

# NUTRITION NEWS

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## Summer Produce

SquirrelPicnic.com



### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Summer is here! The fresh fruits and vegetables are abundant at this time of year. Have you ever wondered what specific fruits and vegetables are available right here in upstate New York? Here is a list along with which vitamins, nutrients, and minerals they contain.

- ◆ Arugula– Arugula’s health benefits include protecting your heart, helping control your weight, improved eye health, reduced cancer risks, digestive aid, blood pressure improvements, diabetes prevention, and reducing inflammation in the body. It may also improve cognitive function. This leafy green vegetable is popular for use in salads, soups, pizza, and omelets. It is rich in Vitamin C, Vitamin A, Vitamin K, and folate. It also contains calcium, potassium, magnesium, phosphorous, zinc, and iron.
- ◆ Asparagus– The benefits of eating asparagus are varied. It may help lower your blood pressure, may help prevent certain can-

cers, may improve digestion, and may even contribute to healthier pregnancy outcomes. Asparagus is rich in fiber, folate, Vitamin A, Vitamin C, and Vitamin K.

- ◆ Cherries– Not only are cherries delicious, but they are packed with nutrients. They are rich in fiber, which can improve your bowel and cardiovascular health. They contain Vitamin C, which aids in immune function. Cherries contain potassium which regulates blood pressure as well as contributing to muscle contractions and nerve function. Cherries also provide B vitamins, manganese, copper, magnesium, and Vitamin K.
- ◆ Dandelion Greens– These greens can be eaten cooked or raw and are an excellent source of Vitamins A, C, and K. They also contain Vitamin E, folate, and small amounts of other B vitamins. They also contain antioxidants, which are crucial in keeping the body healthy

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### Monthly Exercise:

#### Single Leg Balance

Stand with feet shoulder width apart. Lift left foot above the ground, hold position for 12 sec. Repeat with right foot. Continue with 3 repetitions per side.

and possibly warding off certain cancers. Dandelion greens, like most greens, are also rich in fiber.

- ◆ Kale: Kale is a nutritious leafy green that is rich in antioxidants, Vitamin C, Vitamin K, and beta-carotene. These and other nutrients can support eye health, weight management, heart health, and digestive health. Kale has a nutty, earthy flavor that can easily be incorporated into a number of different dishes.
- ◆ Peas— Peas are a filling, excellent source of protein, which is one way that they differ from the above foods. Peas are also high in magnesium, potassium, and calcium. And they are also loaded with antioxidants and Vitamin C.
- ◆ Rhubarb— Rhubarb is known for its reddish color and sour taste. It is often cooked and sweetened. In Asia, its roots can be used medicinally. It is low in calories but is rich in Vitamin K. It is also high in fiber. It is abundant in upstate New York in early summer!
- ◆ Strawberries— Strawberries are also abundant here this time of year and many places offer “pick your own” sites. They are rich in Vitamin C as well as antioxidants. They are low in calories and high in fiber. They support heart health through anthocyanidins, which also prevent inflammatory conditions. They may also regular blood sugar.

Switching gears, according to a study conducted about 20 years ago, people who prepared food in their own kitchens failed to follow food safety and sanitation practices over 99% of the time. Some of these practices include hand washing, preparing, and storing ingredients at proper temperatures

and avoiding cross contamination. Here are a few more general rules to prevent illness, all the way from purchasing to preparation and serving.

- ◆ When shopping, select frozen foods and perishable foods last, such as meat and fish. Always have these products put in separate plastic bags so their drippings don't contaminate other foods.
- ◆ Don't use food from flawed containers that leak, bulge, or are severely dented. Don't taste food that has a foul odor or spurts liquid when the can is opened.
- ◆ Purchase only pasteurized milk and cheese.
- ◆ Purchase only the amount of produce needed for one week's time. The longer you keep fruits and vegetables, the more time available for bacteria to grow.
- ◆ When purchasing pre-cut produce, avoid those that look slimy, brownish, or dry; these are signs of improper holding temperatures.
- ◆ Thoroughly wash hands with hot, soapy water before and after handling food. This practice is especially important when handling raw meat, fish, poultry, or eggs.
- ◆ Make sure counters, cutting boards, dishes, and other equipment are thoroughly cleaned and rinsed before use.
- ◆ If possible, cut foods to be eaten raw on a clean cutting board reserved for that purpose. Then clean this cutting board using hot, soapy water. If the same board must be used for both meat and other foods, cut meat last. The USDA recommends cutting boards that are easy to clean, nonporous materials, such as plastic, marble, or glass. All cutting boards should be sanitized once

a week in a solution of 2 teaspoons chlorine bleach per quart of water.

- ◆ When thawing foods, do so in the refrigerator for 1-3 days, under cold running water, or in the microwave. Also, marinate foods in the refrigerator.
- ◆ Carefully wash fresh fruit and vegetables under running water to remove dirt and bacteria clinging to the surface.
- ◆ Use refrigerated ground meat and patties in 1-2 days and frozen meat and patties within 3-4 months.

So how do you know if you or a loved one has been infected with a foodborne illness? And how can you differentiate between a foodborne illness and a regular intestinal bug or the flu? A major difference is the amount of time and severity with which you are afflicted with symptoms. Foodborne illnesses tend to come on very fast and very strong, usually within just a few hours of eating the contaminated food.

The symptoms may vary depending on the type of infection. Most foodborne illnesses are acute, meaning they come on quickly, last a short amount of time, and usually resolve without treatment. Common symptoms of foodborne illnesses include vomiting, diarrhea (sometimes containing blood), abdominal pain, fever, and chills. Each year, about 48 million people in the United States alone experience foodborne illness. Even more sobering, about 3,000 deaths a year in the US are attributed to foodborne illness.

Foodborne illnesses can be caused by a number of different organisms or substances. These include bacteria, parasites, viruses, and chemicals.

Bacteria are probably the most typical source of foodborne illness. Bacteria include salmonella (found in raw and undercooked meats, poultry, dairy products, and seafood), E. coli (found in raw or undercooked hamburger, unpasteurized fruit juices, milk and fresh produce), and C. botulinum (found in improperly canned foods).

Parasites, such as Giardia or Trichinella, are tiny organisms that live within another organism. These infections are relatively rare in developed countries such as the United States. They are generally spread through water contaminated with the stools of people or animals that are infected. Foods that come into contact with contaminated water during growth or preparation can become contaminated with these parasites. Trichinella is a type of roundworm that may infect people through raw or undercooked pork or wild game.

Lastly, chemicals can cause foodborne illness. Fish or shellfish that may feed on algae that produce toxins may infect humans who then consume the fish or shellfish. Certain types of wild mushrooms also contain certain chemicals that may make people very ill. Lastly, unwashed fruits and vegetables that contain high concentrations of pesticides are also responsible for causing foodborne illnesses in humans.

Foodborne illness can cause acute or chronic health issues. These include dehydration, reactive arthritis, irritable bowel syndrome, and Guillain-Barre Syndrome.

Here is great recipe to try out that fresh local produce from the farmers' markets!

**Strawberry Rhubarb Crisp**

**Fruit Layer**

- 3 cups sliced fresh strawberries
- 3 cups diced rhubarb
- 1 cup white sugar
- 3 tbs all purpose flour

**Crunch Topping**

- 1 1/2 cups all purpose flour
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 cup rolled oats
- 1 cup butter

Gather all ingredients. Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Make the fruit layer. Mix strawberries, rhubarb, white sugar, and flour together in a large bowl. Place the mixture in a 9x13 inch baking dish.

Make the topping: combine 1 1/2 cups flour, brown sugar, oats, and butter and mix until crumbly. You may want to use a pastry cutter for this. Sprinkle on top of the rhubarb and strawberry layer.

Bake in the preheated oven until crisp and lightly browned, about 45 minutes.



**Be on the look out for The Office For The Aging Farmers Market coupons , available July 2023.**

**HEAP**

If you received HEAP last year but have not yet received an application for this year, please call our Office at 867-1195.

If you did not receive HEAP last year but want to apply this year, please call our Office at 867-1195.

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