

Words on Wellness

YOUR EXTENSION CONNECTION TO NUTRITION AND FITNESS

Create a Rainbow on Your Plate

When it comes to fruits and vegetables, eating a variety of colors—red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, and white—provides the best mix of nutrients for your body, not to mention being more pleasing to the eye. Recommendations regarding how much people need depend on age, gender, and amount of physical activity. To learn more about your daily recommendations, visit www.choosemyplate.gov/MyPlate. Most Americans need to increase the amount of fruits and vegetables eaten every day. Remember, all product forms count—fresh, canned, frozen, dried, and 100% juice. By eating more fruits and vegetables, your risk of chronic disease is reduced.



Tips to increase fruits and vegetables in your diet:

- Prepare fruits and vegetables as soon as you get them so they are ready to eat. Consider dividing into individual servings so they are easy to grab and go.
- Have veggies and low-fat dip for a snack.
- Add vegetables to casseroles, stews, and soups.
- Choose fruit for dessert.
- Add veggies to sandwiches.
- Enjoy a fruit smoothie for breakfast or as a snack.

For more tips, visit spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu/cook/produce-basics/.

Source: www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/eat-a-colorful-variety-of-fruits-and-vegetables



Vegetable Soup with Kale and Lentils

Serving Size: 1 1/2 cups | Serves: 6

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons oil (canola or vegetable)
- 1 medium onion, chopped (about 1 cup)
- 1 medium carrot (sliced 1/8 inch thick)
- 2 teaspoons garlic (peeled and minced; 3 cloves) or 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 4 cups water
- 1 cup dry yellow or brown lentils
- 1 can (14.5 ounces) low sodium chicken broth
- 1 tablespoon dried basil or Italian seasoning
- 1 can (14.5 ounces) no sodium added diced tomatoes or 2 chopped tomatoes
- 1 bunch kale (about 7 ounces)
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon ground black pepper

Instructions

1. Heat oil in a large pot over medium heat.
2. Add onion, carrot, and garlic. Cook 5 minutes.
3. Add water to veggies in pot. Heat to boiling.
4. Rinse lentils in colander with water. Add lentils to pot and simmer for 20 minutes. Do not drain.
5. Add chicken broth, dried basil or Italian seasoning, and tomatoes. Cover and cook for 5–10 minutes.
6. Rinse kale leaves; cut out the main stems and discard. Cut leaves into 1" pieces.
7. Stir kale, salt, and pepper into lentil mixture. Return to boiling. Reduce heat, cover, and simmer for 3 minutes.

Nutrition information per serving: 200 calories, 5g total fat, 1g saturated fat, 0g trans fat, 0mg cholesterol, 170mg sodium, 29g total carbohydrate, 12g fiber, 4g sugar, 11g protein

Recipe courtesy of ISU Extension and Outreach's Spend Smart. Eat Smart. website. For more information, recipes, and videos, visit spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu.



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Food Safety for Donated Garden Produce

Donating extra produce from your garden is a great way to reduce waste and address food insecurity in your community. Iowa State University Extension and Outreach has two publications that are useful to review if you plan to donate produce this growing season. *Growing Together: Food Safety in Donation Gardens* provides useful tips for keeping donation garden produce safe during the stages of growing, harvest, and transport. Tips include keeping pets away from the garden, washing hands before and after handling produce, and using municipal (drinking) water to rinse and remove visible dirt from produce. Another publication titled *Top 13 Vegetables to Donate to Food Pantries* discusses the produce that food pantries prefer to receive because clients recognize them, they are simple to prepare, they can be used in many different ways, and they can be stored at least one or two days without refrigeration. Find the no-cost resources online at the Extension Store:

Growing Together: Food Safety in Donation Gardens,
store.extension.iastate.edu/product/15257

Top 13 Vegetables to Donate to Food Pantries,
store.extension.iastate.edu/product/14938

Get Active with Gardening

April is National Garden Month, and if you garden, you probably have experienced many of the benefits. Gardening not only provides nutritious food, it also provides a great cardio and strengthening workout. Spending time connecting with nature can also relieve stress. The regular physical activity gardening provides helps prevent heart disease, obesity, diabetes, and high blood pressure. The strength gained (think carrying watering cans full of water or pushing a wheelbarrow) helps prevent osteoporosis as well. As with any physical activity, it is important to check with your doctor if you have concerns. Consider starting a garden this year. It does not have to be big, even a window box or a few containers provide many benefits. Learn more about the benefits of growing your own produce at articles.extension.org/pages/27731/benefits-of-growing-your-own-fruits-and-vegetables.



Source: web.extension.illinois.edu/cfiv/homeowners/050103.html