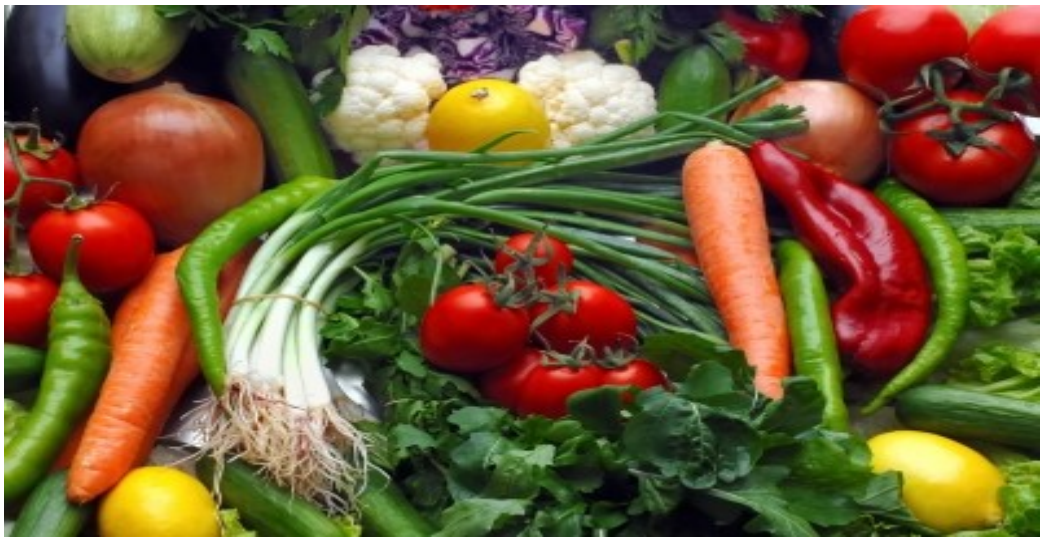
HISTORY AND NUTRITION OF

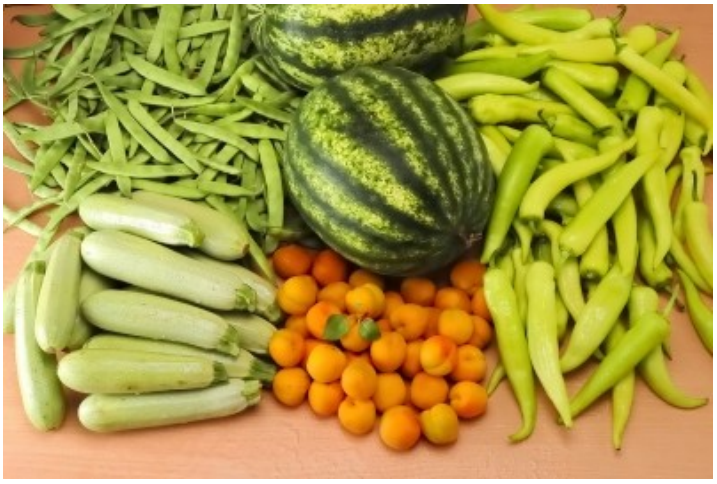


VEGETABLES

by: Gigi Newman
behealthyandwisenow@gmail.com

http://www.behealthyandwise.info

TABLE OF CONTENTS



PREFACE

My reasons for assembling this booklet are simple. People need a simple, easy to understand resource about the food they eat. We need to take a more active role in what we eat. Our bodies need certain vitamins to function well. And when we are functioning at the peak of performance, healthy and happy, all other aspects of our lives will fall into place. This ebook is not a complete listing of everything that's available, nor does it list everything we should be eating. What it does give is an overview of the main vegetables we have available, some history about each one, and the nutritional value we get when we prepare them properly and eat them. At the end of this ebook, I have added some recipes that I think are worth trying. There are many, many more than are listed here.

Farmer's Markets are excellent places to get vegetables that are high in nutritional content and flavor, and low in pesticides and hormones. Our farmers take special care of their fields, adding nutrients when they are needed. This is not always so in commercial and out of country fields. Also, there are some vegetables that cannot be transported across country and still retain their nutritional value and flavor. When you buy vegetables at a Farmer's Market, you are getting the freshest, most flavorful vegetables possible, unless, of course, you grow your own.

I hope this ebook helps you become more informed about what you eat, and inspires you to find out more about the great foods that God put on this earth for us to enjoy.

Thank You
Gigi Newman

****

VEGETABLES

BEANS, STRING (BUSH): Can be green, yellow (wax), or purple.

History: Snap beans originated in Central America, although by the time of Columbus, they were widely distributed throughout the continent. Many of the varieties grown today were developed from the kinds grown by the American Indians.

Nutritional Information: Snap beans are low in fat and are an excellent source of protein and complex carbs. They are a good source of folic acid and also provide significant amounts of iron, phosphorous, manganese and potassium. A major health benefit of these beans is their ability to lower cholesterol and their rich source of fiber. Studies have shown that a high fiber diet prevents blood sugar levels from rising too rapidly after a meal. This makes beans a good choice for diabetics. They promote heart health due to their fiber, antioxidants, B6, and magnesium. 1 cup of snap beans contains approximately 0g. Fat, 3.5g fiber, 2g protein, 8g carbs, 6.5mg sodium.

Uses: Break off both ends, then cut in small pieces or lengthwise for French-style. Boil or steam fresh beans and serve with butter, salt, and pepper. You can add chopped onion, garlic, bacon - whatever you like.

****

BEETS:

History: The original home of the beet was around the Mediterranean, where it was first seen as a leafy plant without enlarged roots. Improved types of these early beets are now grown as Swiss chard. Large - rooted beets were first noted in literature around 1550 in Germany. In the US - 1806, there was only one variety listed.

Nutritional Information: Beets are richer in iron and other nutrients than spinach, which makes them helpful in cases of anemia, tuberculosis, constipation, poor appetite, obesity, tumors, gout, and pimples. Beets are also helpful in the elimination of irritating drug poisons. Beets are one of the best foods to relieve constipation. Beet greens contain a larger amount of nutrients than beet roots. Both contain iron, phosphorus, manganese, fiber, calcium, and vitamins A and C. The roots are a good source of manganese, potassium, and vitamin B. Throughout history, beet roots have been used for medicinal purposes, especially for liver disorders because they have a stimulating detoxification process. Studies have shown that beets contain Betacyanin, the pigment that gives beets their rich purple - crimson color. This pigment is also a powerful cancer fighting agent. Also, due to research, it is said that the favorable effect on bowel function, cholesterol levels, and decrease in colon cancer is due to its Betacyanin content. I cup of beets contains approximately: .17g fat, 3g fiber, 2g protein, 10g carbs, 78mg sodium.

Uses: The great thing about the beet is that you can eat all of it. Use the tops as you would other greens - cooked or raw. Boil whole beets in water. When close to tender, easily slip off skins. Beets should be cooked with an inch of stalk attached to prevent “bleeding”.

****

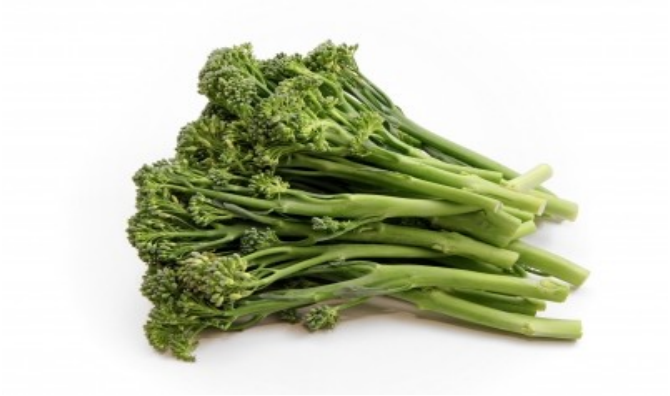
BROCCOLI:

History: Broccoli is recorded as an Italian vegetable, as its name suggests, before anywhere else. It has ties to France about 1560. Thomas Jefferson noted that he experimented with broccoli at Montecello in 1767. The word "broccoli" comes from the Latin "brachium" and Italian "braccio" and means "arm".

Nutritional Information: Broccoli is abundant in antioxidants including beta - carotene, vitamin C, and Lutetine, among others. It is extremely high in cancer fighting activity, particularly against lung, colon, and breast cancers. Like other Cruciferous vegetables, it speeds up removal of estrogen from the body, helping suppress breast cancer. Broccoli is rich in cholesterol reducing fiber. It has anti viral, anti ulcer activity. As a super source of chromium, broccoli helps regulate insulin and blood sugar. Important note: Cooking and processing broccoli destroys some of the anti oxidants and anti estrgenic agents such as indoles and glutathoine. Broccoli is most protective when eaten raw or lightly cooked. I bunch of Broccoli contains approximately: 2g fat, .5g fiber, 5g protein, 1.5g carbs, 4.5mg sodium.

Uses: Broccoli can be boiled, steamed or sautéed, but do not overcook. It goes well with many garnishes, seasonings, and sauces.

****



BRUSSELS SPROUTS:

History: Brussels sprouts are named for its place of origin - Brussels. During the 16th century, Brussels sprouts enjoyed a popularity in southern Netherlands that eventually spread throughout Europe.

Nutritional Information: Because Brussels sprouts are of the Cruciferous family - the same as cabbage and broccoli - they posses the same anti cancer and anti oxidants. Brussels sprouts are a good source of Riboflavin, also known as vitamin B2. B vitamins work together to convert carbs into glucose which is then "burned" to produce energy. B vitamins are also essential in the metabolism of fats and proteins. These vitamins are required for red blood cell formation, respiratory production, for regulating thyroid activity, in the treatment of cataracts, and in relieving bloodshot, itching or burning eyes and sensitivity to light. Food sources containing riboflavin include: almonds, liver, whole grains, wheat germ, wild rice, mushrooms, soy beans, milk, yogurt, eggs, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, spinach, and fortified cereals. 1 sprout contains approximately: 0g fat, .5g fiber, .5g protein, 1.5g carbs, 4.5mg sodium.

Uses: Boil these little cabbages, then add butter, lemon juice, or herb vinegar. Garnish with raisins, slivered almonds or chopped walnuts. For salad, marinate cooked sprouts several hours in oil and vinegar dressing.

****

CABBAGE:

The cabbage family consists of eight vegetables: broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, Chinese cabbage, collards, kale, and kohlrabi.

History: Many of the cabbage family are derived from a wild ancestor, the colewort which is still common in many parts of Europe, particularly near coastal areas. Many early writers and old medieval books on cookery mention coles', but it is likely that these were not truly 'cultivated' varieties. Another member of the family, cauliflower, was not cultivated in England until the 17th century, for example, yet the Greeks and Romans knew about it.

Nutritional Information: Cabbage is a low calorie, nutrient-dense food that offers an excellent source of many nutrients including vitamin C, folic acid, potassium, vitamin B6, calcium, biotin, magnesium, and manganese. Along with it's nutrient content, cabbage contains phytochemicals. Cabbage contains powerful anticancer compounds known as glucosinolates. The higher the intake of cabbage-family vegetables, the lower the rates of cancer especially breast, lung, colon, and prostate cancers. The glucosinolates in cabbage function by increasing the antioxidant defense mechanisms, and also by improving the body's ability to detoxify and eliminate harmful chemicals and hormones. Studies have also shown that cabbage is extremely effective in the treatment of peptic ulcers.

Uses: Grate cabbage and add diced apples and fresh pineapple to make cole slaw. If you add a couple of stalks of celery into the pot you are cooking your cabbage, the strong odor will be greatly reduced. Enjoy cooked cabbage with corned beef. Add potatoes and you have boiled dinner. You can stuff a head of cabbage with ground pork or veal, or make cabbage rolls by stuffing the leaves with ground beef or rice and cheese.

****

CARROTS:

History: The wild ancestors of the carrot are likely to have come from Afghanistan. In early use, carrots were grown for their aromatic leaves and seeds, not their roots. Some relatives of the carrot are still grown for these, fennel, dill and cumin for example. The first mention of the root in classical sources is in the 1st century CE. The modern carrot appears to have been introduced to Europe in the 8-10th centuries. Orange-colored carrots appear in the Netherlands in the 17th century. The parsnip is a close relative of the carrot, as is parsley.

Nutritional Information: Of all the commonly consumed vegetables, carrots provide the highest amount of provitamin A carotenes. Carrots also offer an excellent source of fiber, vitamin K, and biotin. They are a good source of vitamins B6 and C, potassium, and thiamin. Carrots contain a large amount of antioxidant compounds which help to protect against cardiovascular disease and cancer. The high intake of carotene has been linked with a 20 percent decrease in post menopausal breast cancer and up to a 50 percent decrease in the cancers of the cervix, bladder, colon, prostate, larynx, and esophagus. Extensive studies have shown that a diet that includes at least one carrot per day could cut the rate of lung cancer in half. Carrots are also effective in promoting good vision, especially night vision. Beta-carotene provides protection against macular degeneration and the development of senile cataracts - which is the leading cause of blindness in the elderly. 1 medium carrot contains approximately: 0 g. Fat, 2 g. Fiber, ,5 g. Protein, 6 g. Carbs, 21mg. Sodium.

Uses: Carrots can be eaten raw, whole, chopped or grated. Add to salads for color or texture. They are often chopped and boiled, fried or steamed and used in soups and stews. Together with onions and celery, carrots are one of the primary vegetables used to make various broths.

CAULIFLOWER:

History: Cauliflower is a variety of Brassica oleracea in the family Brassicaceae (the same species as broccoli, which it strongly resembles). Although the origin of cauliflower is unknown, at least to me and my resources, there are different varieties available. The traditional white is the most popular. There is also a yellow variety called 'cheddar'. Purple cauliflower also exists, originating in southern Italy. The purple color is caused by the presence of the antioxidant group anthocyanin, which can also be found in red cabbage and red wine.

Nutritional Information: Even though cauliflower is not as nutrient-dense as many of the other vegetables in the cabbage-family, it is still packed with nutrition. Cauliflower is an excellent source of vitamins C and K. It is also a very good source of potassium, fiber, phosphorus, and B vitamins. Cauliflower is a good source of the trace mineral boron. Cauliflower and other vegetables in the cruciferous family, including cabbage, contain compounds that may help prevent cancer. Studies have shown that their compounds stop enzymes from activating cancer-causing agents in the body, and they increase the activity of enzymes that disable and eliminate carcinogens. 1 medium head of cauliflower contains approximately: 1 g. Fat, 14 g. Fiber, 11 g. Protein, 5g. Carbs, 2 mg. Sodium.

Uses: Cauliflower can be boiled, fried, steamed or eaten raw. When cooking, the outer leaves and thick stalks are removed, leaving only the florets. The leaves are also edible, but are most often discarded. These should be broken into similar-sized pieces so the florets are cooked evenly. After eight minutes of steaming, or five minutes of boiling, the florets should be soft, but not mushy (depending on size). Stirring while cooking can break the florets into smaller, uneven pieces. Cauliflower is often served with a cheese sauce, as in the dish cauliflower cheese, or with a meat gravy.

Low carb dieters can use cauliflower as a reasonable substitute for potatoes because while they can produce a similar texture, or mouth feel they lack the starch of potatoes.

****

CELERY:

History: Celery leaves and inflorences were part of the garlands found in the tomb of Tutankhamun, pharaoh of ancient Egypt, and celery mericarps dated to the 7th century BC were recovered in the Heraion of Samos. M. Fragiska mentions another archeological find of celery, dating to the 9th century BC, at Kastanas; however, the literary evidence for ancient Greece is far more abundant. In Homer's *Iliad*, the horses of Myrmidons graze on wild celery that grows in the marshes of Troy, and in *Odyssey* there is mention of the meadows of violet and wild celery surrounding the cave of Calypso. In classical Greece celery leaves were used as garlands for the dead.

Nutritional Information: Celery provides an excellent source of vitamin C and fiber. It is a very good source of folic acid, potassium, and vitamins B1 and B6. Celery also offers a good source of vitamin B2 and calcium. Even though celery contains more sodium than most other vegetables, the sodium is offset by it's high levels of potassium. Studies have shown that the amount of sodium is not significant even for the most salt-sensitive individuals. Celery contains photochemical compounds known as coumarins. Studies have shown that they are effective in cancer prevention and capable of enhancing the activity of certain white blood cells. Coumarin compounds also lower blood pressure, tone the vascular system, and are possibly effective when used in cases of migraines. Due to the high levels of potassium and sodium, when celery-based juices are consumed after a workout they serve as great electrolyte replacement drinks. Studies have also shown that celery may help to lower cholesterol and prevent cancer by improving detoxification. The whole plant is a gentle stimulant, nourishing, and restorative; it can be liquefied, with the juice taken for joint and urinary tract inflammations, such as rheumatoid arthritis, cystitis, or urethritis, for weak conditions, and for nervous exhaustion. The seeds, harvested after the plant flowers in its second year, are the basis for a homeopathic extract used as a diuretic. The extract is believed to help clear toxins from the system, so are especially good for gout, where uric acid crystals collect in the joints, and arthritis. They are also used as a mild digestive stimulant.

Uses: Celery has so many uses, that they cannot all be listed here. As noted, medicine is one of them, but celery can be used in almost any soup or stew. It is great raw on a veggie tray, or as a very healthy snack, instead of a candy bar or chips. When stuffing a turkey, celery is almost always used with the stuffing to add flavor and as we have seen, nutrition.

****

CERLERIC:

History: Celeriac (also known as 'turnip-rooted celery' or 'knob celery') is a specially selected Cultivar Group of celery, grown as a root vegetable for its large and well-developed taproot rather than for its stem and leaves. The root is used when it is about 10-12 cm in diameter, or the size of a large potato. It is not as popular as other root vegetables, especially in the western hemisphere, very possibly because of its garish appearance before cleaning: it has been described as "a vegetable octopus" in reference to the tangle of root lets that grow at the base. There are numerous cultivars available, especially in Europe, where root vegetables are popular. Among the types are 'Prinz', 'Diamant', 'Ibis', and 'Kojak', which all received Royal Horticultural Society Award of Garden Merit designation in the year 2000 trials.

Nutritional Information: Nutritionally, celeriac is low in carbohydrates. Other nutrients are the same as already discussed under the ‘Celery’ heading.

Uses: Celeriac may be used raw or cooked. It is best to peel celeriac before use, since the outer skin is tough and stringy. It has the celery flavor, so it is often used as a flavoring in soups and stews; it can also be mashed or used in casseroles and baked dishes. The hollow stalk of the upper plant can be cut into drinking straw lengths, rinsed out, and used for tomato drinks such as the Bloody Mary. The tomato juice moving through the stalk is lightly permeated with the celery flavor. Celeriac has good keeping properties and should last three to four months if stored between 0° and 5° C and not allowed to dry

CORN, SWEET:

History: Sweet corn also called sweet corn, sugar corn, or simply corn, is a variety of maize with a high sugar content. Sweet corn is the result of a naturally-occurring recessive mutation in the genes which control conversion of sugar to starch inside the endosperm of the corn kernel. Sweet corn occurs as a spontaneous mutation in field corn and was grown by several Native American tribes. The Iroquois gave the first recorded sweet corn (called "Papoon") to European settlers in 1779. It soon became a popular vegetable in southern and central states.

Nutritional Information: Corn is a decent source of vitamin B1, B5, C, E folic acid, magnesium and phosphorus. It is considered to be low in protein, due to the minimal content of the amino acids lysine and tryptophan. It is a good source of complex carbohydrate, fiber, and healthful essential fatty acids. The various flavonoids and carotenes contained in corn, are responsible for the different colors of its different varieties. The colors valued by Native Americans include, pink, black, red, and blue. There were also some that had stripes and spots. Yellow corn is high in the carotenoid, lutein. The lutein in yellow corn and yellow corn food products can protect against heart disease and macular degeneration. Macular degeneration is a condition of the eye which is typically seen in older age. 1 medium ear of corn contains approximately: .35g fat, 2.9g fiber, 3.5 g. Protein, 25 g. Carbs, . 18 g. Sodium.

Uses: Since the process of maturation involves converting sugar into starch, sweet corn stores poorly and must be eaten, canned, or frozen before the kernels become tough and starchy. The kernels are boiled or steamed, and usually served with butter and salt. *Creamed corn* is sweet corn served in a milk or cream sauce.

CUCUMBERS:

History: The cucumber has been cultivated for at least 3,000 years in Western Asia, and was probably introduced to other parts of Europe by the Romans. Records of cucumber cultivation appear in France in the 9th Century, England in the 14th Century, and in North America by the mid-16th Century. The cucumber is believed to be native to India. Vegetable historians say that it was introduced into China during the 2nd century before Christ. The cucumber is listed among the products of ancient Ur and the legend of Gilgamesh describes people eating cucumbers. Some sources also state that it was produced in ancient Thrace, and it is certainly part of modern cuisine in Bulgaria and Turkey, parts of which make up that ancient state. From India, it spread to Greece (where it was called "vilwos") and Italy (where the Romans were especially fond of the crop), and later into China. The fruit is mentioned in the Bible (Numbers 11:5) as having been freely available in Egypt, even to the enslaved Israelites. The French, in 1535, found the Indians growing it in what is now Montreal, and De Soto found it being grown in Florida in 1539. I found an exuberant amount of history for this vegetable. If you are interested in more, visit www.wikipedia.com. They list each historic era and culture separately.

Nutritional Information: Even though fresh cucumbers are mostly composed of water, they still pack a lot of nutrition. The flesh of cucumbers is a very good source of vitamins A, C, and folic acid. The hard skin is rich in fiber and a variety of minerals including magnesium, silica, molybdenum, and potassium. Cucumbers are an excellent source of silica, which is a trace mineral that contributes to the strength of our connective tissue. Connective tissue is what holds our body together. Cucumbers are effective when used for various skin problems, including swelling under the eyes and sunburn. They also contain ascorbic and caffeic acids. These acids prevent water retention. That may explain why when cucumbers are applied topically they are often helpful for swollen eyes, burns, and dermatitis. 1 medium cucumber contains approximately: 0 g. Fat, 2 g. Fiber, 2 g. Protein, 8 g. Carbs, 6 mg. Sodium.

Uses: In addition to the above, cucumbers are eaten either raw, cooked, or made into pickled cucumbers.

EGG PLANT:

History: Eggplant, aubergine or brinjal is commonly used as a vegetable in cooking. It is closely related to the tomato and potato and is native to southern India and Sri Lanka. The eggplant is an important food crop grown for its large, pendulous, purple or white fruit. It has been cultivated in southern and eastern Asian countries since prehistory but appears to have become known to the Western world no earlier than ca. 1500 CE. The numerous Arabic and North African names for it, along with the lack of ancient Greek and Roman names, indicate that it was introduced throughout the Mediterranean area by the Arabs who invaded Persia in the early Middle Ages. The name eggplant in the United States, Australia, and Canada developed from the fact that the fruits of some 18th-century European cultivars were yellow or white and resembled goose or hen's eggs. Aubergine is the British name given to this fruit.

Nutritional Information: Eggplants are low in calories and are an excellent source of dietary fiber. They are also a very good source of potassium and vitamins B1 and B6. Eggplants are also a good source of folic acid, magnesium, copper, manganese, and niacin. Eggplant skins contain an anthocyanin flavonoid called nasunin. It's A potent antioxidant and free-radical scavenger. Studies have shown that nasunin protects cell membranes from damage. Nasunin also helps to move excess iron out of the body. Eggplants may also help to lower cholesterol levels.

Uses: This versatile vegetable can be steamed, baked, fried, broiled, or

sautéed, breaded, stuffed or sauced. Eggplant combines well with cheese, tomatoes, onions, garlic, herbs, and meats. Eggplant has a tendency to become watery. You can eliminate this by slicing, salting, and draining it before use. Or slice and cover with a heavily weighted plate, and let stand until moisture is squeezed out. Eggplant also tends to soak up oil, so baking is better than frying or sauté. Try this Italian dish: slices coated in egg and bread crumbs, then baked with a topping of tomato sauce and grated cheese.

GARLIC:

History: Garlic is a species in the onion family Alliaceae. Its close relatives include the onion, shallot, and leek. Garlic has been used throughout recorded history for both culinary and medicinal purposes. The ancestry of cultivated garlic is not definitely established: "a difficulty in the identification of its wild progenitor is the sterility of the cultivars". From the earliest times garlic has been used as a food. It formed part of the food of the Israelites in Egypt (Numbers 11:5) and of the laborers employed by Khufu in constructing the pyramid. Garlic is still grown in Egypt, but the Syrian variety is the kind most esteemed now .It was consumed by the ancient Greek and Roman soldiers, sailors and rural classes and by the African peasantry. Galen eulogizes it as the "rustic's theriac" (cure-all) and Alexander Neckam, a writer of the 12th century recommends it as a palliative of the heat of the sun in field labor. Dr. T. Sydenham valued it as an application in confluent smallpox and found some dropsies cured by it alone. Early in the 20th century, it was sometimes used in the treatment of pulmonary tuberculosis . Garlic was rare in traditional English cuisine (though it is said to have been grown in England before 1548), and has been a much more common ingredient in Mediterranean Europe. Garlic was placed by the ancient Greeks on the piles of stones at cross-roads, as a supper for Hecate and according to Pliny, garlic and onions were invoked as deities by the Egyptians at the taking of oaths. The inhabitants of Pelusium in lower Egypt, who worshipped the onion, are said to have had an aversion to both onions and garlic as food.

Nutritional Information: Garlic provides an excellent source of vitamin B6. It also offers a very good source of vitamin C, manganese, and selenium. Garlic is also a good source of other minerals including calcium, copper, phosphorous, iron, and potassium. Garlic offers many therapeutic effects which are due to its volatile factors. It is composed of sulfur-containing compounds and a few others. Garlic also contains a high concentration of trace minerals, (particularly selenium and germanium), glucosinolates, and enzymes. Studies have shown that garlic provides protection against atherosclerosis and heart disease. The studies revealed that garlic decreases total serum cholesterol levels while increasing serum HDL-cholesterol levels. HDL cholesterol, also known as "good" cholesterol, is a protective factor against heart disease. Studies have also shown that garlic is effective in lowering blood pressure. Throughout history, garlic has also been used as an infection fighter. Allicin has been proven to be effective against common infections such as colds, flu, stomach viruses, and candida yeast. It is also effective against powerful pathogenic microbes, including tuberculosis and botulism. Garlic has been known to offer protection against some cancers.

Uses: Garlic is widely used around the world for its pungent flavor, as a seasoning or condiment or to enhance other flavors. Depending on the form of cooking and the desired result, the flavor is either mellow or intense. It is often paired with onion, tomato, and/or ginger. Add minced garlic to salad dressings and meat sauces. Joined with melted butter it becomes a sauce for lobster, snails, mushrooms, and many green vegetables.

****

KOHLRABI:

History: Kohlrabi is a low, stout cultivar of the cabbage which has been selected for its swollen, nearly spherical, Sputnik-like shape. The name comes from the German *Kohl* ("cabbage") plus *Rabi* ("turnip"), because the swollen stem resembles the latter. Its origin in nature is the same as that of cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, and Brussels sprouts: They are all bred from, and the same species as, the wild mustard plant. Kohlrabi was not known 500 years ago and was not noted in the US until about 1800.

Nutritional Information: Since kohlrabi is a member of the cole family, its nutritional value is also similar to that of cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, and Brussels sprouts. Refer back to these for this info.

Uses: Use this root, discarding the roots and leaves. Young kohlrabi makes a tasty chilled salad. Try marinating in a dressing made from mayonnaise and sour cream seasoned with dill seed, mustard, and lemon juice. Dice or quarter, boil in a small amount of water, then serve with a creamy cheese sauce lightly seasoned with nutmeg.

****

LETTUCE:

History: The wild predecessor of modern lettuce, Lactuca serriola, can still be seen all over Europe and the more temperate parts of Asia. It is likely that it originated on the Mediterranean rim on rocky wasteland or woodland clearings. This ancient wild relative of the modern lettuce contains lactucarium, a narcotic similar to opium. The Romans took advantage of this property by eating lettuce at the end of a meal to induce sleep. In earlier times the Egyptians held a similar view of the lettuce. However as well as a hypnotic or an aid to sleep. With the vast number of lettuce cultivars in existence, it is near impossible to pinpoint their exact origins. Certainly both the Roman and Egyptian lettuce continued to be eaten long after the two

great civilizations started to decline.

Nutritional Information: All lettuce is a good source of chlorophyll and vitamin K. Iceberg lettuce provides a good source of choline. Romaine lettuce is the most nutrient-dense of all the lettuce varieties and is an excellent source of vitamins A, B1, B2, and C, folic acid, manganese and chromium. Since lettuce is very low in calories, it has been effective when consumed as a diet food. Due to its high water content, lettuce provides little health benefits beyond its nutrient content. 3.5 oz. Lettuce contains approximately: .2 g. Fat, 1.1 g. Fiber, 2.2 g. Carbs, 0 g. Sodium.

Uses: Of course, the most common use is chilled, alone or in combination with other vegetables. But, if you would like to try something different, braise it in butter and flavor with nutmeg like the French, or make cream of lettuce soup, flavored with a dash of curry and garnished with chopped, hard boiled eggs. Maybe try lettuce in a wilted salad or stir fried with mushrooms and onions.

****

ONIONS:

History: A. cepa (including seed-propagated onions and most shallot types) is only known from cultivation. It probably originates from Central Asia

(between Turkmenistan and Afghanistan) where some of its relatives still grow in the wild. Onions fed the builders of the pyramids and the conquering troops of Alexander the Great. General Grant, in a dispatch to the War Department wrote:"I will not move my armies without onions."

Nutritional Information: Onions are a very good source of vitamins B6 and C, chromium, biotin, and fiber. They are also a good source of folic acid and vitamins B1 and K. The health benefits provided by onions are mostly due to their content of several organic sulfur compounds. Like garlic, onions also have the enzyme alliinase (released when an onion is cut or crushed). Other constituents that are found in onions include flavonoids (primarily quercetin); phenolic acids (such as ellagic, caffeic, sinapic, and p-coumaric), pectin, sterols, saponins, and volatile oils. Studies have shown that, like garlic, onions and onion extracts decrease blood lipid levels, prevent clot formation, and lower blood pressure. Studies have also revealed that onions have a significant effect in lowering blood sugar levels. Throughout history, onions have also been used to treat asthma. Their action in asthma is mostly due to their ability to inhibit the production of compounds that cause the bronchial muscle to spasm, which then causes the muscle to relax. 1 medium onion contains approximately: 0g. Fat, 2 g. Fiber, 1.0 g. Protein, 9.5 g. Carbs, 3 mg. Sodium.

Uses: Peeling onions under running water helps prevent tears. Onions will compliment any dish. It is used with much frequency by all nationalities. Onions are available in fresh, frozen, canned, pickled, and dehydrated forms. Onions can be used, usually chopped or sliced, in almost every type of food, including cooked foods and fresh salads, and as a spicy garnish; they are rarely eaten on their own but usually act as accompaniment to the main course. Depending on the variety, an onion can be sharp and pungent or mild and sweet.

PEAS:

History: Peas have been cultivated for thousands of years. The sites of cultivation have been described in southern Syria and southeastern Turkey. In early times peas were grown mostly for their dry seeds. Along with broad beans and lentils these formed an important part of the diet of most people in Europe during the Middle Ages. By the 1600s and 1700s it became popular to eat peas "green", that is, while they are immature and right after they are picked. This was especially true in France and England. The popularity of green peas spread to North America. Thomas Jefferson grew more than 30 cultivars of peas on his estate. With the invention of canning and freezing of foods, green peas became available year-round, not just in spring as before.

Nutritional Information: Peas are lower in calcium and phosphorus than beans, but they provide similar levels of protein and carbohydrates. They are a good source of protein, B vitamins, magnesium, phosphorus, manganese, iron, and potassium. Dried peas are an excellent source of fiber. Green peas are a good source of vitamin C, vitamin K, and carotenes. Even though dried peas contain less nutrients than fresh peas, they are more calorie-dense due to their lack of water. Dried peas provide the same nutritional content and health benefits as common beans. Green peas provide a little more additional nutrition and antioxidants. 1 cup of peas contain approximately: .5 g. Fat, 7 g. Fiber, 8 g. Protein, 21 g. Carbs, 7 mg. Sodium.

Uses: Fresh peas are often eaten boiled and flavored with butter and/or spearmint as a side dish vegetable. Salt is also commonly added to peas when served. Fresh peas are also used in pot pies, salads and casseroles. Pod peas are used in stir fried dishes, particularly those in American Chinese cuisine. Pea pods do not keep well once picked, and if not used quickly are best preserved by drying, canning or freezing within a few hours of harvest. Overcooking kills both flavor and texture, so cook quickly, either stir fried or butter steamed.

****

PEPPERS:

History: Capsicum is a genus of plants from the nightshade family, native to Mexico, and now cultivated worldwide. Some of the members of *Capsicum* are used as spices, vegetables, and medicines. The fruit of *Capsicum* plants have a variety of names depending on place and type. They are commonly called chili pepper, red or green pepper, or just pepper in Britain and the US; the large mild form is called bell pepper in the US, capsicum in Australian English and Indian English, and paprika in some other countries (although paprika can also refer to the powdered spice made from various capsicum fruit). The original Mexican term, *chili* (now *chile* in Spanish) came from Nahuatl word *chilli* or *xilli*, referring to a huge *Capsicum* variety cultivated at least since 3000 B.C., according to remains found in pottery from Puebla and Oaxaca. In the United States, the common heatless species is referred to as "bell peppers," "sweet peppers," "red/green/etc peppers," or simply "peppers", while the hot species are collectively called "chile/chiles," "chili/chilies," or "chili/chile peppers" (one L only), "hot peppers", or named as a specific variety (e.g., banana pepper). In many mid western regions of the United States the Sweet Bell Pepper is commonly called a mango. With the modern advent of fresh tropical fruit importers exposing a wider latitude of individuals to the tropical fruit variety of the Mango, this definition is becoming archaic. However many menus still call a stuffed Bell Pepper a *Mango*. The name "pepper" came into use because the plants were hot in the same sense as the condiment black pepper. But there is no botanical relationship with this plant.

Nutritional Information: Bell peppers are low in calories and are packed with nutrition. As one of the most nutrient-dense foods available, they provide a good source of vitamin B6, C, and K, beta-carotene, thiamin, and folic acid. Bell peppers are also a very good source of phytochemicals. They provide exceptional antioxidant activity. Red bell peppers have significantly higher levels of nutrients than green peppers. Red bell peppers also contain lycopene, which is a carotene that offers protection against cancer and heart disease. Studies have shown that bell peppers, possibly due to their vitamin C and beta-carotene content, are effective in providing protection against

cataracts. However, like other nutrient-dense vegetables, they contain many different powerful phytochemicals. Bell peppers also contain substances, including vitamin C, capsaicin, and flavonoids. Those substances have been shown to prevent blood clot formation and reduce the risk of heart attacks and strokes. Even though chili peppers contain more of those compounds, bell pepper consumption should still be promoted for individuals with elevated cholesterol levels. 1 medium pepper contains approximately: .2 g. Fat, 2 g. Fiber, 1 g. Protein, 5.5 g. Carbs, 4 mg. Sodium.

Uses: Peppers can be eaten raw or cooked. They are suitable for stuffing with fillings such as cheese, meat or rice. They are also frequently used both chopped and raw in salads, or cooked in stir-fries or other mixed dishes. They can be sliced into strips and fried, roasted whole or in pieces, or chopped and incorporated into salsas or other sauces. They can be preserved by drying or pickling. Dried peppers may be reconstituted whole, or processed into flakes or powders. Pickled or marinated peppers are frequently added to sandwiches or salads. Extracts can be made and incorporated into hot sauces. Chili peppers can easily be peeled by blistering them under a broiler then putting them in a brown paper bag. Twist bag closed and let stand to steam and cool. Remove them one at a time and peel, starting from the stem end.

****

POTATOES:

History: The potato is commonly grown for its starchy tuber. Potatoes are the world's most widely grown tuber crop, and the fourth largest food crop in terms of fresh produce — after rice, wheat, and maize ('corn'). The potato was domesticated in southern Peru and northern Bolivia and is important to the culture of the Andes, where farmers grow many different varieties that

have a remarkable diversity of colors and shapes. In pre-Colombian times they were also widely cultivated on Chiloe Island in Chile. Potatoes spread from South America to Spain and from there to the rest of the world after European colonization in the late 1400s and early 1500s. They soon became an important field crop. Historical and genetic evidence suggests that the potato reached India not very much later than Europe, probably taken there by the Portuguese.

Nutritional Information: Potatoes provide a very good source of potassium, niacin, vitamins B6 and C, fiber, and pantothenic acid. Potatoes also provide a decent amount of protein. Even though the protein content in potatoes is about the same as that in corn and rice, potatoes contain lysine, which is an essential amino acid that is usually not found in grains. Most of the nutrients, including the fiber, are found in the skins. Boiled potatoes may be an effective treatment for skin wounds. Their skin treatment capabilities are especially beneficial in some third-world countries were modern skin graft procedures are not available. Nutritionally, potatoes are best known for their carbohydrate content (approximately 26 grams in a medium potato). Starch is the predominant form of carbohydrate found in potatoes. A small but significant portion of the starch in potatoes is resistant to enzymatic digestion in the stomach and small intestine and, thus, reaches the large intestine essentially intact. This resistant starch is considered to have similar physiological effects and health benefits of fiber (e.g., provide bulk, offer protection against colon cancer, improve glucose tolerance and insulin sensitivity, lower plasma cholesterol and triglyceride concentrations, increase satiety, and possibly even reduce fat storage). The amount of resistant starch found in potatoes is highly dependent upon preparation methods. Cooking and then cooling potatoes significantly increases resistant starch. Potatoes contain a number of important vitamins and minerals. A medium potato (150g/5.3 oz) with the skin provides 27 mg vitamin C (45% of the Daily Value (DV)), 620 mg of potassium (18% of DV), 0.2 mg vitamin B6 (10% of DV) and trace amounts of thiamin, riboflavin, folate, niacin, magnesium, phosphorus, iron, and zinc. Moreover, the fiber content of a potato with skin (2 grams) equals that of many whole grain breads, pastas, and cereals. In addition to vitamins, minerals and fiber, potatoes also contain an assortment of phytochemicals, such as carotenoids and polyphenols. The notion that “all

of the potato's nutrients" are found in the skin is a myth. While the skin does contain approximately half of the total dietary fiber, the majority (more than 50%) of the nutrients are found within the potato itself. The cooking method used can significantly impact the nutrient availability of the potato. Potatoes are often broadly classified as "high" on the glycemic index (GI) and thus are frequently excluded from the diets of individuals trying to follow a "low GI" eating regimen. In fact, the GI of potatoes can vary considerably depending on the type (i.e., red vs. russet vs. white vs. Prince Edward), origin (i.e., where it was grown), preparation methods (i.e., cooking method, whether it is eaten hot or cold, whether it is mashed or cubed or consumed whole, etc), and what it is consumed with (i.e., the addition of various high fat or high protein toppings).

Uses: Potatoes are prepared in many ways: skin-on or peeled, whole or cut up, with seasonings or without. The only requirement involves cooking to break down the starch. Most potato dishes are served hot, but some are first cooked then served cold, notably potato salad and potato chips/crisps.Common dishes are: mashed potatoes, which are first boiled (usually peeled), and then mashed with milk and butter; whole baked potatoes; boiled or steamed potatoes; French-fried potatoes or chips; cut into cubes and roasted; scalloped, diced, or sliced and fried (home fries); grated into small thin strips and fried (hash browns); grated and formed into dumplings, Rsti or potato pancakes. Unlike many foods, potatoes can also be easily cooked in a microwave oven and still retain nearly all of their nutritional value, provided that they are covered in ventilated plastic wrap to prevent moisture from escaping—this method produces a meal very similar to a baked potato. Potato chunks also commonly appear as a stew ingredient.

PUMPKINS:

History: The pumpkin is a squash fruit, usually orange in color when ripe (although there are also white, red, and gray varieties). Pumpkins grow as a gourd from a trailing vine. It is Cultivated in North America, continental Europe, Australia, India and some other countries and is native to the Western hemisphere. The pumpkin varies greatly in form, being sometimes nearly globular, but more generally oblong or ovoid in shape. The rind is smooth and variable in color. The larger kinds acquire a weight of 40 to 80 lb but smaller varieties are in vogue for garden culture. Pumpkins are a popular food, with their insides commonly eaten cooked and served in dishes such as pumpkin pie; the seeds can be roasted as a snack. Pumpkins are traditionally used to carve Jack-o'-lanterns for use in Halloween celebrations. Pumpkin is called *Yaqtin* in Arabic, *Kadu-Halwaayi* in Farsi and Urdu. Botanically it is a fruit, referring to a plant part which grows from a flower; however, it is widely regarded as a vegetable in culinary terms, referring to how it is eaten. The pumpkin is from the Squash family and is related to the zucchini.

Nutritional Information: Pumpkins are part of the winter squash group. Also included in the group are acorn, butternut, and spaghetti squash. Winter squash, like other richly colored vegetables, provide excellent sources of carotenes. Generally, the richer the color, the richer the concentration. They also offer a very good source of vitamins B1 and C, folic acid, pantothenic acid, fiber, and potassium. Winter squash is also a good source of vitamin B6 and niacin. Studies have shown that, due to their carotene properties, winter squash exert a protective effect against many cancers (particularly lung cancer). Diets that are rich in carotenes (especially pumpkins) offer protection against cancer, heart disease, and type 2 diabetes. Studies have also shown that pumpkin seeds are helpful in reducing symptoms of benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH). Since summer squash have a high water content, they are not as nutrient-dense as the winter varieties. Summer squash still provide several nutritional benefits. They are low in calories and provide a decent amount of vitamin C, potassium, and carotenes. Studies have shown that juice made from summer

squash is equal to juice made from pumpkins, leeks, and radishes in their ability to prevent cell mutations. Summer squash are especially beneficial during the summer months due to their higher water content. They protect against dehydration and the carotenes help to protect against the damaging effects of the sun. Pumpkins are orange because they contain massive amounts of lutein, alpha- and beta-carotene. These nutrients turn to vitamin A in the body.

Uses: When ripe, the pumpkin can be boiled, baked, or roasted, or made into various kinds of pie, a traditional staple of American Thanksgiving, alone or mixed with other fruit; while small and green it may be eaten in the same way as the vegetable marrow. It can also be eaten mashed or incorporated into soup. If you pour milk into a pumpkin and bake it you can make a pudding. In the Middle East pumpkin is used for sweet dishes, a well known sweet delicacy is called Halawa Yaqtin. In South Asian countries such as India pumpkin is cooked with butter, sugar and spices called Kadu ka Halwa. In addition to food, pumpkins are traditionally used to celebrate Halloween and many places have festivals where the main attraction is the pumpkin chucking contest.

****

RADISHES:

History: The radish is an edible root vegetable of the Brassicaceae family that is grown and consumed throughout the world. Although the radish was a well-established crop in Hellenistic and Roman times, which leads to the assumption that it was brought into cultivation at an earlier time, there are almost no archeological records available to help determine its earlier history and domestication. Wild forms of the radish and its relatives the mustards and turnip can be found over west Asia and Europe, suggesting that their domestication took place somewhere in that area.

Nutritional Information: Relative to their serving size, radishes are rich in ascorbic acid, folic acid, and potassium. Relative to their caloric value, they are a good source of vitamin B6, riboflavin, magnesium, copper, and calcium. One cup of sliced red radish bulbs provides approximately 20 calories or less, coming largely from carbohydrates, making radishes, relative to their size, a very filling food for their caloric value. Radishes and their greens provide an excellent source of vitamin C. Radish leaves contain almost six times the vitamin C content of their root and are also a good source of calcium. Red Globes also offer a very good source of the trace mineral molybdenum and are a good source of potassium and folic acid. Daikons also provide a very good source of potassium and copper. Radishes, like other member of the cruciferous family (cabbage, kale, broccoli, Brussels sprouts), contain cancer-protective properties. Throughout history radishes have been effective when used as a medicinal food for liver disorders. They contain a variety of sulfur-based chemicals that increase the flow of bile. Therefore, they help to maintain a healthy gallbladder and liver, and improve digestion. Fresh radish roots contain a large amount of vitamin C than cooked radish roots.

Uses: The most popular part for eating is the napiform taproot, although the entire plant is edible and the tops can be used as a leaf vegetable. The skin comes in a variety of colors. Most commonly known is the round, red-skinned variety but other varieties may have a pink, white or gray-black skin,

and there is a yellow-skinned variety.

The bulb of the radish is usually eaten raw, but tougher specimens can be steamed. The raw flesh has a crisp texture and a pungent, peppery flavor, caused by chewing glucosinolates and the enzyme myrosinase in the radish, that, when brought together form allyl isothiocyanates , also present in mustard, horseradish and wasabi. Radishes are suggested as an alternative treatment for a variety of ailments including whooping cough, cancer, coughs, gastric discomfort, liver problems, constipation, dyspepsia, gallbladder problems, arthritis, gallstones, kidney stones and intestinal parasites.

****

RUTABAGAS:

History: The rutabaga, swede or (yellow) turnip is a root vegetable that originated as a cross between the cabbage and the white turnip. Its leaves may also be eaten as a leaf vegetable.

"Rutabaga" (from dialectal Swedish *"rotabagge"*, *root ram*) is the common American term for the plant, while "swede" (*Swede*) is the preferred term used in much of England, Wales, Ireland, Australia and New Zealand. In the U.S., it is also known as "Swedish turnip" or "yellow turnip", while in Atlantic Canada, where turnips are relatively unknown, it is called turnip. This is also true in Scotland, where it is commonly referred to as "neep", and the turnip instead is called a "swede" or "white turnip". Prior to pumpkins being readily available in Scotland (a relatively recent innovation), turnips were hollowed out and carved with faces to make lanterns for Halloween. Often called Jack O'lanterns they were the ancient symbol of a damned soul. In North-East England, turnips and swedes/rutabagas are both colloquially called "snadgies". Its common name in Sweden is "kålrot" (cabbage root). In Norway it is also called "kålrot", but often also "kålrabi"(which in Sweden & Denmark means kohlrab). Some claim the vegetable is native to Sweden, but others think it was introduced to Sweden, possibly from Finland or Siberia, in the early 17th century. From Sweden, it reached Scotland, and from there it spread to the rest of Great Britain and to North America. In continental Europe, it acquired a bad reputation during World War I, when it became a food of last resort. In the German *Steckrübenwinter* (swede/rutabaga winter) of 1916–17, large parts of the population were kept alive on a diet consisting of rutabagas and little else. After the war, most people were so tired of rutabagas that they gained a reputation as a "famine food," which reputation they have retained to the present day. As a consequence, they are rarely planted in Germany.

Nutritional Information: Because it is a member of the Brassico family, the nutrients are about the same as Brussels spouts and cabbage. The roots are

very high in vitamin C and the tops are rich in both vitamin C and A.

Uses: The Swedes cook rutabagas with potatoes and mash them with butter and milk to create a puree called "rotmos" (root mash). In Scotland, the same vegetables are boiled and mashed separately to produce "tatties and neeps" ("tatties" being the Scots word for potatoes), traditionally served with the Scottish national dish of haggis as the main course of a Burns supper. Neeps are also extensively used in soups and stews. In Norway, swedes/rutabagas are mixed with potatoes, carrots, onion and cream to make a similar mash called "kålrabistappe". In Canada rutabagas are used as filler in foods such as mincemeat and Christmas cake, or as a side dish with Sunday dinner in Atlantic Canada. In the US, rutabagas are mostly eaten as part of stews or casseroles, are served mashed with carrots, or baked in a pasty. The town of Cumberland, Wisconsin celebrates a "Rutabaga Festival" each year, always the weekend preceding Labor Day Weekend. The International Rutabaga Curling Championship annually takes place at the Ithaca, NY farmer's market.

****

SPINACH:

History: Spinach is a flowering plant native to central and southwestern Asia. The myth about spinach and its high iron content may have first been propagated by Dr. E. von Wolf in 1870, because a misplaced decimal point in his publication led to an iron-content figure that was ten times too high. In 1937, German chemists reinvestigated this "miracle vegetable" and corrected the mistake.

Nutritional Information: Spinach is one of the most nutrient-dense vegetables. It provides an excellent source of vitamins C and K, carotenes, and folic acid. It also offers a very good source of manganese, iron, magnesium, and vitamin B2. Spinach is also a good source of vitamins B1, B6, and E. The iron content in spinach is twice that of other greens. Spinach is also one of the most alkaline foods. This makes it useful in helping to regulate the body's pH balance. Spinach also contains one of the richest

dietary sources of lutein. Therefore, it is effective in promoting healthy eye sight and preventing macular degeneration and cataracts. Spinach, like other chlorophyll and carotene containing vegetables, contains anticancer properties. Studies have identified at least thirteen different flavonoid compounds in spinach that function as antioxidants and as anticancer agents. 1 bunch of spinach contains approximately: 1 g. Fat, 9 g. Fiber, 9.5 g. Protein, 12 g. Carbs., .1 mg. Sodium.

Uses: Spinach can be eaten fresh, steamed, or quickly boiled. To benefit from the folate in spinach, it is better to steam it than to boil it. Boiling spinach for four minutes can halve the level of folate.

****

SWEET POTATOES:

History: The sweet potato commonly called a yam in parts of the United States (especially in the southern and western portions of the country; this terminology causes some confusion with true yams) is a crop plant whose large, starchy, sweet tasting tuberous roots are an important root vegetable. The young leaves and shoots are sometimes eaten as greens. The sweet potato is only distantly related to the potato. It is even more distantly related to the true yam which is native to Africa and Asia. Sweet potatoes are native to the tropical parts of the Americas, and were domesticated there at least 5000 years ago. They spread very early throughout the region, including the Caribbean. They were also known before western exploration in Polynesia. How exactly they arrived there is the subject of a fierce debate which

involves archaeological, linguistic and genetic evidence. Sweet potatoes are now cultivated throughout tropical and warm temperate regions wherever there is sufficient water to support their growth. North Carolina, the leading U.S. state in sweet potato production, currently provides 40% of the annual U.S. production of sweet potatoes.

Nutritional Information: Sweet potatoes provide an excellent source of carotenes. The darker varieties of sweet potatoes contain a higher concentration of carotenes. Sweet potatoes also offer a very good source of vitamins B6 and C. They are also a good source of manganese, copper, biotin, pantothenic acid, vitamin B2, and dietary fiber. Sweet potatoes contain unique root storage proteins, which have been shown to contain significant antioxidant effects. Since sweet potatoes contain proteins along with their high content of carotenes and vitamin C, they are a valuable food for boosting antioxidants in the body. Studies have shown that unlike many other starchy vegetables, sweet potatoes are an "antidiabetic" food.

Uses: The roots are most frequently boiled, fried, or baked. They can also be processed to make starch and a partial flour substitute. Industrial uses include the production of starch and industrial alcohol. Although the leaves and shoots are also edible, the starchy tuberous roots are by far the most important product. Candied sweet potatoes are a side dish consisting mainly of sweet potatoes prepared with sugar, marshmallows, maple syrup, molasses, or other sweet ingredients. Often served on American Thanksgiving, this dish represents traditional American cooking and indigenous food. Sweet potato pie is also a traditional favorite dish in southern U.S. Cuisine. Baked sweet potatoes are sometimes offered in restaurants as an alternative to baked potatoes. They are often topped with brown sugar and butter. Boiled sweet potato leaves are a common side dish in Taiwanese cuisine, often boiled with garlic and vegetable oil and dashed with salt before serving. They are commonly found at bindang restaurants, as well as dishes featuring the sweet potato root. Steamed/Boiled chunks, for a simple and healthy snack, chunks of sweet potato may be boiled in water or cooked in the microwave. Sweet potato chips can be sliced, fried, and eaten just like potato chips or french fries.

TOMATOES

History: The tomato is a plant in the Solanaceae or nightshade family, as are its close cousins tobacco, chili peppers, potato, and eggplant, is native to Central, South, and southern North America from Mexico to Peru. The tomato probably originated in the highlands of the west coast of South America. There is a competing theory that says the tomato, like the word "tomato", originated in Mexico, where one of the two apparently oldest "wild" types grows. It is entirely possible that domestication even arose in both regions independently. In any case, by some means the tomato migrated to Central America. Maya and other peoples in the region used the fruit in their cooking, and it was being cultivated in southern Mexico and probably other areas, by the 16th century. It is thought that the Pueblo people believed those who witnessed the ingestion of tomato seeds were blessed with powers of divination. The large, lumpy tomato, a mutation from a smoother, smaller fruit, originated and was encouraged in Central America. The tomato plant was not grown in England until the 1590s. The earliest reference to tomatoes being grown in British North America is from 1710, when herbalist William Salmon reported seeing them in what is today South Carolina.

Nutritional Information: Tomatoes are low in calories and are packed with nutrition, especially when they are fully ripe. For example, red tomatoes contain up to four times the amount of beta-carotene as green tomatoes. Tomatoes provide an excellent source of vitamins C and K, carotenes (especially lycopene), and biotin. They are also a very good source of vitamin B6, niacin, folic acid, fiber, and pantothenic acid. Due to the high content of lycopene that tomatoes contain, they have increasingly received a lot of attention as a health food. Studies have shown that the red carotene (lycopene) is extremely protective against breast, lung, colon, prostate, and skin cancers. Studies also found that tomatoes lower the risk of heart disease, cataracts, and macular degeneration. The way lycopene works, is it helps to prevent those diseases and others by neutralizing harmful oxygen free radicals before they can do any damage to cellular structures. Tomatoes are often picked unripe (and thus green) and ripened in

storage with ethylene. Ethylene is a hydrocarbon gas produced by many fruits that acts as the molecular cue to begin the ripening process. Tomatoes ripened in this way tend to keep longer but have poorer flavor and a mealier, starchier texture than tomatoes ripened on the plant. They may be recognized by their color, which is more pink or orange than the other ripe tomatoes' deep red.

Uses: Tomatoes are now eaten freely throughout the world, and their consumption is believed to benefit the heart among other things. Lycopene, one of nature's most powerful antioxidants, is present in tomatoes, and, especially when tomatoes are cooked, has been found beneficial in preventing prostate cancer. However, other research contradicts this claim.

Botanically a fruit, the tomato is nutritionally categorized as a vegetable. Since "vegetable" is not a botanical term, there is no contradiction in a plant part being a fruit botanically while still being considered a vegetable. Tomatoes are used extensively in Mediterranean and Middle Eastern cuisines, especially Italian ones. The tomato has an acidic property that is used to bring out other flavors. This same acidity makes tomatoes especially easy to preserve in home canning as tomato sauce or paste. Unripe green tomatoes can also be used to make salsa, be breaded and fried, or pickled.

****

TURNIPS

History: The turnip is a root vegetable commonly grown in temperate climates worldwide for its white, bulbous taproot. Turnips are notably popular in Europe, particularly in its colder parts, because they grow well in cold climates and can be stored for several months after harvest. The turnip is

a well-established crop in Hellenistic and Roman times. Evidence from around 1500 BC show farmers of India growing forms of wild turnip for the oil from its seeds. Neolithic evidence show it grown independently in northern climates.

Nutritional Information: Turnips are a "starch" vegetable, but provide only one third the amount of calories as an equal amount of potatoes. Turnips provide an excellent source of vitamin C, fiber, folic acid, manganese, pantothenic acid, and copper. They also offer a very good source of thiamine, potassium, niacin, and magnesium. In addition, they are a good source of vitamin B6 and E, folic acid, and riboflavin. Turnip greens are more nutrition dense than the root. The greens provide an excellent source of vitamins A, B6, C, E, folic acid, calcium, copper, fiber, and manganese.

Uses: Turnip greens go well in salads when they are young and tender. They can also be steamed or boiled, and are especially good when cooked with other greens like swiss chard. The root should be peeled before using. Slice it and serve raw or boil it and serve with parsley and lemon butter. Baked, mashed, scalloped, or country fried turnips are great compliments of pork or game. Turnips can also be used in soufflés, soups, stews, and casseroles. Oriental people use them in stir fry dishes and for making pickles.

****

WINTER SQUASH

History: Squashes, also called *marrows*, depending on variety or the nationality of the speaker. Winter squash is a warm-seasoned vegetable. It differs from summer squash in that it is harvested and eaten in the mature fruit stage, when the seeds within have matured fully and the skin has hardened into a tough rind. At this stage, most varieties of this fruit can be stored for use during the winter.

Nutritional Information: The winter squash group includes pumpkin, acorn, butternut, and spaghetti squash. Winter squash, like other richly colored vegetables, provide excellent sources of carotenes. Generally, the richer the

color, the richer the concentration. They also offer a very good source of vitamins B1 and C, folic acid, pantothenic acid, fiber, and potassium. Winter squash are also a good source of vitamin B6 and niacin. Studies have shown that, due to their carotene properties, winter squash exert a protective effect against many cancers, particularly lung cancer. Diets that are rich in carotenes (especially pumpkins) offer protection against cancer, heart disease, and type 2 diabetes. Studies have also shown that pumpkin seeds are helpful in reducing symptoms of benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH).

Uses: Winter squash can be steamed, baked, or broiled. To speed baking, put it on the pan cut side down, cook till nearly tender, then turn right side up, add butter and seasonings, and bake for another 15 to 20 minutes. It can be eaten right from the shell or scooped out and dressed up with cream, brown sugar, and butter. Winter squash takes well to sweet spices and seasonings and many garnishes.

****

ZUCCHINI:

History: Zucchini or Courgette in New Zealand and British English is a small summer squash. It can either be yellow or green or light green, and generally has a similar shape to a ridged cucumber, though a few cultivars are available that produce round or bottle-shaped fruit. Zucchini is one of the easiest vegetables to cultivate in a temperate climate. As such, zucchini has a reputation among home gardeners for overwhelming production, and a common type of joke among home growers revolves around creative ways of giving away unwanted zucchini to people who already have been given more than they can use. Zucchini is European in origin. Courgette comes from the French name of the fruit, with the same spelling. It is a diminutive of courage, meaning squash. While "zucca" is the Italian word for squash, and the feminine diminutive plural "zucchine" is preferred in most areas of Italy, the male diminutive plural "zucchini" is used in other areas of Italy, Australia, and the United States. The first records of zucchini in the United States date to the early 1920s. It was almost certainly brought over by Italian immigrants, and probably got its start in California.

Nutritional Information: Since summer squash have a high water content, they are not as nutrient-dense as the winter varieties. Summer squash still provide several nutritional benefits. They are low in calories and provide a decent amount of vitamin C, potassium, and carotenes. Studies have shown that juice made from summer squash is equal to juice made from pumpkins, leeks, and radishes in their ability to prevent cell mutations. Summer squash are especially beneficial during the summer months due to their higher water content. They protect against dehydration and the carotenes help to protect against the damaging effects of the sun. The zucchini vegetable is low in calories (approximately 15 food calories per 100 g fresh zucchini) and contains useful amounts of folate (24 mcg/100 g), potassium (280 mg/100 g) and vitamin A (384 IU [115 mcg]/100 g. It is a great choice for dieters everywhere.

Uses: Zucchini is usually served cooked, often steamed, boiled, grilled, stuffed and baked, barbecued, fried, or incorporated in other recipes such as soufflés. Its flower can be eaten stuffed and is a delicacy when deep fried as tempura. Many people find zucchini is best when quickly cooked so it still retains its firmness and flavor, and 2 to 4 minutes is all it takes to cook a zucchini to perfection. With additional cooking it falls apart into a watery mass, which for some styles and tastes, may be the objective, as when cooking a ratatouille. (It should be noted though that there are variations on ratatouille where many of the vegetables get done to either the barely cooked or medium cooked stage.) Zucchini has probably inspired more recipes than any other singe vegetable. Try zucchini bread, pancakes, or cake. Split large ones and fill with ground beef, curried lamb, rice, seasoned crumbs, or any other stuffing. Bake, topping with herbs and grated cheese for the last few minutes in the oven.

****

MELONS

MUSKMELON:

History: Muskmelon refers to the broader group of fruits grown and traded as melons. It is an accessory fruit of a type that botanists call a false berry. It was first cultivated more than 4000 years ago (circa 2000 BC) in Persia and Africa. The first introduction into Europe are said to have come from Egypt to Rome in the 1st century. Columbus reported on his second voyage to the New World that he found them grown in the Galapagos from a planting two months earlier. Muskmelons were recorded in Mississippi and Alabama in 1582, and in Virginia and along the Hudson River by 1609.

Nutritional Information: Melons provide a good source of potassium and vitamin C. Like many other fruits, they are also fat and cholesterol free, high in water content, and are relatively low in calories. Many melons originated in the Middle East and their popularity was gradually spread across Europe. Of all the melons, ancient Egyptians and Romans mostly consumed cantaloupes and muskmelons. Christopher Columbus transported melon seeds to the United States and Spanish explorers eventually cultivated them. Melons are in the same gourd family as squashes and cucumbers. Most melons are similar in appearance to winter squash. Both groups have thick flesh and an inner seed-filled midsection. The main difference between melons and squashes is in the way that they are used. Squashes are consumed as vegetables while melons are consumed as fruits due to their much sweeter, juicy flavor. Muskmelons are a good source of potassium, vitamin A and folate. They are helpful to the kidneys and are a useful laxative. North American muskmelons are the most beta-carotene-rich of all melons and are also high in vitamin C.

Uses: Muskmelons are best when allowed to vine ripen and eaten just as they are. They can be cut up and added to any fruit combination, or slice in half width wise and fill with other fruits.

WATERMELON:

History: Watermelon is both a fruit and a vegetable and plant of a vine-like (climber and trailer) herb originally from southern Africa and one of the most common type of melon. It is not known when the plant was first cultivated, evidence of its cultivation in the Nile Valley from at least as early as the second millennium BC. Finds of the characteristically large seed are reported in Twelfth dynasty sites; numerous watermelon seeds were recovered from the tomb of Pharaoh Tutankhamun.

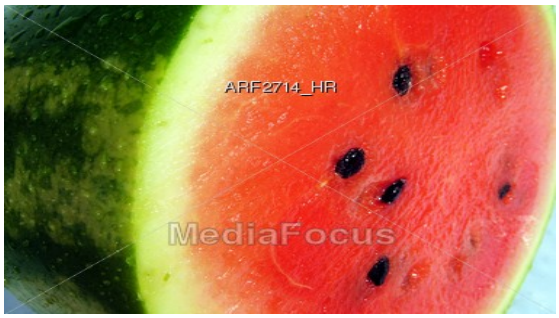
By the 10th century AD, watermelons were being cultivated in China, which is today the world's single largest watermelon producer. By the 13th century, Moorish invaders had introduced the fruit to Europe; and, according to John Mariani's *The Dictionary of American Food and Drink*, "watermelon" made its first appearance in an English dictionary in 1615. Watermelons were introduced to North American Indians in the 1500s. Early French explorers found Native Americans cultivating the fruit in the Mississippi Valley. Many sources list the watermelon as being introduced in Massachusetts as early as 1629. Southern food historian John Egerton has said he believes African slaves helped introduce the watermelon to the United States. Texas Agricultural Extension horticulturalist Jerry Parsons, Ph.D., lists African slaves and European colonists as having distributed watermelons to many areas of the world. Parsons also mentions the crop being farmed by Native Americans in Florida (by 1664) and the Colorado River area (by 1799). Other early watermelon sightings include the Midwestern states (1673), Connecticut (1747), and the Illiana region (1822). Until the 1940s, however, it was hard to find watermelons in good condition at grocery stores. Melon lovers had to grow their own, which tended not to keep for long, purchase them from local grocers supplied by truck farmers, or purchase them from roadside produce stands. Now they can be found in most any local grocery store, and if preferred in slices or whole, with seeds or without.

Nutritional Information: When compared to other fruits, watermelon has an extremely high water content. It is about 92 percent water. It is low in calories and provides a very good source of vitamin C, beta-carotene, and

lycopene. Watermelon also provides a good source of vitamins B1 and B6, biotin, pantothenic acid, magnesium, fiber, and potassium. Due to its high water content and lower calorie content, watermelon delivers more nutrients per calorie. It contains a large amount of some of the most important antioxidants in nature, including lycopene. Lycopene is the red carotenoid pigment that also gives tomatoes their red color. A one-cup serving of watermelon will provide around 48 calories. Watermelon is an excellent source of vitamin C and vitamin A, with one serving containing 14.59 mg of vitamin C and 556.32 IU of vitamin A. Watermelon also provides significant amounts of vitamin B6 and vitamin B1, as well as the minerals potassium and magnesium.

Uses: Fresh watermelon may be eaten in a variety of ways and is also often used to flavor summer drinks and smoothies. Watermelon rinds are also edible, and sometimes used as a vegetable. In China, they are stir-fried, stewed, or more often pickled. When stir-fried, the de-skinned and de-fruited rind is cooked with olive oil, garlic, chili peppers, scallions, sugar and rum (and provides a great way to utilize the whole watermelon). Pickled watermelon rind is also widespread in Russia, Ukraine, and Romania. Watermelon seeds are rich in fat and protein, and are widely eaten as a snack, added to other dishes, or used as an oilseed. In China watermelon seeds are one of the most common snack foods, popular especially with women, competing with sunflower seeds, and sold roasted and seasoned. In West Africa, they are pressed for oil, and are popular in egusi soup and other dishes. Trivia: The Oklahoma State Senate passed a bill on April 17, 2007 declaring watermelon as the official state vegetable.

****



RASPBERRIES:

History: The Raspberry or Red Raspberry is a plant that produces a tart, sweet, red composite fruit in summer or early autumn. In proper botanical language, it is not a berry at all, but instead an aggregate fruit of numerous droplets around a central core. Raspberries are grown for two reasons: for the fresh market and for commercial processing. Traditionally raspberries were a late summer crop, but with new technology, varieties and innovations, raspberries can be enjoyed all year-round.

Nutritional Information: Raspberries provide an excellent source of vitamin C, fiber, manganese, flavonoids, and ellagic acid. They also offer a very good source of vitamin B2 and a good source of other B vitamins, such as niacin, folic acid, pantothenic acid, and vitamin B6. Raspberries are low in calories and are nutrient-dense. Therefore, they are an excellent food for individuals with a "sweet tooth" who are attempting to improve their quality of nutrition without increasing their caloric intake. Flavonoids, mainly anthocyanidins, are responsible for the colors of raspberries and also most of their health benefits. The flavonoids act as powerful antioxidants. Raspberries also provide an excellent source of the cancer-fighting compound ellagic acid.

Uses: Raspberries are best eaten right away. Top your morning cereal with some, or add cream and a little sugar and eat alone. Raspberries go well with many other fruits for a fruit salad, or a delicious pie. Pretty much whatever you can think of to use them for, it works.

****

RECIPES

Beet Appetizer Salad:

2 lb. Beets
Salt
½ Onion, diced
4 Tomatoes, skinned, seeded, and diced
2 Garlic cloves, chopped
4 TB Italian parsley, chopped
4 TB Cilantro, chopped
4 med. Potatoes, boiled

Dressing:

2 TB Vinegar
8 TB Olive oil
Salt & pepper
Hot red pepper

Garnish:

Black olives

Cut off ends of beets. Wash well and cook in boiling salted water until tender. Drain and remove skins under running cold water. Dice.

Mix together the dressing ingredients.

Combine beets in a salad bowl with the onion, tomato, garlic, cilantro, and parsley. Pour over half the dressing, toss gently and chill for 30 minutes. Slice potatoes, place in a shallow bowl and toss with remaining dressing. Chill.

When ready to assemble, arrange beets, tomato, and onion in the center of a

shallow bowl and arrange potatoes in a ring around them. Garnish with olives.

****

Best Broccoli Salad:

1 lg. Bunch Broccoli, cut up
¼ cup finely chopped red Onion
½ cup Raisins
½ cup Sunflower seeds
8 slices cripy fried Bacon, crumbled

Dressing:

1 cup real Mayonnaise
¼ cup Sugar
½ tsp. Salt
1 TB Vinegar

Layer first 5 ingredients. Stir dressing ingredients together, pour over salad. Toss. Serve imediately; Leftovers also good. Serves 6.

****

Best Ever Brussels Sprouts:

1 ¼ fresh Brussels Sprouts
1 TB Olive oil
1 TB butter
½ lb. Lean slab Bacon; rind removed, cut into 1/4" dice
3 Carrots; peeled and diced
2 tsp. Snipped Green Onion tops or Chives

Trim stem ends off sprouts; Remove tough outer leaves. Halve sprouts lengthwise; cut into strips. Heat oil and butter together in a heavy pot. Add

bacon; cook over medium-low heat until it renders the fat and turns golden, about 5 minutes. If desired, drain some fat. Add carrots and stir to coat with fat. Cook, stirring often, until carrots begin to soften, about 5 minutes. Add sliced sprouts; toss well. Cook, stirring, until they are crisp-tender, about 5 minutes. Sprinkle with onion tops and serve. Yield: 4 to 6 servings.

****

Beef Stuffed Cabbage Rolls:

1 lb. Beef, ground
1/3 cup Rice, uncooked
1 Egg; beaten
1 ½ tsp. Pepper
6 lg. Cabbage leaves
1 med. Onion, thinly sliced
2 TB Butter; melted
10 ¾ oz Tomato soup; undiluted
1 ¼ cup Water
½ cup Celery, chopped
1 tsp. Parsley, fresh; minced
3 TB Lemon juice
1 tsp. Sugar
1 tsp. Salt
1/8 tsp. Pepper

Combine ground beef, rice, egg, 1 ½ tsp. Salt, and 1/8 tsp. Pepper; stir well. Cook cabbage leaves in boiling water 5 to 8 minutes or until just tender; drain. Place equal portions of meat mixture in center of each cabbage leaf; fold ends over, and fasten with a wooden toothpick. Saute' onion in butter in a large skillet until tender but not brown. Add tomato soup and remaining ingredients, stirring well; simmer 10 minutes. Place cabbage rolls in the tomato mixture; cover and simmer 1 ½ to 2 hours.

****

Always Perfect Cream of Carrot:

1 lb. Carrots
½ lb. Potatoes
6 cups Chicken stock
1 ½ tsp.Thyme
1 TB Worchesterchire sauce
1 tsp. Tabasco
1 cup heavy Cream
1 cup light Cream
1-2 TB Butter

Thinly slice carrots. Cube potatoes. Boil vegetables in butter and chicken stock, until tender. Stir in thyme. Using a hand blender or food processor, puree carrot mixture. Stir in Worchestershire sauce, Tabasco, and cream. Heat through but do not boil. Salt and pepper to taste. Serve hot or cold.

****

Beef Cauliflower and Snow Peas:

2 TB Vegetable oil
2 minced Garlic cloves
¼ cup chopped Onion
2 tsp. Salt
Fresh ground Pepper
¼ lb. Snow peas, stems removed
½ med. Cauliflower head, broken into flowerets
1 cup Chicken broth or stock
1 TB Cornstarch
1 lb. very thinly sliced flank Steak
¼ cup Soy sauce

Cut steak into 2-inch strips; mix cornstarch and soy sauce and set aside. Heat chicken broth and set aside. Heat oil in heavy skillet or wok until hot. Add garlic and cook for 2-3 minutes. Add beef and saute' quickly, keeping it moving, just until it loses color, about 30 seconds. Add onion, salt, and pepper to taste, stirring constantly for another ½ minute or so. Add chicken broth, bring quickly to a boil, then add cauliflower pieces, a few at a time. Cook 3 minutes, then add snow peas, stirring constantly, for another few minutes. After 7 inutes maximum, cauliflower should be tender and pea pods, a bright green. Add soy sauce mixture, mix thoroughly, and stir until thickened. Pour into a heavy serving dish and serve immediately.

****

Celeriac Slaw:

2 celeric; grated thin
2 Carrots; grated thin
2 heads Savoy Cabbage; chopped fine
2 red Onions; sliced thin
1/3 cup red Wine vinegar
¼ cup Sugar
Saffron Mayonnaise
6 egg yolks
2 TB Dijon mustard
2 tsp. Salt
1 pinch Saffron; crumbled
2 TB Lemon juice
3 cup Canola oil

To make dressing: Whisk yolks with mustard in bowl. Stir in salt, pepper, saffron, and lemon juice. Slowly drizzle in canola oil until thick and creamy consistency.

To make slaw: Toss celeric, carrot, cabbage, and red onion with red vinagar, sugar, salt, and pepper. Mix slaw with saffron mayonnaise to taste. Optional: regular Mayo.

****

Authentic Hungarian Cucumber Relish:

6 to 7 peeled cucumbers, thinly sliced
1 lg. Onion, thinly sliced
1 TB Salt
2 cups Sugar
1 cup Vinegar

Mix first 3 ingredients in a bowl and let sit for 3 hours. After 3 hours, pour off excess liquid. Add 2 cups of sugar and 1 cup of white vinegar. Mix and store in covered glass jar or dish in refrigerator. Will keep up to 3 or 4 months.

****

Appetizer Eggplant:

1 lg. Eggplant; about 1-1/2 lb.
3 TB Olive oil
1 can Tomato sauce; 8 oz.
3 cloves Garlic; pressed
1 Green bell pepper; seeded and chopped
1 TB Ground Cumin
¼ tsp.Cayenne; or to taste
2 tsp. Sugar
2 tsp. Salt
¼ cup Red wine Vinegar
¼ cup Cilantro leaves; fresh chopped

Dice eggplant (unpeeled), discarding ends. In a large skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add garlic and stir for a few seconds. Add eggplant and stir briefly to coat with oil. Add tomato sauce, bell pepper, cumin, cayenne, sugar, salt, and vinegar. Cook, covered, over medium heat for 20 minutes. Uncover, raise heat and boil, stirring, until reduced to about 3 cups. Cover and chill well. Just before serving, stir in chopped cilantro. Serve with wedged of pita bread, slices of french bread, or dark pumpernickle. Or with carrot, zucchini, and celery strips for dipping.

****

Beans Saute'ed with Garlic:

1 lb. String Beans
1 whole garlic
2 TB Sunflower oil
1 cup Water
Salt and Pepper

Take a handful of beans, lay them flat and cut off the ends. Do the same with the other end, then the rest of the beans. Wash them. Heat the oil in a large frying pan, preferably one in which you can lay all the beans in one layer, and put in the beans and finely chopped garlic. Turn for two or three minutes until well coated in garlic and oil. Pour in just enough water to cover and turn the heat up to maximum. The water will boil away as the beans cook – it will take no more than seven or eight minutes. Once the beans started to sizzle as the water boils away, sprinkle them generously with salt and pepper. Wen the water has completely evaporated, the beans are ready.

****

Kohlrabi Saute':

4 med. Kohlrabi bulbs
1 TB Butter
1 Tb Olive oil
1 Garlic clove; finely chopped
1 med Onion; chopped
1 TB Lemon juice
2 TB Parsley; chopped
Salt and pepper
2 TB sour cream

Peel the tough outer skin of the kolhrabi, then coursely grate the bulbs. In a skillet, heat butter and olive oil. Add garlic, onion, and kohlrabi and saute', stirring for 5 to 7 minutes until kohlrabi is tender crisp. Stir in lemon juice and parsley, then season with salt and pepper to taste. Stir in sour cream, and serve hot. Yields: 4 to 6 servings

Broiled Marinated Vegetables:

2 lb. Mixed baby summer squash; split lengthwise.
4 baby eggplant, sliced into thirds lengthwise.
¼ cup Olive oil
1 cup soy sauce
1 cup lime juice
2 TB fresh minced ginger
6 cloves garlic; minced
2 TB ground cumin seed

Mix it all together and marinate the vegetables for 1-2 hours. Spread them out in a flat casserol dish, cover with the marinade, and broil for about 10 minutes. Scoop out of the dish and serve.

Note: Any part that is not covered with marinade will burn. The leftover marinade make a good stir-fry sauce or gravy over rice.

You can also marinade overnight, then grill the veggies on a BBQ in a grilling basket.

****

All-Time Favorite Potato Salad:

3 to 4 med. Potatoes, cooked, peeled, cubed
3 eggs, hard-cooked, chopped
1 small onion or 6 green onions, chopped
2 stalks celery, chopped
¼ cup chopped pickle or pickle relish
1 tsp salt
1/8 tsp. Pepper
¾ cup mayonnaise or salad dressing
1 TB prepared mustard

In large bowl, combine all ingredients; mix well. Cover, and refrigerate until serving time. 4 to 6 servings

Pumpkin Quiche:

1 10” unbaked pie crust
2 TB chopped onion
1 minced clove garlic
2 TB butter
4 eggs, slightly beaten
2 cup mashed cooked pumpkin
1 cup milk
1 cup cream
2 cups grated swiss cheese
1 tsp. Salt
½ tsp. Nutmeg

Saute' onion and garlic in butter and set aside. Combine remaining ingredients and onion mixture. Pour into pie shell. Bake at 375 degrees for forty minutes or until set and brown. Let cool slightly before cutting.

****

Broccoli-Spinach Spread:

¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
1 tsp. Whole cumin seeds
½ tsp. Cruched red pepper flakes
2 tsp. Fresh lime juice
½ tsp. Salt
¼ tsp. Pepper
1 lb. Broccoli, including stem – cut into 1/4” pieces
¼ lb. Fresh spinach
½ cup water
2 TB grated coconut

Heat oil in non-stick frying pan over med-low heat. Add cumin and pepper flakes and fry for ½ minute. Stir in lime juice, salt, pepper, vegetables and water. Cover and simmer until the vegetables are reduced to a chunky puree (45 to 60 minutes). Sir occasionally. Immediately before serving, spread

about 1 tsp. Of mixture on poppy seed crackers. Sprinkle with coconut.

****

Roasted Butternut Squash:

½ butternut squash; peeled, deseeded
1 TB olive oil
1 chili pepper;deseeded and chopped
chopped herbs to garnish; ex. Parsley, etc.

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees F. Cut the squash into large wedges. Heat the oil in an ovenproof frying pan, and add the squash and chili. Coat well in the oil, put in the oven for 15-20 minutes and sprinkle with herbs.

****

Baked Stuffed Sweet Potatoes:

8 med. Sized sweet potatoes
6 TB melted butter
3 TB sugar
¾ cup diced orange sections
¼ cup flaked coconut
½ tsp. Salt
butter

Scrub sweet potatoes and bake at 350 degrees for one hour or until tender. Remove from oven and cut a thin slice from each side of potato, scoop out all pulp, being careful not to break the skin. Mash pulp; add melted butter, sugar, oranges, coconut and salt, mix well. Spoon into shells, dot each with about 1 tsp butter. Bake at 450 degrees for 15 minutes or until tops are lightly browned. Serves 8. Good with pork roast or pork chops.

****

Au Gratin Turnips and Potatoes:

4 cups sliced turnips and potatoes (any combination) peeled and thinly sliced
1 med. Onion peeled and finely sliced
2 TB melted butter
½ cup milk
1/8 tsp. Grated nutmeg
¼ tsp. Ground white pepper
½ tsp. Salt
½ cup grated swiss cheese

Preheat oven to 375 degrees f. Toss together turnips, potatoes, onion with melted butter and place in a 9" square or round baking dish. Cover tightly and place in preheated oven for 30 minutes. In a small pot on top of the stove combine milk, nutmeg, pepper and salt and bring to a boil. Immediately remove from heat. Remove turnip-potato mixture from the oven, remove cover and mix in half the cheese. Pour the milk over the potatoes and sprinkle with remaining cheese. Replace in oven, uncovered, another 20 to 25 minutes. If the gratin is golden brown, it's ready to serve. If not, preheat broiler. Place gratin under broiler about 3 minutes to brown top before serving.

****

Barbecued Zucchini:

6 med. Zucchini
1 cup italian salad dressing
salt and pepper to taste

Trim the ends of the squash and cut each lengthwise in half and then each piece into quarters. Marinate in the salad dressing for ½ hour before cooking. Place on the charcoal grill and add salt and pepper to taste. These pieces should cook in very little time, so watch them. Nobody likes soggy zucchini!

(pictures from: http://www.freedigitalphotos.net)