



Good Food News

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A New Year of Good Food

With the excitement of a New Year upon us, I am sure we have all been thinking in some way about a resolution for the coming year. For some people it's to lose weight or to do more exercise. For others it might be to call their family and friends more often. Some people are talking of quitting smoking. Sitting here today on my first day back to work after a nice break, I am thinking about food. I am not thinking about all the holiday cookies and meals I have eaten over the last two weeks, but about all the wonderful fruits and veggies that come in the Good Food Box every week.

Even though I work around fresh fruits and vegetables every day, I sometimes miss my 5 to 10 servings a day. So I thought that an easy new years resolution or goal would be for us all to try and eat 5 to 10 servings of vegetables and fruits per day. By getting the Good Food Box you are already well on your way. In our own FoodShare Field to Table Campaign: Eat it, grow it, share it - put food first, we are reminded to taste ten fruits and vegetables every day. What exactly does this mean? How do you know if you are eating enough fruits and veggies every day? And what are the benefits of doing so?

Vegetables and fruit are rich in essential vitamins, fibre, carbohydrates and phytochemicals which means that they are some of the healthiest foods you can eat. Reaching for 5 to 10 a day means that you should be eating at least 5 and as many as 10 fruits and vegetables every day. It may sound like a lot but when you understand what a serving size is and how it can be broken down, it will seem so easy to do. You might also be wondering if orange juice counts as a fruit or if frozen peas count as a vegetable. I will outline what a serving size for fruits and vegetables are and give you some examples from the 5 to 10 a day website. A good way to meet your daily quota is to include more than one fruit or veggie per meal or snack.

Generally the deeper or brighter the colour, the more nutritious. Choose a variety of different fruits and vegetables. It's easy to get into a rut when it comes to the food you eat, so break out and try a wider variety. Be sure to include dark-green, leafy vegetables; yellow, orange, and red fruits and vegetables; cooked tomatoes; and citrus fruits, all of which you get on a regular basis in your box.

There are tons of health reasons why we should all be eating more fruits and vegetables on a daily basis.

Eating 5 to 10 fruits and veggies a day along with a balanced diet can help reduce your risk of cancer, heart disease and stroke. The 5 to 10 a day website also tells us that vegetables and fruit appear to reduce the risk of cancer, heart disease and stroke by providing protective substances such as vitamins, minerals, and fibre, as well as plant compounds called phytochemicals. For example, a diet high in vegetables and fruit may help reduce the risk of cancer by stopping normal cells from changing into cancerous cells. Vegetables and fruit may help reduce the risk of heart disease by protecting artery walls from damage. What's more, when you fill up on vegetables and fruit, you may not be as hungry for less healthy foods.

If you are interested in seeing how many fruits and vegetables you tend to reach for in a day, think about taking the 5 to 10 a day challenge. It can be found at <http://www.5to10aday.com/eng/challenge.htm>.

By participating in the Good Food Box program you are already well on your way to having access to a wide variety of fresh fruits and vegetables. We always try to provide you with produce that is in season, but as you know, the winter sometimes makes this goal difficult. Keep your eye out for these seasonal vegetables and fruits such as beets, cabbage, carrots, garlic, leeks, mushrooms, onions, parsnips, potatoes, rutabagas, sprouts, winter squash, apples, pears and rhubarb.

One serving is equal to:	For Example:
1 medium size vegetable or fruit	a medium sized apple, banana or carrot as a snack
125 mL (½ cup) raw, cooked, frozen or canned vegetables or fruit	a large scoop of peas with your dinner or a small bowl of sliced peaches for dessert
125 mL (½ cup) juice	a small glass of orange juice with your breakfast
250 mL (1 cup) salad (raw leafy greens)	a small side salad with your dinner
50 mL (¼ cup) dried fruit	a small box of raisins with your lunch



I hope your New Year is filled with lots of fruits and veggies! -- Lynn

Food Share  

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Working with communities to improve access to affordable and healthy food — from field to table



Recipes

Orecchiette Pasta with Shiitake

Mushroom and Sugar Snap Peas

Who doesn't love this whimsical concave shape of orecchiette ("little ears") pasta that comes from Puglia, Italy? The pasta holds the natural sauce created by the concentrated juices produced by the mushrooms as they cook down. If there is any leftover pasta, it is delicious served at room temperature the next day. Add some toasted pine nuts for a garnish for a pleasing crunch.

12 ounces orecchiette pasta
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 cup minced red onion
1 cup stemmed and sliced shiitake (or button) mushrooms
1 large portobello cap, diced (about 1 1/2 cups)
1 cup sugar snap or snow peas, strings removed
1 cup minced scallions (green onions)
1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
sea salt, to taste
ground pepper, to taste

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add the pasta and cook for 8 to 9 minutes, until it is al dente. Drain the pasta, reserving about 1/2 cup of the cooking liquid. Place the cooked pasta in a bowl large enough for easy mixing.

Heat the olive oil in a 10- or 12-inch non-stick sauté pan over medium heat. Add the onion, and sauté for 1 minute to wilt the onion; add the shiitake and portobello mushrooms, and sauté for 4 to 5 minutes. Add the sugar snap peas, and sauté 2 additional minutes.

Add the sautéed vegetables to the bowl with the cooked pasta. Toss well, adding a tablespoon or so of the reserved pasta water, if needed, for moisture. Add the scallions, Parmesan cheese, and salt and pepper, and toss lightly to blend.

From: Whole Foods Recipes, Serves 4

Vegetarian Mushroom Soup

1 tbsp (15 mL) butter
1 onion, chopped
3 cloves garlic, minced
1/2 tsp (2 mL) dried thyme
1/4 tsp (1 mL) each salt and pepper
4 cups (1 L) sliced mushrooms
1 potato, peeled and diced
1/4 cup (50 mL) all-purpose flour
4 cups (1 L) vegetable or chicken stock
1/4 cup (50 mL) light sour cream
1 green onion, chopped

In saucepan, melt butter over medium heat; cook onion, garlic, thyme, salt and pepper, stirring occasionally, until softened, about 5 minutes. Add mushrooms and potato; cook over medium-high heat until no liquid remains and mushrooms are tender, about 10 minutes. Stir in flour; cook for 1 minute. Stir in stock and bring to boil; reduce heat and simmer until thickened, about 10 minutes. Top each serving with dollop of sour cream and sprinkle of green onion.

Enjoy!!

Featured this week...

Mushrooms

Early Greeks and Romans are thought to be among the first cultivators of mushrooms, using them in a wide array of dishes. Today there are literally thousands of varieties of this fleshy fungus. Sizes and shapes vary tremendously and colours can range from white to black and a few colours in between. There are over 38,000 different mushroom varieties. The cap's texture can be smooth, pitted, honeycombed or ruffled and flavours range from bland to rich, nutty and earthy. The cultivated mushroom (white button) is commonly found in most supermarkets today. However, those that more readily excite the palate are the more exotic wild mushrooms such as criminis, portabello, shiitakes, oyster, enoki, chanterelles, and morels. CRIMINIS look like button mushrooms, but are brown instead of white and taste earthier, meatier and more intensely flavoured than the white button. The PORTABELLO is the biggest mushroom you can buy, and has a rich meaty taste and is actually a variety of the crimini. SHIITAKES are tan to dark brown and look similar to buttons and crimini except that the cap is wider and shaped like an umbrella. The flavour is woody and rich with a meaty texture that emerges when cooked. The OYSTER mushroom's cap resembles a fan and colour ranges from off-white to grey-brown with a mild flavour and silky texture. ENOKI mushrooms are native to Japan and are tiny white caps on long, thin stems. They have a sweet, crunchy fresh flavour with a hint of citrus. CHANTERELLES are shaped like trumpets with frilly caps and vary in flavour from fruity to earthy. MORELS are among the most expensive mushrooms because they are usually picked in the wild and have a woody aroma and meaty texture. Because so many wild mushrooms are poisonous, it's vitally important to know which species are edible and which are not. Extreme caution should be taken when picking them yourself.

Store and Prep:

The common mushrooms are available year-round but are at their peak in fall and winter. Look for those that are firm and evenly coloured with tightly closed caps. Fresh mushrooms should be stored with cool air circulating around them in a paper bag. They should be wiped with a damp paper towel or rinsed with cold water and dried thoroughly. Mushrooms should never be soaked because they absorb water and will become mushy. Mushrooms are one of nature's most versatile foods and can be used in hundreds of ways and cooked in almost any way imaginable.

Health-wise:

Mushrooms are extremely low in calories and plain raw mushrooms contain no fat. Mushrooms are a good source of iron, potassium, zinc, niacin, folate and the antioxidant mineral selenium. Health-wise, shiitakes are your best bet. Japanese studies show that they contain lenitan, a phytochemical that may help to boost immune activities against cancer and influenza viruses. Other tests show that shiitakes may also help to lower cholesterol.

Deliveries

For the week of Jan 10, Coordinator orders are due by 5 p.m. on Tuesday Jan 3.

For the week of Jan 17, Coordinator orders are due by 5 p.m. on Tuesday Jan 10.