

BUY FRESH - BUY LOCAL

Food of the Week: Bell Pepper

Originating in South America, sweet bell peppers have been grown on earth since 5000 BC. Spanish and Portuguese sailors, who traveled through South America, commonly ate this popular vegetable. Today bell peppers are primarily grown in China, Turkey, Spain, Romania, Nigeria, and Mexico, but are also found in California, Florida, and New Jersey.

Bell pepper can be found in a variety of colors. The yellow, orange, and red peppers are simply ripe versions of the green bell pepper. Bell peppers can be 3 inches wide and 4 inches long and have 3 to 4 lobes and blocky appearance. The bell pepper is harvested green before maturing to a different color. However, some fresh markets sell bell peppers that have been ripened red before harvest.

Red peppers have higher amounts of beta-carotene, thus are more nutrient dense than their green counterparts. In addition, red peppers are high in vitamin C and have a fair amount of vitamin E. These vitamins and other nutrients have been shown to prevent heart disease, stroke, some cancers and cataracts.

Nutrition

Nutrition information per 1 large yellow pepper: calories: 50, carbohydrates: 12 g, proteins: 2 g, fat: 0 g, cholesterol: 0 mg, fiber: 2 g, sodium: 4 mg, potassium: 394 mg, vitamin A: 45 RE, vitamin C: 341 mg

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
University Extension

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Recipe of the Week: Easy Stuffed Peppers

Preparation Time >20 min Makes 4 servings

4 peppers, large
12 oz ground turkey
1 c onions, finely chopped
1 t dried oregano
1.5 c cooked rice
¼ c grated parmesan cheese
¾ c fat-free egg substitute
1 c low sodium tomato sauce

Cut the peppers in half lengthwise. Remove and discard the stems and seeds. Blanch the peppers in boiling water for 3 minutes. Drain and set aside. Crumble the turkey into a 2 quart casserole. Sprinkle with the onions and oregano. Cover with vented plastic wrap and microwave on high for 4 minutes. Break up the turkey with a spoon and mix well. Cover and microwave on high for 3 minutes, or until the turkey is cooked through and the onions are translucent. Carefully drain off any accumulated fat. Stir in the rice, Parmesan, egg and 1/2 cup tomato sauce. Divide the mixture among the pepper halves. Arrange the peppers in a 9" x 13" baking dish. Top with the remaining 1/2 cup tomato sauce. Cover loosely with wax paper. Microwave on high for 6 minutes. Rearrange the peppers and give the dish a half turn. Cover and microwave on high for 6 minutes.

Nutritional information per serving: calories: 399 kcal, carbohydrates: 32 g, proteins: 34 g, fat: 15 g, cholesterol: 91 mg, fiber: 4 g, sodium: 633 mg, vitamin A: 205 RE, calcium: 159 mg

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