

Words on Wellness

Produce Basics

Preparing fresh produce is easy if you have the right information! Spend Smart. Eat Smart [Produce Basics](https://go.iastate.edu/EXKVVD), go.iastate.edu/EXKVVD, describes how to store, clean, and prepare fresh produce.

- **Corn on the Cob**, go.iastate.edu/UIOFP4: A summer staple that is high in fiber.
 - Choose ears of corn that have a bright green husk.
 - If husk is removed, refrigerate in tightly wrapped plastic for 1 to 2 days. If husk is still on, store uncovered in a refrigerator for 1 to 2 days.
- **Onions**: This vegetable is high in vitamin C and fiber.
 - Choose onions that are dry, shiny, and firm, and do not have dents or bruises.
 - Store whole onions in a cool, dark, well-ventilated place and use within 4 weeks.
 - Refrigerate cut onions in a tightly sealed container and use within 7 days.
 - Rinse onions under cool running water before use.
- **Zucchini**, go.iastate.edu/ZAC1CS: This food helps heal cuts and wounds while helping the immune system.
 - Choose zucchini that have shiny skins and firm flesh.
 - Store in a plastic bag in the vegetable (crisper) drawer of the refrigerator and use within 4–5 days.

Produce Safety in Gardens

Gardening is a fun and satisfying summer activity. It can increase your family's food security and have physical and mental health benefits. However, gardens can be a dangerous place. Here are some essential gardening safety and health tips to keep in mind:

- **Wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**. Use safety gloves to protect your hands from cuts and irritations. Wear long sleeves, safety goggles, long pants, a straw hat, and boots. Apply sunscreen that has an SPF of 30 or higher and use insect repellent if needed.
- **Consider temperatures**. Weather conditions can change excessively from morning to afternoon. Check the weather first and then plan your gardening day. Remember to stay hydrated!
- **Use chemicals carefully**. Read the chemical label before use. This ensures it will be used correctly and for its intended purpose. Store away from children and animals.
- **Focus on posture**. Gardening includes a lot of bending and kneeling. Take time to ensure you maintain the right posture. Ask for assistance when lifting anything heavy.

Summer Bounty Salad

Serving Size: 1 cup | Serves: 8

Ingredients:

- 7 cups vegetables (zucchini, broccoli, carrots, radishes, green onions)
- 1 pepper (green, red, or yellow)
- 2 tomatoes (red, yellow, or mixed)
- 2/3 cup light or fat free salad dressing

Directions:

1. Wash and prepare the vegetables as follows:
 - Cut broccoli into florets.
 - Chop zucchini, carrots, radishes, and green onions.
 - Slice pepper (1 to 1 1/2 cups)
 - Chop tomatoes.
2. Combine vegetables and salad dressing in a bowl, stirring to coat vegetables with dressing.
3. Cover and refrigerate 1–3 hours to blend flavors. Store any leftovers in refrigerator and use within 3 days

Tip:

We have a video for you! Make [Summer Bounty Salad](https://go.iastate.edu/HLKNNF), go.iastate.edu/HLKNNF. This is a [recipe](https://go.iastate.edu/ZYRU63), go.iastate.edu/ZYRU63, that is easy, delicious, and perfect for this time of year.

Nutrition information per serving:

60 calories, 1.5g total fat, 0g saturated fat, 0g trans fat, 0mg cholesterol, 220mg sodium, 10g total carbohydrate, 3g fiber, 6g sugar, 2g protein



How to Create a Container Garden

Is your garden limited on space? Consider growing your vegetables in containers! Container gardening occurs when plants are grown in containers such as pots rather than in the ground. This method reduces potential problems with infertile garden sites and “free-living” bacteria such as nematodes.

- **Containers.** Almost any type of container can be used as long as it has drainage holes in the bottom. Common containers include plastic, clay, ceramic, or wood. Check out this [resource](https://extension.iastate.edu/product/4179), store. extension.iastate.edu/product/4179, for more information on size of containers recommended for various vegetables and the amount of potting mix.
- **Growing mixes.** Select quality mixes that are free of plant disease organisms and weed seeds, are less likely to compact, drain well, are lightweight, and hold moisture and nutrients. Soilless potting mixes can be purchased from garden centers and retail outlets and can be prepared with fertilizer included.
- **Summer care of container gardens.**
 - **Location.** Vegetables grow best in full sunlight. Plants that bear fruit require at least 6 hours of direct sunlight per day. Leafy vegetables tolerate more shade.
 - **Watering.** Plants grown in containers require more frequent watering because they dry out from the sun and wind. Never allow the soil to completely dry out between waterings. Overwatering will also kill plants. Avoid wetting leaves when watering to prevent the development of plant diseases.
 - **Fertilization.** A soluble fertilizer (15-30-15 or 20-20-20) applied once every week is recommended. If using a commercial potting mix, it may not be necessary to begin fertilization until midsummer.

Journey with Mindfulness

Stress is a regular part of life, but coping with it can be difficult. Many continue to feel overwhelmed, unsure, and exhausted. One way to welcome a fresh start and clear the head is to explore meditation practices. Meditation practices have a variety of health benefits such as improved sleep quality and reduced physical symptoms of stress and anxiety, and they can help you learn to stay centered and keep inner peace. See below for apps and music for meditation.

- **Insight Timer** is a free app for your device. It provides guided meditations and talks led by the world’s top meditation and mindfulness experts, neuroscientists, and psychologists.
- **The Stop, Breathe, Think** app is available for Apple and Android devices. It allows the user to check in with emotions and recommends short, guided meditations as well as yoga and acupressure videos.
- **The Calm** app includes guided meditations, sleep stories, music, classes, and calm body programs.

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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.

