger
3 cups canned puree pumpkin	1/4 tsp ground cloves
3/4 cup brown sugar	3/4 cup low fat plain yogurt
1-1/2 cups low fat cottage cheese	

1. Soften the gelatin in the cold water in a small saucepan for one minute. Turn the heat to medium high and heat to dissolve completely.
2. Pour into a food processor with the pumpkin, brown sugar, cottage cheese, cinnamon, ginger, and cloves. Blend until smooth. Stir in the yogurt and pour into individual custard cups.
3. Chill in the refrigerator until set.

Pumpkin-Pie Pudding

(Makes 6 servings)

2 cups low-fat milk	3/4 cup dark brown sugar
1/4 cup cornstarch	2 large eggs
1 cup canned pumpkin	1/4 tsp pumpkin-pie spice

1. Whisk milk, sugar, and cornstarch in a large saucepan; bring to a boil. Boil 3 minutes, whisking constantly.
2. Beat eggs with a whisk in a large bowl.
3. Gradually add half the hot milk mixture to the beaten eggs.
4. Return milk-egg mixture to pan. Cook over medium heat 3 minutes, or until thick, whisking constantly.
5. Remove from heat; stir in pumpkin and pumpkin-pie spice.
6. Spoon evenly into 6 (6-ounce) custard cups. Let cool, and chill for about 30 minutes, or until pudding is set.

Pumpkin Muffins

(Makes 18 muffins)

2 3/4 cups all-purpose flour	1 cup granulated sugar
1 TBSP baking powder	1 tsp baking soda
1 tsp ground cinnamon	1 cup canned pumpkin
3/4 cup fat-free sour cream	1/3 cup fat-free milk
1/4 cup vegetable oil	1 tsp vanilla extract
1 large egg	1 large egg white
Cooking spray	1 TBSP granulated sugar
1-1/2 tsp brown sugar	

1. Preheat oven to 375°.
2. Lightly spoon flour into dry measuring cups; level with a knife. Combine flour, sugar, baking powder, and cinnamon in a medium bowl, stirring with a whisk. Make a well in center of mixture.
3. Combine pumpkin and next 6 ingredients (pumpkin through egg white); add to flour mixture, stirring just until moist. Spoon the batter into 18 muffin cups coated with cooking spray.
4. Combine 1 tablespoon granulated sugar and brown sugar; sprinkle over muffins.
5. Bake at 375° for 25 minutes or until muffins spring back when touched lightly in center. Remove muffins from pans immediately; cool on a wire rack.

Pumpkin Pancakes

(Makes 8 pancakes)

1/2 cup canned pumpkin	1/2 cup low-fat vanilla yogurt
1/4 tsp baking soda	1 large egg yolk
1/4 cup cake flour	4 large egg whites
Cooking spray	Maple syrup or honey

1. Whisk together pumpkin, yogurt, baking soda, egg yolk, and flour.
2. Whisk egg whites; fold into pumpkin mixture.
3. Heat a large nonstick skillet coated with cooking spray over medium heat.
4. Spoon in 1/3 cup batter for each pancake. Flip when tops are covered with bubbles and edges are slightly brown (about 3 minutes per side). Drizzle with syrup or honey.

Pumpkin Ravioli

(Makes 6 servings)

1 cup canned pumpkin	1/3 cup grated Parmesan cheese
1/8 tsp black pepper	24 wonton wrappers
1/2 cup chicken broth	1 1/2 TBSP unsalted butter
Chopped parsley	

1. Combine pumpkin, cheese, and black pepper.
2. Spoon about 2 teaspoons pumpkin mixture into center of each wonton wrapper. Moisten edges of dough with water; bring 2 opposite sides together to form a triangle, pinching edges to seal.
3. Place ravioli into a large saucepan of boiling water ; cook 7 minutes, and drain in a colander.
4. Place chicken broth and butter in pan; bring to a boil. Add ravioli, tossing to coat.
5. Sprinkle with parsley.

Pumpkin Spice Hummus

(Makes 12 servings)

15 oz can chickpeas, drained and rinsed	1 cup pumpkin puree
1/4 cup tahini (or raw cashew butter)	1 TBSP canola oil
3 TBSP pure maple syrup	1 tsp vanilla extract
1 1/2 tsp ground cinnamon	1/4 tsp ground ginger
1/8 tsp ground nutmeg	1/8 tsp ground cloves

1. Combine all ingredients in your food processor.
2. Blend until smooth. Taste and adjust spices if needed.
3. Serve with pita chips.

Bowties with Creamy Pumpkin and Parmesan

(Makes 4 servings)

1 box whole wheat bowtie pasta	2 TBSP butter or olive oil
15 oz can pumpkin puree	3 TBSP light sour cream (or plain yogurt)
1/4 cup pasta water, reserved	black pepper, to taste
grated Parmesan cheese	

1. Cook pasta according to directions.
2. When pasta is cooked, set aside 1/4 cup of pasta water before draining pasta.
3. After draining pasta, put back into pot used for cooking.
4. Add butter or olive oil, pumpkin, sour cream or plain yogurt, and pasta water to pot.
5. Gently stir until combined and creamy. Add black pepper to taste. Serve with a freshly grated parmesan cheese.

Low-Fat Baked Pumpkin Pasta

(Makes 6 servings)

12 ounces uncooked penne pasta	2 tsp olive oil
1 medium onion, finely chopped	2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
2 small zucchini, halved lengthwise, then sliced	1/2 tsp dried thyme
1 tsp dried sage	1 15 ounce can pure pumpkin
1 cup part-skim ricotta cheese	1/2 cup water reserved from pasta pot
1/2 cup shredded parmesan cheese	

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
2. Cook pasta in a large pot of boiling water according to directions on package, less 2 minutes, and reserve 1/2 cup of cooking water when done.
3. Meanwhile heat oil in large skillet. Sauté onions and garlic for 5-6 minutes, until softened. Stir in zucchini and herbs, and sauté for 3-4 minutes.
4. Stir in canned pumpkin and ricotta cheese.
5. Empty drained pasta plus 1/2 cup of reserved cooking water into skillet and mix well.
6. Spoon pasta into a 11 x 7 baking dish. Sprinkle parmesan cheese on top. Bake for 10-15 minutes.

Leafy Greens

Nutrition

Leafy greens such as, turnip, collard, mustard and beet, are low-calorie and vitamin packed vegetables. They provide an excellent source of vitamins A and C, and provide a source of calcium, iron, fiber and other nutrients.

Selection

- Select greens with leaves that are fresh, young, tender and free from blemishes.
- Look for a healthy green color. Beet tops and ruby chard should have a reddish color.
- Avoid leaves with coarse fibrous stems, yellowish green color or wilted condition.
- Avoid greens with evidence of insects.
- One pound of greens will yield about three cups cooked greens.

Storage and Cleaning

- Never wash greens before storing, since moisture promotes decay.
- Wrap greens in paper towels and place in a plastic storage bag. Store in the vegetable crisper of your refrigerator. Use within 3 to 5 days.
- Wash greens thoroughly. Place them in a sink filled with lukewarm water and swish around. Remove any roots, stems the greens if necessary, and repeat the washing process until the grit disappears. For salad greens, whirl in a salad spinner or pat dry in paper towel.

Tips

- Mild-flavored greens like spinach, kale or chard can be steamed until barely tender.
- Stronger-flavored greens like collards, mustard, or turnip greens benefit from longer cooking in a seasoned broth. They should also be blanched before adding to soups and stews to prevent a bitter flavor.
- Do not cook greens in aluminum cookware which affects both their appearance and taste.

Recipes - Mustard Greens

Mustard Greens with Sesame Oil

1/2 cup thinly sliced onions	2 cloves garlic, minced
1 TBSP olive oil	1 pound mustard greens, <i>washed and torn</i>
2-3 TBSP chicken broth or vegetable broth	<i>into large pieces</i>
1/4 tsp black pepper	1/4 tsp dark sesame oil

1. In a large sauté pan, sauté onions in olive oil over medium heat until the onions begin to brown and caramelize, about 5 to 10 minutes. Add the minced garlic and cook a minute more, until fragrant.
2. Add the mustard greens and broth and cook until the mustard greens are just barely wilted. Toss with sesame oil. Season with black pepper.

Braised Mustard Greens

(Makes 8 servings)

4 slices bacon, chopped	3 bunches mustard greens, trimmed and chopped
2 TBSP white vinegar	2 tsp sugar
2 cups chicken broth	

1. In a large skillet over medium high heat brown bacon and render its fat.
2. Add chopped greens to the pan in batches and turn until they wilt, then add more greens.
3. When all of the greens are in the pan, add vinegar and cook a minute.
4. Season greens with sugar.
5. Add chicken broth to the pan and cover. Reduce heat to medium low and simmer greens 15 to 20 minutes then serve.

Black-Eyed Peas and Mustard Greens

(Makes 4 servings)

2 bacon slices	12-oz torn mustard greens, stems removed
1/4 tsp black pepper	1 TBSP olive oil
1/2 cup chopped green onions	2 tsp caraway seeds
3 garlic cloves, minced	1 jalapeno pepper, seeded and chopped
1 (16-ounce) can black-eyed peas, <i>rinsed and drained</i>	1/4 cup balsamic vinegar

1. Cook bacon in large nonstick skillet over medium heat until crisp. Remove bacon from pan, reserving 1 tablespoon drippings in pan. Crumble bacon and set aside.
2. Add greens to drippings in pan; cook 4 minutes or until wilted.
3. Combine greens and black pepper in large bowl, set aside.
4. Add oil to pan. Stir in onions, caraway seeds, garlic, and jalapeño; cook 1 minute.
5. Add black-eyed peas; cook 1 minute.
6. Stir in vinegar and bring to boil. Add pea mixture to greens mixture. Sprinkle with reserved bacon.

Vegetable Lo Mein with Edamame & Mustard Greens

(Makes 6 servings)

1/2 cup low-sodium chicken broth	2 TBSP canola oil
1/2 c sliced mushrooms	1 TBS grated ginger
2 quarts water	1 medium red bell pepper, <i>cut into 1/4-inch thick strips</i>
3 cups chopped mustard greens	1 (14-ounce) package Chinese egg noodles (or 1/4 <i>vermicelli or spaghetti noodles</i>)
3/4 cup chopped green onions	1-1/2 cups frozen shelled edamame <i>(green soybeans), thawed</i>
1/4 cup low sodium soy sauce, divided	
1 garlic clove, minced	
1 TBSP dark sesame oil	
3 TBSP hoisin sauce	

1. Bring 2 quarts water to boil in a Dutch oven. Add greens and cook for 1 minute or until greens wilt. Drain water from greens using a colander. Plunge greens into ice water; drain and squeeze dry. Set greens aside.
2. Cook egg noodles in 2 quarts of water for 2 minutes or until done. Drain well.
3. Place noodles in large bowl. Add 1 TBS soy sauce and sesame oil, tossing to coat, and set aside.
4. Heat oil in large non-stick skillet over medium-high heat. Add ginger; sauté for about 30 seconds. Add mushrooms, bell pepper, onions, garlic; sauté for 2 minutes or until bell pepper is crisp-tender.
5. Stir in greens and edamame; cook for 30 seconds.
6. Stir in chicken broth, noodle mixture, remaining 3 tablespoons soy sauce, and hoisin sauce; cook 2 minutes or until thoroughly heated.

Sweet Potato

Nutrition

Orange-fleshed sweet potatoes may be one of nature's unsurpassed sources of beta-carotene. Several recent studies have shown the superior ability of sweet potatoes to raise our blood levels of vitamin A. It is important to have some fat in your sweet potato-containing meals if you want to enjoy the full beta-carotene benefits of this root vegetable. Recent research has shown that a minimum of 3-5 grams of fat per meal significantly increases our uptake of beta-carotene from sweet potatoes. They are also a very good source of vitamin C and manganese. In addition, sweet potatoes are a good source of copper, dietary fiber, niacin, vitamin B5, and potassium.

Selection

Choose sweet potatoes that are firm and do not have any cracks, bruises or soft spots. Avoid those that are displayed in the refrigerated section of the produce department since cold temperature negatively alters their taste.

Storage

- Sweet potatoes should be stored in a cool, dark and well-ventilated place, where they will keep fresh for up to ten days.
- Ideally, they should be kept out of the refrigerator in a cool, dry, dark place.
- It is a good idea to keep your sweet potatoes loose and not in a plastic bag, but if desired, a brown paper bag with multiple air holes punched in it will work.
- Store in well-ventilated cupboard away from sources of excess heat, like the stove.

Preparation

- Peel them before eating since sometimes the skin is treated with dye or wax; if preparing the sweet potato whole, just peel it after cooking.
- As the flesh of sweet potatoes will darken upon contact with the air, cook them immediately after peeling and/or cutting them. If this is not possible, to prevent oxidation, keep them in a bowl covered completely with water until you are ready to cook them.

Black Bean and Sweet Potato Chili

(Makes 6 servings)

2 TBSP olive oil	2 ½ cups onions, chopped
3 garlic cloves, chopped	3 cups sweet potato, Cut in ½ inch pieces
2 TBSP chili powder	2 tsp cumin, ground
3 (15 oz) cans black beans, rinsed & drained	2 ½ cups vegetable stock
1 (14.5 oz) can diced tomatoes	2 cups swiss chard, chopped (optional)

1. Heat oil in heavy large pot over medium high heat. Add onion and garlic, sauté until clear or lightly browned.
2. Add the diced sweet potatoes, sauté about 2 minutes. Stir in chili powder and cumin. Saute mix for a couple of minutes or until golden brown.
3. Add beans, stock, and tomatoes. Bring to a boil.
4. Reduce heat and simmer uncovered, until sweet potatoes are tender.
5. Stir in chopped chard (optional), simmer until tender but still bright green. Season to taste with black pepper.

Oven Roasted Sweet Potato

(Makes 4 servings)

3 small sweet potatoes (about 2 pounds) 1- 1/2 TBSP garlic-flavored olive oil
1/2 tsp dry mustard 2 tsp minced fresh rosemary

1. Preheat oven to 450°.
2. Peel sweet potatoes; cut each potato lengthwise into 8 wedges. In a large bowl, combine sweet potatoes and remaining ingredients; toss well to coat.
3. Arrange potatoes in a single layer on a baking sheet. Bake potatoes at 450° for 30 minutes or until soft and lightly browned, turning wedges after the first 15 minutes. Serve immediately.

Sweet Potato and Spinach Quesadillas

(Makes 4 servings)

2 medium sweet potatoes (1 pound total) 1 cup red-wine vinegar
1/2 cup sugar 4 black peppercorns
1 large red onion, sliced 1/4 tsp ground black pepper
8 (6-inch) whole-wheat tortillas 5 cups baby spinach (about 4 ounces)
1 cup shredded part-skim mozzarella 4 TBSP olive oil

1. Microwave potatoes on high until tender (about 15 minutes).
2. Meanwhile, in a medium saucepan, combine vinegar, sugar, and peppercorns; bring to a boil and stir to dissolve sugar. Place onion slices in a medium heatproof bowl; pour hot vinegar mixture over onion and let stand 10 minutes. Drain onion slices and transfer to a plate to cool.
3. Split cooked potatoes open with a knife; remove flesh and transfer to a bowl (you should have about 1 cup).
4. Use a fork to mash potato with pepper; divide potato filling among 4 tortillas. Top each with 1 heaping cup spinach, 1/4 cup cheese, and another tortilla.
5. Heat a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Working in batches, heat 1 teaspoon oil and transfer 1 quesadilla to skillet; cook until quesadilla is crisp and cheese is melted (about 3 minutes per side).
6. Transfer cooked quesadilla to serving plate. Repeat with remaining oil and quesadillas. Cut quesadillas in quarters and serve each with 1/4 cup pickled onions.

Sweet Potato Pudding

(Makes 6 servings)

6 sweet potatoes	3 TBSP butter, melted
1/4 cup low-fat cream	1 teaspoon vanilla
pepper to taste	1 teaspoon honey

1. Preheat oven to 350
2. Wash and peel sweet potatoes and remove blemishes. Boil or steam until fork tender
3. Drain and mash with a tablespoon of butter. Heat cream until hot but not boiling,
4. Beat potatoes with mixer, pouring in cream in a thin stream, beat until fluffy.
5. Beat in remaining ingredients
6. Transfer potatoes in a buttered baking dish.
7. Bake for 20 minutes, until brown.

Brown Sugar-Glazed Sweet Potato Wedges

(Makes 12 servings)

Make this dish up to two days ahead, and store, covered, in the refrigerator. Reheat at 350, covered, for 20 minutes or until heated through; if desired, finish the dish under the broiler to recrisp the edges of the potato.

1/4 cup unsalted butter	3/4 cup packed dark brown sugar
1/4 cup water	1/2 tsp ground nutmeg
1/4 tsp ground ginger	1 (3-inch) cinnamon stick
4 pounds sweet potatoes, peeled, cut in half crosswise, and cut into 1/2-inch wedges	
Cooking spray	

1. Preheat oven to 400°.
2. Melt butter in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Add sugar, water, nutmeg, ginger, and cinnamon; bring to a simmer. Cook 5 minutes, stirring frequently. Discard cinnamon stick.
3. Combine sugar mixture and potato wedges in a large bowl; toss well to coat.
4. Arrange potato mixture on a large jelly-roll pan coated with cooking spray.
5. Bake at 400° for 40 minutes or until tender, stirring after 20 minutes.
6. Yield: 12 servings (serving size: 2/3 cup).

Twice Baked Sweet Potato

(Makes 2 servings)

2 medium sweet potatoes
2 TBSP reduced-fat sour cream
2 TBSP shredded reduced-fat sharp cheddar cheese

3 ounces turkey bacon, diced
3 tsp chopped fresh chives

1. Pierce potatoes with a fork, and arrange on paper towels. Microwave on high 8 minutes; turn potatoes over after 4 minutes.
2. Cut each potato in half lengthwise, and scoop out the pulp, leaving 1/4-inch-thick shells.
3. Mash pulp with 3 ounces turkey bacon, 2 tablespoons sour cream, and 2 teaspoons chives in a bowl. Spoon mixture into shells.
4. Sprinkle 2 tablespoons cheese over tops of potatoes. Microwave on high 2 minutes, and sprinkle with 1 teaspoon chives.

Roasted Sweet Potatoes

(Makes 3 - 5 servings)

3 sweet potatoes, *peeled and cut into bite size cubes*
1 tsp of ground cinnamon
Pinch of ground ginger

2 tsp olive oil
1 TBSP of brown sugar
1/4 tsp of ground nutmeg

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.
2. Coat a small baking dish with cooking spray.
3. Peel and dice the sweet potatoes into bite size cubes.
4. Mix olive oil, brown sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg, and ginger.
5. Toss sweet potatoes with olive oil mixture. Place coated sweet potatoes in baking dish.
6. Bake in the oven for 60 minutes. Stir the sweet potatoes once or twice during roasting.

Broccoli

Nutrition

Broccoli can provide you with some special cholesterol-lowering benefits if you will cook it by steaming. The fiber-related components in broccoli do a better job of binding together with bile acids in your digestive tract when they've been steamed. When this binding process takes place, it is easier for bile acids to be excreted, and the result is a lowering of your cholesterol levels.

Broccoli may help us solve our vitamin D deficiency epidemic. When large supplemental doses of vitamin D are needed to offset deficiency, ample supplies of vitamin K and vitamin A help keep our vitamin D metabolism in balance. Broccoli has an unusually strong combination of both vitamin A (in the form of beta-carotene) and vitamin K. For people faced with the need to rebuild vitamin D stores through vitamin D supplements, broccoli may be an ideal food to include in the diet.

Selection

Choose broccoli heads with tight, green florets and firm stalks. The broccoli should feel heavy for its size. The cut ends of the stalks should be fresh and moist looking. Avoid broccoli with dried out or browning stem ends or yellowing florets.

Storage

Store broccoli unwashed in an open plastic bag in the refrigerator. If bought very fresh like at a farmers market, broccoli will keep up to 10 days.

Preparation

Trim Off the Florets - Slice straight through the broccoli stem as close to the crown as you can get. The crown should break into several large florets. Cut through the "trunk" of each floret to make bite-sized pieces. Place these in a small bowl and run them under water to wash away any grit.

Blanching - Prepare a bowl of ice water and have it next to the stove. Bring a large pot of water to a rapid boil. Add a heaping tablespoon of salt. Add the broccoli florets and cook until crisp-tender, 1 - 1 1/2 minutes. Remove with a slotted spoon and plunge immediately in the ice water. Let the water come back to a boil, then cook the stems until they are also crisp-tender, 1 1/2 - 2 minutes. If you would like softer vegetables, cook for an additional 30 seconds.

Steaming in the Microwave - Place the broccoli florets and stems in a microwave-safe dish and pour 2-3 tablespoons of water over top. Cover with a dinner plate and microwave on high for 3-4 minutes. Remove the lid carefully and check if the broccoli is tender. Microwave in additional one minute bursts if necessary.

Steaming on the Stove Top - Fill a pot with a few inches of water and insert a steamer basket over top. Be sure the water does not touch the bottom of the steamer basket. Bring the water to a simmer over medium-high heat. Add the broccoli florets and stems and cover. Steam for 4-5 minutes, until tender.

Creamy Broccoli and Apple Slaw

(Makes 4 servings)

1/2 cup plain low-fat yogurt

1 TBSP cider vinegar

black pepper

1/2 apple, finely chopped

2 TBSP pecans

1/4 cup mayonnaise

1 small shallot, finely chopped

1/2 bunch broccoli, finely chopped (~ 3 cups)

1/4 cup dried cranberries

1. In a large bowl, stir together the yogurt, mayonnaise, vinegar, shallot, black pepper.
2. Add the broccoli, apple, cranberries, and nuts. Toss to combine.

Broccoli, Orange, and Olive Salad

(Makes 4 servings)

1 bunch broccoli, cut into florets (~ 6 cups) 1/4 cup pitted kalamata olives, chopped
1 orange, *segmented, plus 1 TBSP finely grated zest* 2 TBSP olive oil
1/4 tsp black pepper

1. Fill a large saucepan with 1 inch of water and fit with a steamer basket. Bring the water to a boil. Place the broccoli in the basket, cover, and steam until tender, 5 to 7 minutes.
2. Rinse broccoli with cold water to cool. Drain thoroughly in colander.
3. In a large bowl, toss the broccoli with the olives, orange segments and zest, olive oil, and black pepper.

Carmelized Broccoli

(Makes 6 servings)

1 TBSP plus 1 tsp olive oil 8 cups small broccoli florets
1 cup diced sweet onion 1/2 cup pecans, roughly chopped
2 TBSP balsamic vinegar 1/2 cup raisins
Black pepper, to taste

1. Heat 1 TBSP olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add broccoli florets and onion; cook 5 minutes.
2. Stir in pecans; cook 2 minutes. Add balsamic vinegar and raisins; cook 2 more minutes.
3. Remove from heat and stir in black pepper and remaining 1 tsp olive oil.

Roasted Garlic Lemon Broccoli

(Makes 6 servings)

2 heads broccoli, separated into florets 2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil
1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper 1 clove garlic, minced
1/2 teaspoon lemon juice

1. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F.
2. In a large bowl, toss broccoli florets with the extra virgin olive oil, pepper and garlic.
3. Spread the broccoli out in an even layer on a baking sheet.
4. Bake in preheated oven until florets are tender enough to pierce the stems with a fork, 15 to
5. 20 minutes.
6. Remove and transfer to a serving platter. Squeeze lemon juice liberally over the broccoli before serving for a refreshing, tangy finish.

Broccoli-Orange Salad

4 cups fresh broccoli florets
(about 1 ½ lbs. fresh broccoli)
½ cup pecan pieces, toasted
2 tablespoons sugar
1 (11-ounce) can Mandarin oranges, drained

1 small purple onion, thinly sliced
½ cup raisins
¾ cup mayonnaise (fat-free or reduced-fat)
1 ½ teaspoons white vinegar

1. Combine first 4 ingredients in a bowl, set aside.
2. Combine mayonnaise, sugar and vinegar. Add to broccoli mixture, stirring to coat.
3. Gently stir in Mandarin oranges. Cover and refrigerate at least 3 hours.

Mediterranean Roasted Broccoli and Tomatoes

(Makes 4 servings)

12 ounces broccoli crowns,
bite-size florets (about 4 cups)
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 TBSP lemon juice
1 tsp dried oregano

1 cup grape tomatoes
1 TBSP olive oil
1/2 tsp freshly grated lemon zest
10 pitted black olives, sliced

1. Preheat oven to 450°F.
2. Toss broccoli, tomatoes, oil, and garlic in a large bowl until evenly coated.
3. Spread in an even layer on a baking sheet. Bake until the broccoli begins to brown, 10 to 13 minutes.
4. Meanwhile, combine lemon zest and juice, olives, and oregano in a large bowl. Add the roasted vegetables; stir to combine. Serve warm.