

# Words on Wellness

## Get Fired Up! Grill What's in Season

Warm weather is a wonderful time to fire up the grill. From asparagus to early zucchini or grilled chicken with mushrooms, onions, and peppers, using your grill to make the most of the summer



crop of vegetables adds a variety of colors to summer meals! Did you know that there are several different ways to grill perfect vegetables? Check out the tips below!

- **Directly on the grill.** On a gas grill, preheat the grill to medium heat, about 375°F. Marinate your veggies or season them with your favorite spices and lightly drizzle with olive oil. Put your seasoned vegetables on the grill in a single layer, placing the ones that take the longest to cook in the back of the grill. Close the lid and let the vegetables cook for ~20 minutes. After 10 minutes, open the lid and flip the vegetables until done to your liking.
- **Kabobs.** A kabob is made by skewering pieces of meat and or vegetables and then grilling them. Grilling kabobs is a great way to grill a bunch of vegetables together! Toss vegetables in desired sauce and seasonings. If using wooden skewers, soak them in water for 30 minutes before threading on the vegetables to avoid burning. Combine vegetables with similar cooking times onto skewers (peppers, onions, zucchini, tomatoes). Place skewers on the grill over medium heat. Grill for 20 minutes or until you can easily stick a fork through the vegetable.
- **Foil packets.** This way of grilling requires no pots and pans to scrub! To create foil packets, place ingredients in the center of the foil and tightly seal the packet to trap the steam inside. You can serve the packets directly from the grill or stack them in the refrigerator until you are ready to use. Check out this month's recipe!
- **Grill basket.** Using this method is similar to a foil packet but easier. A grill basket is a wire container made out of large-weave mesh. You can use it to hold food while cooking on a grill. For more information, check out this Iowa State University Extension article on [Grilling those summer veggies](https://blogs.extension.iastate.edu/answerline), [blogs.extension.iastate.edu/answerline](https://blogs.extension.iastate.edu/answerline).
- **Questions about grill safety?** Read [Safe Summertime Grilling](https://blogs.extension.iastate.edu/answerline), [blogs.extension.iastate.edu/answerline](https://blogs.extension.iastate.edu/answerline).

## Grilled Vegetable Packets

Serving Size: 3/4 cup | Serves: 5

### Ingredients:

- 2 zucchini, small (sliced)
- 2 yellow squash, small (sliced)
- 4 red potatoes, small (scrubbed well and sliced)
- 1/2 red onion (sliced)
- 1/2 bell pepper (red or green, seeded and sliced)
- 1/4 cup Italian salad dressing, light
- salt and pepper (optional, to taste)

### Directions:

1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. Heat grill to medium heat or 350°F.
3. Wash vegetables and slice.
4. Toss in a large bowl. Add dressing and toss until vegetables are coated.
5. Tear 2 large squares of aluminum foil and place half of the vegetable mixture on each piece. Place an equal piece of foil over the top of the vegetable mixture and fold bottom piece with top sheet to form a packet.
6. Place on heated grill for 20–30 minutes or until the potatoes are tender. If you don't have a grill, bake Veggie Packets in the oven at 400°F for 20–30 minutes.
7. Before you open the packets, poke holes in the foil with a fork. Be careful opening the foil because the steam will be very hot and could burn you!
8. Empty vegetables onto serving plate or serve from foil packets.

### Nutrition information per serving:

133 calories, 0g total fat, 0g saturated fat, 0g trans fat, 0mg cholesterol, 144mg sodium, 29g total carbohydrate, 4g fiber, 5g sugar, 4g protein. This recipe is courtesy of MyPlate website, [USDA MyPlate Recipes](https://www.myplate.gov/myplate-kitchen/recipes), [www.myplate.gov/myplate-kitchen/recipes](https://www.myplate.gov/myplate-kitchen/recipes).

## Three Simple Rules for Outdoor Meals

Potlucks and family events are a fun reason to get outdoors in the warm weather. However, you need to take extra care to keep food safe from foodborne illness. Foodborne illnesses increase during the summer months because bacteria multiply faster with warm temperatures. Read the three simple food safety guidelines below to protect yourself, your family, and your friends from foodborne illness.

- **Clean.** Wash hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds before and after handling food, touching pets, and using the restroom. After prepping each item, wash and sanitize cutting boards, utensils, and dishes. Rinse fruits and vegetables under running tap water and scrub firm produce with a clean produce brush.
- **Separate.** Never place cooked food on a dish that previously held raw poultry, meat, seafood, or eggs. Bacteria can spread from raw juices to cooked or ready-to-eat food. Instead, use one cutting board for fresh produce and another for raw food items.
- **Cook.** Pack a food thermometer to ensure the safety of meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs. These food items must be cooked to a safe minimum internal temperature to destroy any harmful bacteria that could cause foodborne illnesses. Use a food thermometer to test for doneness:
  - Fish—145°F
  - Steaks, chops—145°F
  - Ground meat—160°F
  - Poultry—165°F

Sources: [US Food and Drug Administration](https://www.fda.gov), [www.fda.gov](http://www.fda.gov)  
[ISU Extension and Outreach - Words on Wellness](http://go.iastate.edu/IFSNX3), [go.iastate.edu/IFSNX3](http://go.iastate.edu/IFSNX3)

## Double Up on Food Bucks

Did you know more than 380,000 Iowans rely on food assistance programs? Iowa ranks 50th in the nation for fruit and vegetable consumption, according to the Iowa Healthiest State Initiative website. The Double Up Food Bucks (DUFBI) Incentive Program matches the value of food assistance benefits and makes it easier for low-income Iowans to consume fruits and vegetables while supporting local farmers and economies. For more information, read the tips below.

- If you are on food assistance, you get more money to spend on fresh fruit and vegetables! DUFBI gives you \$1 for every \$1 you spend on any fresh fruits and vegetables with your SNAP EBT card. You can use the extra money to buy fresh fruit and vegetables at local grocery stores or farmers markets.
- In Iowa, find a [DUFBI location](http://iowahealthieststate.com), [iowahealthieststate.com](http://iowahealthieststate.com), near you.
- Outside of Iowa, see if your state has this program and find participating grocery stores and farmers markets near you at [Double Up Food Bucks](http://doubleupamerica.org), [doubleupamerica.org](http://doubleupamerica.org).

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*If you or someone you know is skipping meals, going hungry, or choosing between food and medicine, call 1-855-944-3663 to apply for assistance today.*

*Call Iowa 2-1-1 or Iowa Lifelong Links, 1-866-468-7887, for additional resources.*

