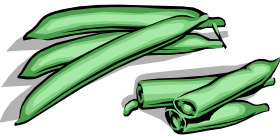


PICK A BETTER SNACK – ON THE GO!

June

Week One -

On the Go – With Green Beans!



June is fresh fruit and vegetable month! As summer approaches fresh produce is becoming more plentiful at the store. A popular vegetable this

time of year is the green bean.

Green beans are part of a food category referred to as edible pod beans – you eat the pod as well as the beans inside. Green beans, sometimes called snap beans for the way they “snap” when bent, are one of the most popular varieties of edible pod beans. The edible pods contain such nutrients as beta carotene, lutein and zeaxanthin, and vitamin C. They are low in calories but rich in carbohydrates, fiber and folate. In addition to green beans, note there are other varieties that are yellow, red and purple.

Green beans and yellow wax beans are identical in taste and texture. They used to be called string beans because of a long tough string that would run down the seam of the pod. However, through breeding, this trait has been almost completely eliminated. Beans should have long, straight pods that snap easily when bent and have a good color. Avoid beans that are shriveled or show blemishes or signs of decay. Also avoid beans if the seed is visible through the pod, this indicates the bean is over-mature and will be tough and leathery. Store green beans in the refrigerator, but don't wash them until you're ready to use.

Wash. Eat. (how easy is that?)

Take Green Beans With You!

- Green beans taste great fresh off the vine! Keep a container of washed, ready-to-eat beans in your refrigerator for a quick, crunchy snack.
- Dunk fresh green beans in low-fat dip.
- Add fresh green beans to any salad.

GRILLED GREEN BEANS

Heat grill. In foil place green beans (stemmed, snapped if desired), drizzle with a little olive oil and sprinkle with garlic powder. For more color and flavor, add wedges of red onion. Seal vegetables into foil and grill about 15 to 20 minutes – depending upon desired crispness.

Quick Nibble:

The Spanish brought beans back to the old world where they were valued as an ornamental, not as an edible vegetable.

Week Two -

On the Go – With Peaches!



June is rose month! Along with roses being in bloom, peaches are making a seasonal comeback at your grocer's produce stand. Did you know peaches are members of the rose family? That explains the sweet fragrance they give

off when ripe.

When choosing peaches, note that they don't get sweeter after harvest although they may get softer and juicier as they mature. Look for peaches with a skin showing a yellow or creamy background color. The amount of pink or red on the skin will depend on the variety and is not a good indicator of ripeness. If there is a green undertone, it means the peach was picked too early and it will not be sweet. Avoid peaches that are hard and instead choose those that yield to pressure along the seam. If your peaches aren't quite ripe when you buy them, place them in a paper sack with an apple and leave them on the counter for a couple days. They should soften up. Avoid peaches with tan circles or spots on the skin because this is an early sign of decay.

Wash. Eat. (how easy is that?)

Take Peaches With You!

- Pack a fresh peach when you're on the go for an easy, take anywhere snack.
- For a quick dessert, top flour tortillas with sliced peaches and a sprinkle of cinnamon and sugar. Bake until heated through.

GRILLED PEACH DESSERT

Cut a peach in half and remove the pit. Spray the cut edge with low-fat butter spray and sprinkle with brown sugar. Grill over medium heat, cut side up for several minutes. Turn and grill until the peach is soft, but still holds its shape. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Quick Nibbles:

- ♥ Peaches are a low-fat food source of vitamin E.
- ♥ Commercially grown peaches are mechanically brushed after harvest to remove most of the fuzz.

For snack and activity ideas for the other 11 months of the year go to:

www.extension.iastate.edu/food/

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Week Three -

On the Go – With Apricots!



Apricot season runs from the beginning of May through the middle of July. Apricots are a good source of vitamin C, fiber, and potassium. Dried apricots are rich in iron. About half of the apricot

crop, grown mostly in California, is canned. Canned apricots packed in light syrup have twice as many calories and half the beta carotene and vitamin C of the fresh fruit.

When choosing fresh apricots, look for firm fruit with a yellowish orange color. Avoid apricots with a green tinge—they will never develop full flavor. If you purchase apricots that are not quite ripe, place them in a paper bag at room temperature for 2-3 days. Once ripe, store in the refrigerator for one or two days – they have a short shelf life. Wash fruit just before using.

Dried apricots are a rich source of iron, potassium, beta carotene and fiber. There are two main types of dried apricots: 1) California style that are dried halves and 2) Turkish style that are smaller and whole. Turkish are a bit sweeter. You may also wish to try apricot nectar. It is only slightly higher in calories than orange juice, but is a good source of potassium and beta carotene.

Wash. Eat. (how easy is that?)

Take Apricots With You!

- Fresh and dried apricots make a perfect take-anywhere snack. Take a sandwich bag full of apricots as you head out the door.
- Try mixing equal parts of apricot nectar with pineapple juice. Add sugar free lemon-lime soda if you want a little fizz.

APRICOT CEREAL BARS

Combine **1 cup white sugar** and **1 cup white corn syrup** in a saucepan over medium high heat. Heat until the mixture begins to bubble. Remove from heat and stir in **1 cup peanut butter**. Add to this syrup mixture **6-cups ready-to-eat breakfast cereal** (ex. toasted oats, corn flakes, puffed rice—a higher fiber, whole grain product is the nutritional preference) and **1 cup diced, dried apricots**. Spread into a 9x13 inch pan sprayed with non-stick cooking spray. Cool. Cut into squares.

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Week Four -

On the Go – With Lemons & Limes!



Both lemons and limes are praised for their disease fighting qualities. Due to their high vitamin C content, both fruits have historically been eaten to prevent

scurvy. For hundreds of years, British sailors have eaten limes to ward off scurvy. That's why Englishmen are sometimes referred to as "Limeys," even to this day!

During the California gold rush, lemons became so important to warding off scurvy that miners were willing to pay outrageous amounts of money for the fruit. The high demand of lemons during the gold rush led to a large number of lemon trees being planted to meet the demand. Americans are still reaping the benefits of the lemon rush more than 100 years later!

When choosing fresh lemons, look for a bright yellow color – not green. Limes should be dark green for the characteristic tart flavor we enjoy. Both lemons and limes should be heavy for their size with a fine-grained skin. Avoid fruit with bruises, wrinkles or discoloration. Lemons may remain at room temperature for about 2 weeks. Limes should always be refrigerated. To extend the shelf life of lemons and limes, store them in the refrigerator. Both may be effectively stored in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for up to 6 weeks.

Wash. Eat. (how easy is that?)

Take Lemons and Limes With You!

- As an alternative to high-fat dressing, squeeze lemon and lime juice on your salad for a tangy twist!
- Freeze lemon and lime juice in ice cube trays to add to your drinks on hot summer days.

LUSCIOUS LEMON OR LIME LIGHTNING

1 cup sugar free lemonade or reconstituted limeade
1 cup reduced fat or fat free lemon or key lime yogurt
½ cup sugar free lemon-lime soda
2 sticks red licorice

Combine first three ingredients. Pour into glasses. Bite ends from licorice and use as a straw to enjoy this tart treat. Note: You may wish to combine the lemon/limeade and yogurt at home. Pack this in a cooler and take to a picnic. Add the chilled soda when ready to serve.