



Cooking with the Good Food Box



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Objectives

- To encourage Good Food Box (GFB) participants to prepare tasty meals featuring veggies and fruit
- To expand and encourage cooking skills by providing training sessions and recipes to support healthy eating
- To demonstrate safe food handling and proper food storage
- To bring participants together to socialize and build support for healthy eating for self and families
- To encourage healthy living and diabetes prevention by increasing knowledge of healthy eating

Materials Needed

- Community Kitchen Facilitator Manual; Community Kitchen Participant Manual
- Module, including: Workshop Grocery List (Appendix A); Kitchen tools and Workshop Equipment List (Appendix B); Recipes and handouts
- First Aid Kit including band aids
- Draw Item - \$20 vegetable and fruit selection (can be items from a recent Good Food Box)

Workshop Preparation

~1-2 hours for workshop prep

- So you aren't rushed and have time to greet the participants as they arrive.

2½ - 3 hours for total workshop running time

- Assess the kitchen/hall to plan for demo and work areas, bring in groceries and equipment.
- Wash and sanitize all work and cooking areas (refer to page 3 of the Community Kitchen Facilitators Manual).
- Set-up sample GFB to use as a door prize (or use fresh fruit and vegetables as a prize if there is no GFB program).
- Make workshop participant snacks. Follow the 'Bean Dip recipe' (page 5) and serve with pitas and veggies.
- Set up stations. Arrange ingredients and cooking utensils needed for each recipe.
 - Station 1: Farmer's Pie; Lemon Pasta Salad
 - Station 2: Apple Sauce; Kale and Caramelized Onions.
- Set-up handouts for participants (evaluation forms, any other printed materials).

Workshop Participant Snacks

Bean Dip

Makes about 2 ½ cups, from The Basic Shelf Cookbook, 2011, Page 49.

Ingredients	Quantity
Black beans, drained and rinsed	1 can
Tomato salsa (buy pre-made or make from scratch. See recipe below.)	½ cup
Garlic, chopped	1 clove
Cumin	1 tsp
Pinch pepper	
Vegetables, pita bread wedges or crackers	

1. In a bowl combine beans, salsa, garlic, cumin and pepper.
2. For a chunky dip, use a fork or potato masher to mash all ingredients. For a smoother dip, incorporate all ingredients in a blender and blend to desired consistency. Serve with raw veggies, pita bread wedges or crackers.
3. No double dipping and refrigerate any leftovers.

Tip: Save cans to show ingredients, can sizes, nutrition label etc. Visual learners like to ‘see’ what you are using so they are familiar and will spot the item in the grocery store etc).

Basic & Easy Salsa

Makes about 2 cups

Ingredients	Quantity
Tomato, chopped to desired consistency	2 cups
Medium onion, finely chopped	½
Jalapeno pepper, finely diced (remove seeds if you think this is too spicy)	1
Juice of lime or lemon	1 (2-3 tbsp)
Pinch of salt and pepper	

Tip: In the fall season try fresh peaches, red onion and red pepper instead of tomato and onion.

Workshop Outline

Total workshop time: 2½ - 3 hours

1. Welcome, Snack and Housekeeping	5 min
2. Icebreaker Activity	15 min
3. GFB Discussion	20 min
4. Knife safety and onion demo	20 min
5. Work Stations	1hour 20 min
6. Eat together, Evaluation and GFB Draw	25 min
→Extras (“if time permits”)	
→Appendices	

Welcome, Snack and Housekeeping

(5 min)

- Introduce yourself and any helpers. Provide the bean dip with pita wedges and veggies as a snack.
- Registration/Attendance: collect info to track turnout.
- Housekeeping: Provide washroom location, reminders about handwashing, aprons, and hairnets/bandanas.

Icebreaker Activity

(15 min ‘Food Moves’)

***Ask people to stand for this icebreaker.**

Here’s how it works:

- You will name a food and participants will go to one corner of the room if they “like it”, another corner if they “don’t like it” and another corner if they “haven’t tried”. Make sure you let them know which corner is which!
- Try some of these: kale, onions, apples, cucumber, carrots, red lentils, garlic, lemon (and any others you want to add!)

***Note: This is a good time to discuss what to do if your GFB contains something you don’t want or already have a lot of. What can you do? Share with a friend, trade it in, leave it for someone else, take it home and freeze it etc.**

Fruit and Vegetable Group Discussion

(20 min) Let's talk about the Good Food Box (skip this paragraph if there is no GFB in your area)

- Use local information about availability, cost, and how to sign up.
- Review typical box content.
- A typical GFB Newsletter has these sections:
 - Featured food with selection, prep and storage info
 - Storage info for foods
 - Physical activity section- encouraging tips to get you started
 - Featured recipes

After grocery shopping wash*, prepare/cut vegetables and fruit when you get back home. Put these in the fridge for healthy snacks on the run, and/or portion them into individual servings or recipe measures and freeze for upcoming meals/snacks.

*Note: often best to wash leafy vegetables like spinach, kale and lettuce right before use, so that they don't get soggy (you can also use a salad spinner or paper towel to thoroughly dry before putting back into fridge).

Snack choices with the fruit and vegetables: (ask the group for ideas first)

- Whole or cut up vegetables like carrot sticks, celery, small tomatoes, cucumbers
- Carrots and celery with hummus
- Whole or sliced apples, oranges, pineapple chunks, grapes, with yogurt dip
- Individual yogurts with berries
- Baked potato or sweet potato chips
- Cottage cheese with fruit
- Peanut butter on celery

Discussion Activity: Ask participants **“What is your favourite dish or snack using something from the Good Food Box?”** (10 mins) See Appendix C for other ideas.

Knife Handling Safety

(20 min)

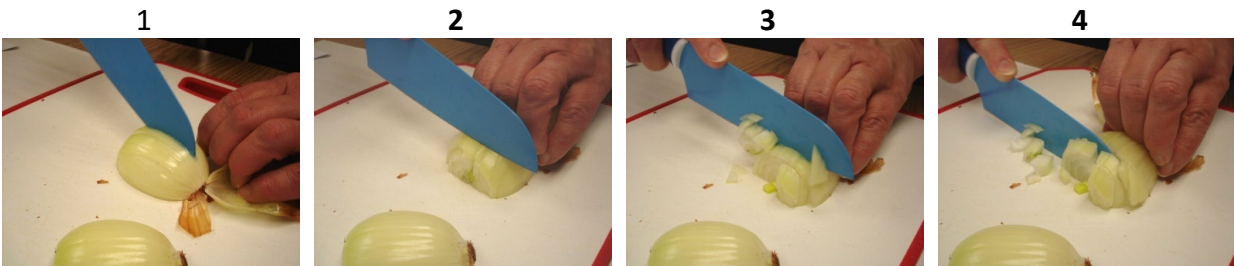
Provide hair nets or bandanas, review proper hand washing practices and have everyone wash their hands. Review procedure for dish washing dishes (wash, rinse, sanitize and air dry if possible).

Using a Knife Safely: Facilitator Demonstration

- Demonstrate 'claw' position (see photos below) and cutting safe basics using a cooking or yellow onion (or can choose carrots see Facilitator's Notes).
- Great beginnings start with a simple ingredients like an onion that adds lots of flavour, few calories and can be used in plenty of ways.
- Today's diced onion will be used for the kale recipe and/or tomato/onion/ jalapeño salsa.

How to Cut an Onion

- Those natural layers make chopping and dicing easy once you have the method for cutting.
- Peel away the papery layers, then slice off the top end. Slice in half from the top end to the root end. Place flat side down, hold at root end and make a series of parallel cuts from the top end to just above the root end using a small, sharp knife (1). Accomplished chefs also make several cuts along the flat plane from the tip to near the root end to make a finer dice.
- For home chefs, turn the onion 90° degrees and make several close cross cuts to produce finely chopped onion (2, 3, 4).



How to Select Onions

Choose onions that are dry on the outside and firm to the touch. The outer skin should be paper-like. One of the easiest ways to keep onions fresh is to store them in the mesh bags they're sold in. The mesh bag allows air circulation. If kept cool, dry and in the dark, onions should last for one month. There are many different colours of onions including yellow (cooking), red, white and green.

- Onions are often a basic included in the GFB.
- Onions add flavour and are a basic in so much of what we cook.

How Onions Add Flavour

- **Sauté:** In a frying pan on medium-high heat, add a teaspoon of vegetable oil, chopped or diced onions and stir. Cook them until transparent and still tender. This step may take 5 - 8 minutes.
- **Caramelizing:** In a frying pan at medium-high heat, add a tsp of vegetable oil. Heat the pan, then add onions. Stir to lightly coat in oil. Continue to cook on a medium heat stirring occasionally. They will soften and change colour to become a dark golden. If they begin to stick to the pan, add a little water and keep stirring. This may take 30 - 45 minutes. These slow cooked, golden onions add colour and a sweet but savory flavour to foods. Store refrigerated in an air tight container. Use within several days.

Uses for Onions

It's all about flavour! So add yellow, red or white onions to:

- Salads (pasta, bean or greens), sandwich fillings, sandwiches, grilled sandwiches/paninis and burger toppings.
- Soups, stews, stir fries, slow cooked casseroles.
- Slow roasted beef, pork or moose cooked with sliced or quartered onions.
- Sautéed onions in side dishes of veggies: potatoes & onions, cabbage & onions, green beans & onions.
- Spaghetti sauces, tomato salsas, relishes and scrambled eggs.
- Caramelized onions in soups, dips, quiches/egg dishes and as a pizza topping.

Ask if anyone has other ideas??

Green onions, also known as bunching onions or scallions, are great in salads, dips, salsas, sandwiches or a stir fry. Use fresh. Choose smooth, firm, white bulbs and bright green tops. Trim immediately and refrigerate in a plastic bag for up to one week. Simple to prepare, just peel by gently sliding off the outermost paper-thin layer.



Group Work/Work Stations

(1 hour 20 min) (80 min)

Participant Activity: Let's Get Cooking!

Organize participants into **two groups** and get them started with food preparation. Each group will do **two recipes**. Visit with each group and provide teaching as needed.

Station 1:

- Lemon pasta salad
- Farmer's Pie

Station 2:

- Kale and Caramelized Onions
- Applesauce

If one group is finished before another they can look in on what other groups are making and start with clean up.

A three sink system for dish washing should be set up at this time, or use of the sanitizing dishwasher.

Talking Points

We are going to prepare 4 items that we hope you will prepare at home again.

Hopefully there will be something in one of the dishes that you have not tried before.

We will split the group into 2 and each group will make 2 recipes.

Everyone will be able to enjoy all of the food at the end. Any leftovers can be taken home.

OPTIONAL: A 3rd station that everyone can visit when they're done their recipe. It has a 'take home' item for each participant



Work Station Group 1

Farmer's Pie

(Adapted from 'The Ontario Table' by Lynn Ogryzlo)

- Have the group each work on different parts of the recipe (chopping veggies, measuring spices, etc).

Ingredients	For 4-6
Sweet potatoes	2 (or 1 sweet and 2-3 small white potatoes)
Milk	~2tbsp
Onion, chopped	1
Garlic cloves, chopped	2
Veggies (anything you have in your fridge- mushrooms, carrots, peppers, corn)	1 cup (or more!)
Thyme, dried	1-2 tsp
Lean ground beef (or blend ground moose or deer with ground pork)	1 ½ lbs
Flour	2 tbsp
Liquid (any-broth, water, wine etc)	¼ cup
Beef bouillon cube	1
Cheese, grated	½ cup
Green onions, chopped	1-2

1. Peel and then boil sweet potatoes until tender and drain. Mash them with butter and a splash of milk. Add some salt and pepper and set aside.
2. Preheat oven to 375° F.
3. Heat oil in a pan and sauté onion and garlic for about 1 minute.
4. Add in vegetables and cook another couple of minutes.
5. Add in meat and cook until brown. Usually about 8-10 minutes.
6. Sprinkle flour over the meat and vegetables and stir well.
7. Add in liquid and bouillon cube.
8. Spoon the meat and veg into a deep baking dish (5 qt or 1.25L). Cover with half of the grated cheese.
9. Cover the mixture with the mashed potato topping. Top with green onions and the rest of the cheese.
10. Bake for 30 min at 375°F. Let cool and enjoy

Lemon Pasta Salad

- Have the group each work on different parts of the recipe.
- Mix and match! Try adding spinach, kale, tomatoes and any leftover raw vegetables that you have on hand. (You can leave part of the recipe without the 'extras' for people to try)

Ingredients	For 4
Dry small pasta (ex. orzo, small bowties, macaroni, wild rice mix)	1 ½ cups
Olive oil	2 tbsp
Lemon	Juice and zest of 1 lemon
Cucumber, seeded and chopped	1
Parsley, finely chopped	1 tbsp
Feta cheese, chopped	½ cup
*Optional: add in chopped spinach or kale	2 cups
*Optional: add in chopped tomatoes	1 cup

1. Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Cook the pasta according to package directions. Drain the pasta, let cool for a couple of minutes, and toss with the olive oil, lemon juice and zest, cucumber, herbs and feta.
2. Season with salt and pepper, to taste. Serve chilled. Can be made up to a day in advance and kept in the refrigerator. *Add the spinach or kale the day you plan to serve the salad.



Work Station Group 2

Apple Sauce

- This is a great way to use up less than perfect/fresh apples!
- Talk about ideas and other ways to use applesauce while you prep the recipe. For example: Use in baking to replace oil (1:1 ratio). Use it in baking to keep things moist. Use it as a topping on pancakes, French toast or oatmeal. Try it mixed with yogurt. Add it to a smoothie. Serve it with pork dishes.

Ingredients	
Apples (any kind works but McIntosh and Golden Delicious are great)	~ 3lbs
Sugar (maple syrup, brown sugar, white sugar)	¼ cup (or less!)
Cinnamon	1 tsp
Nutmeg	½ tsp
Dash of salt	⅛ tsp
Splash of water and lemon juice	1-2 tbsp each

1. Remove the cores from the apples and cut them into several large chunks. I like to leave the skins on most of my apples for the extra fiber and vitamins.
2. Place apples and all the ingredients in a pot. Turn on medium-high heat. Cover with a tight-fitting lid.
3. Bring to a boil, then cover and reduce heat to low. Simmer for 20-25 minutes or until the apples have softened significantly. Stir often so they don't stick to the bottom!
4. Add more water if needed, to get the right consistency.
5. Mash with a potato masher, pass through a food mill or puree with an immersion blender (or food processor). If you'd like a smoother version, pass through a sieve.
6. Serve at room temperature or refrigerate until cold.



Kale and Caramelized Onions

Serves 4-6 as a side

Ingredients	
Fresh kale, wash, de-stemmed and roughly chopped	1 lb
Medium sized onion, sliced thinly	1
Cooking oil	1 tbsp
Lemon juice (optional)	1 tbsp
Salt and pepper to taste	

1. Caramelize the onions: Heat 1 tablespoon of oil in a sauté pan over medium low heat and add the onions.
2. Cook very slowly on medium low heat, stirring occasionally, until the onions are browned; do not burn. When finished, remove from heat and set aside.
3. In a separate sauté pan, heat the remaining 1 tablespoon of oil over medium heat. Add the chopped kale and sauté until tender, about 8 minutes.
4. Add the onions and, if desired, the lemon juice. Toss together. Remove from heat and serve.



Work Station Group 3 (Optional)

Take Home Item

Suggestions for possible Take Home ideas (quantities to be determined depends on budget, participants etc.):

- Stock making ingredients: bay leaves, peppercorns, dried parsley.
- Meal accompaniments: brown rice, wild rice, barley.
- Spice mix of your choice (for example, look up a salt-free Mexican or Italian seasoning).

Eating Together. Evaluation and GFB Draw

(25 min)

Enjoy meal together with open question & answer session. If there are any questions related to food and nutrition, call Telehealth and you can speak to a registered dietitian for free.

Make sure to ask participants to fill out the anonymous evaluations and mention how important their feedback is for us to plan for future activities. Pull names out of a hat to decide who wins the door prize/Good Food Box.

Health Connect Ontario

Call Health Connect Ontario at 811 to speak to a
Registered Dietitian, Monday to Friday 9-5

Extras

Facilitator Demonstration- Cutting up fruit and vegetables

How to cut and use vegetables and fruit. See pages 19-24 for information. Options: carrots, apples, mangoes, pineapple, papaya, spinach, kale, squash, lettuce.

Facilitator Discussion- Composting

Check out page 18 for a fun handout on composting. Feel free to talk about it and/or print and handout to participants.

Appendix A

Facilitator's Grocery List for Workshop

**adjust amounts on grocery list for size of your recipes/ # of participants

- 1 can black beans
- Tomato salsa (½ cup)
- Bulbs garlic
- Cumin
- Black pepper
- Salt

If you make salsa from scratch:

1 tomato
1 onion
1 jalapeno pepper
Lemon juice

- Pita, whole wheat for bean dip
- Veggies for bean dip
- Onions (buy extra so participants can practice cutting)
- Sweet potatoes
- Milk
- Thyme
- Ground beef/moose/deer
- Flour
- Veggies (any mix- carrots, peppers, corn, mushrooms)
- Beef bouillon cube
- Cheese

- Green onion
- Small pasta (orzo, macaroni or wild rice blend)
- Olive oil
- Lemon
- Cucumber
- Fresh parsley
- Feta cheese

Optional for salad:

Spinach or kale
Tomatoes

- Apples (McIntosh, golden delicious)
- Sugar
- Cinnamon
- Nutmeg
- Lemon juice
- Kale
- Cooking oil
- Spices/Ingredients for Station 3
- Containers/baggies for Station 3 spices and any leftovers for Take Home
- Spoons/plates/forks for tasting prepared foods

Appendix B

Kitchen Equipment Needed

- Cutting boards (many)
- Knives (many)
- Can opener
- Measuring spoons
- Mixing bowls
- Immersion hand blender
- Potato masher
- Vegetable peeler
- Measuring cups
- Large pot for stew
- Large pot for pasta
- Lemon zester
- Large pot for apple sauce
- Non-stick skillet for kale/onion

Optional:

Garlic press
Extra induction hotplates for cooking

- Flipper or lifter
- Spoons for stirring stew/sauce
- Items for 'take home'/station 3

- Serving dishes
- Aprons, hair net/bandanas
- First Aid Kit with band aids
- Spoons/plates/forks

Composting Handout

Even if you have a small backyard, you can compost! It can be a family activity that is educational and fun. Adding any compost to your garden will make your soil more fertile!

Composting is a process that turns vegetable and plant waste like peels, core and bruised parts, into fertilizer and soil.



The benefits of composting

- Creating healthy soil
- Reducing waste
- Returning nutrients to the soil
- Saving landfill space for waste that cannot be composted

Composting is a natural process that turns organic materials (any dead plants- including vegetables, fruit, grass clippings, etc) into a nutrient-rich soil addition. If your compost pile (3'x3'x3' is the optimal size) is managed well it should not develop odours to attract unwanted interest from bears, raccoons or rodents etc. It can take as little as 3 months or up to 18 months to make compost. The decomposing time varies depending on how well your compost pile is maintained.

General rules for managing your compost

- Don't add dairy, fish, meat or grease.
- Keep it aerated (turn it over with a fork or shovel) so oxygen flows through.
- Keep it moist (occasionally add water).
- Smaller pieces decompose faster so chop or shred materials.
- Learn how to make layers!

Layers

- Place 4 to 6 inches of green materials then alternate with brown materials:
Green materials like fruit and vegetable peels and cores; and grass clippings contain nitrogen and decompose quickly.
Brown materials like dried leaves, dead plants, shredded newspapers and wood chips contain carbon needed to make good organic matter.
- Spread a 1 inch layer of finished compost or garden soil on top of kitchen scraps to speed up the break down (soil contains microbes to break down organic matter).
- Read the labels, store bought soils are often sterilized (to destroy weed seeds so they do not add micro-organisms to the pile).
- Continue to compost during the cold winter months. The freezing and thawing process helps to break down materials.

Appendix C

Facilitator Notes for Vegetables and Fruits

Carrots

A source of folate and fibre. Carrots are a healthy choice. An excellent source of beta carotene-this is converted in the body to Vitamin A, which helps your eyes and skin stay strong and healthy. Beta-carotene also acts as an antioxidant, which have been known to lower the risk of some chronic diseases.

- One raw 7 ½ inch carrot contains 31 calories. So eat up!



Buying Carrots

- Buy carrots that are firm and crisp with a smooth, blemish-free surface.

Storing Carrots

- Remove the leafy green carrot tops before storing, or the greens will take moisture out of the carrots and make them tough and wilted. Did you know you can eat the green tops? Chop them up and sauté them or add to a stew.
- Store them in their original bag in a cool place or the fridge.

Preparation

- Many of the nutrients in carrots are just below the skin, so simply rinse, then scrub or scrape lightly. Do not peel unless the outer skin is thick or tough.

Baby Carrots are full-grown carrots that have been peeled and shaped into smaller pieces by a machine. Their small size makes them a popular snack food but, because they no longer have the skin, they are a little less nutritious than regular sized carrots.

Uses for carrots

- Carrots add colour and crunch to a variety of dishes.
- Carrot sticks served with hummus make a great snack.
- Add carrot slices or grated carrots to salads (pasta, bean or green).
- Add diced carrots to coleslaw or potato salad.
- Add carrots to homemade soups and prepared canned soups for extra flavour.
- Boil carrots, potatoes, ginger, celery and spices, then puree to make a great soup.
- Add carrots to stews, stir fries and slow cooked casseroles.
- Add diced carrots to spaghetti sauces or salad sandwich fillings like tuna.
- Add cooked, mashed carrots to your regular mashed potatoes for extra colour.
- Add slices or chunks of carrots to pot roasts, slow roasted beef, pork or moose.
- Carrot chunks, onion slices and potato wedges can be seasoned and roasted with oregano or Italian dressing in a hot oven to make a great side dish.
- Add carrots to any side dishes: potatoes, cabbage and onions, green beans & onions or potato and carrot pancakes, rice dishes, scalloped potatoes.
- Add grated carrots to muffin mixes, try a lower fat carrot cake.



Apples

Coring Apples: There are 3 general methods that you can use depending on what tools (knives, cutting board) you have handy. Wash your apples then choose your method.

Apple coring tool: Place the apple upright on a cutting board. Line up the corer centering it on the stem end. Push and twist to move the corer through the apple. Lift out the core and push

out the core being careful to keep your fingers safe. You can then use a sharp knife to cut the apple into quarters and peel if needed.

Dinner/table knife: Push the knife blade into the apple to cut around the horizontal centre. Remove the knife then twist the two halves apart. Using the blade tip of the knife score a hexagon around the exposed core then push out with your thumb.

Kitchen knife: Slice the apple apart vertically into two pieces, then slices again into quarters. Lay a slice on a flat side, place sharp blade of knife at a slight diagonal alignment just above the exposed core and slice off the core. Continue with other pieces.

Once cut most varieties of apples (and many other fruits like avocado, peaches, pears, cherries, and banana) will start to brown. This is a natural process where cut flesh exposed to air (oxygen) forms a natural compound which browns. To prevent exposure to oxygen the fruit can be mixed and covered with other ingredients like a dressing or dipped in 1 cup of water with 2 tsp lemon juice.

Should I peel or not to peel the apple skin? Leaving a bit of skin on is fine. You can make your decision depending on what you are doing with your apples and how much you like the fibre. Even in a fruit crisp a little peel is quite acceptable.

Mangoes

There are 2 popular varieties available in the grocery stores. This is a picture of **Red mangoes**. It has a thin leathery skin that is mostly red or green. It can have patches of red, orange, yellow and even purple! The other popular variety is the Ataulfo mangoes. They are smaller and have a yellow skin. Mangoes have a complex flavour- sweet and tart! They are a great source of vitamins A and C.



Store on the counter at room temperature and check for ripeness each day. To check for ripeness, the mango skin should give a bit with slight pressure. Once ripe eat right away, prepare and freeze or use in green salads, fruit salads, fruit crisps, fruit smoothies or as fruit cubes in a bowl of yogurt.

To Prepare: Mangoes have a biggish flat pit in the center so you have to cut on either side of the pit.

1. Slice lengthwise into 2 almost 'halves'.
2. Take each half and score into the flesh with a sharp knife making a cross hatch XXX pattern without cutting through the skin.
3. Press the fruit up from the skin side. Then run your knife along the inside edge between the skin and flesh to make cubes or scoop out with a spoon.

Check YouTube to find a demo for how to cut a mango. Enjoy!
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lvLdPjpELyU>

Pineapple

Choose pineapples that have crisp green, not yellow or brown, leaves. Pineapple should be firm, smell sweet and be fragrant. The colour of the pineapple peel/skin does not matter, it can vary from green to golden. Pineapples do not ripen after picking.



Store it on your counter up to 2 days at room temperature to help reduce acidity making it taste sweeter. If you wish to store it longer, wrap in a plastic bag and store in the refrigerator.

1. Using a sharp knife and a cutting board, begin by cutting off the spiky top.
2. Trim off a slice from the bottom so the pineapple can stand up.
3. Next you will slice the tough outer skin and spikes from all sides. Slice off the peel from all sides by following the contour.
4. With the fruit standing upright, cut into two halves, then into quarters.
5. Turn a quarter onto its flat side and cut off the inner tough core using a slightly diagonal cut. Continue until all pieces have been cored.
6. Chunk or slices the long pieces into smaller bite sized bits.



Papaya

You have to taste it to believe the complex flavour and satiny texture. It has a sweet-tart floral flavour that reminds you of melon and raspberries. Papaya is high in vitamins A C as well as fibre and potassium. Its seeds are edible but have a slight 'peppery' taste. Some people opt to buzz them in a blender and use in a salad dressing /vinaigrette. For longer storage, keep it in the fridge for 10-12 days but ripen it at room temperature. Check for ripeness before using this delicious fruit in

salads, smoothies or served with chicken dishes, curry or salsas. Check for ripeness- the green outer skin should turn slightly yellow and 'give' a little when you lightly press your finger on it. Rinse with cool water to wash the peel then you are ready to slice and enjoy.

1. Using a sharp knife, cut in half lengthwise.
2. Scoop out the seeds from both halves. You can scoop out the fruit to make balls.
3. Using a knife remove the peel and slice into serving sized pieces.

Spinach

Today you can buy prewashed and bagged spinach that is ready to use. Garden fresh spinach leaves should be rinsed in cold water to remove any soil or sand. Drain and wrap in paper towel. Cover or put in a bag and refrigerate. Use in 2 - 4 days.

Discard any yellow leaves. The bigger leaves can be de-stemmed so that you are left with tender and tasty leaves.

To de-stem, place the leaf stem side up. Hold one hand down on the leaf and use the other hand to pull the stem away from the full length of the leaf. Use the leaf parts and discard or compost the stem.

Try adding spinach to soups or pasta just before serving. The heat from the cooked food will soften and wilt the leaves for tender eating. You can even add raw spinach to smoothies.

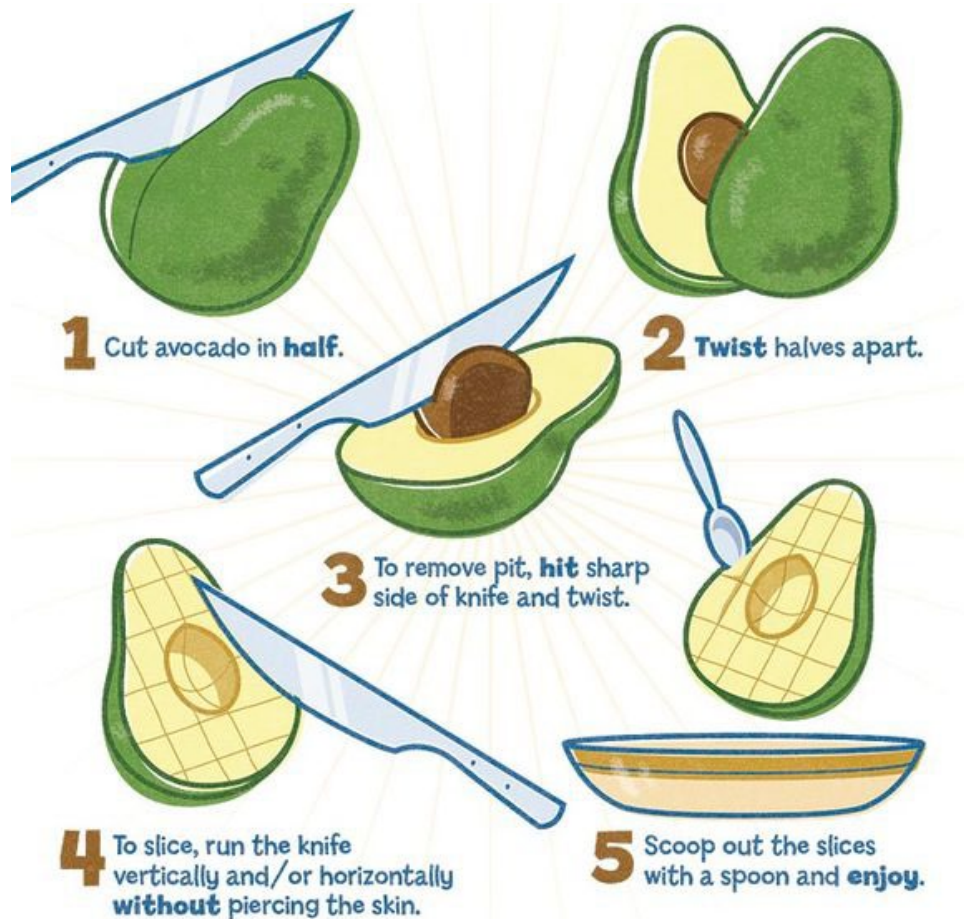


Avocado

This green skinned, egg-shaped fruit ripens after picking. Avocados are high in vitamins A, B-complex, C, D and E. They also contain calcium, iron, magnesium, zinc and potassium.

Store hard avocados on the counter for a few days to ripen. Ripe avocados should be slightly soft and without sunken spots or cracks.

Use thick slices of avocado as an additional layer of goodness along with a lettuce leaf on sandwiches. Add slices or chopped avocado to a salad or mash it up into a traditional green dip called guacamole.





Kale

These beautiful green, wrinkly leaves have an earthy flavour and are related to the cabbage family. Kale is a healthy choice, rich in vitamins A, C and K. The leaves should look fresh, not wilted, and have no brown or yellow spots. Choose kale with smaller-sized leaves. They will be more tender and have a milder flavor than those with larger leaves.

To store, place kale in a plastic storage bag and remove as much of the air from the bag as possible. Store in the refrigerator for up to 5 days. The longer it is stored the more bitter its flavor becomes.

Do not wash kale before storing as the water will make it spoil.

When ready to use, wash the leaves and blot off excess water. De-stem larger pieces with thick stems. Place the stem side up on a flat surface. Hold one hand down on the leaf and use the other hand to pull the stem away from the full length of the leaf. Use the leaf parts and discard the stem.

Squash

The hard skinned squashes, including pumpkin, butternut, acorn, spaghetti and buttercup, are called winter squashes. They come in many colours and sizes and add nutrition to meals. The cooked orange or yellow flesh can be mashed and served as a side dish, casserole, pie fillings or in muffins. Add chunks of squash to stews and soups, or roast squash slices or wedges with other veggies like sweet potatoes. The photo to the right shows an acorn squash on the left and a butternut squash on the lower right.



There are many ways to cut up a squash. Some cooks wash them, cut them in half and clean out the seeds. Then they pierce the hard skin 5-6 times with a fork and microwave for 3 minutes to soften the skin for peeling.

To Cut a Butternut Squash:

1. Place the washed, raw squash on a cutting board and cut about 1 inch off from the top and base ends.
2. Next, cut off the neck and place it flat end down. Slice off the skin starting at the top and slice down.
3. Rest the neck on its side and make $\frac{1}{2}$ inch slices. Dice or make into planks or sticks.
4. Take the main bulb of the squash and using a spoon, scoop out the seeds and insides and discard. Place the bulb end cut side down. With your knife at an angle, slice off the skin from the top half. Turn over to the other end and repeat. Cut the bulb in half. Dice, slice or chunk your squash to suit your recipe.

Lettuce

Summer is a good time to try a new variety of lettuce. Lettuce is low in calories and a source of vitamin A, vitamin C and folate. It is the main ingredient in many garden salads. Often darker green lettuces have more vitamins. Enjoy lettuce more often. Add it shredded on top of your usual sandwich fillings, have a side salad with your meals, or even try a lettuce wrap. Choose firm, crisp lettuce. Avoid lettuces that have dark or soft spots or wilted leaves. Bagged lettuces keep about one week in the fridge.



1. To use just tear apart leaves, rinse in cold water. Be sure to remove any sand or dirt often caught in the inner ribs of the lettuce.
2. Drain and gently pat leaves dry with a paper towel. Or use a salad spinner to remove excess moisture from the leaves.
3. Using a slightly damp paper towel, loosely roll up lettuce and place in a plastic bag, store in the crisper drawer in the fridge.

For additional recipes see '5x5 Pantry' or purchase the 'Basic Shelf Cookbook', 2011 Edition for participants.