



Boost Your Health with Winter Produce

IT MAY COME AS A SURPRISE but throughout the long, cold winter there is a bountiful harvest available and a wide array of fresh fruits and vegetables to enjoy. Fruits and vegetables provide our bodies with



a variety of vitamins, minerals and phytochemicals needed to stay healthy and maintain a strong immune system. A healthy immune system helps us resist falling ill with our increased exposure to winter colds and flus.

If there is a year-round farmer's market nearby, this is an excellent place to look for your freshest, locally grown produce. When choosing produce, pick firm, slightly heavy, with skins and leaves that are smooth and unblemished. If some of winter's

bounty is unfamiliar to you, try preparing something different each week; surely some new favorites will be found!

WINTER FRUIT:

Apples, bananas, blood oranges, clementines, cranberries, grapes (red), grapefruits, kiwi, kumquat, oranges, passion fruit, pears, persimmons, pomegranates, pumelo, satsuma oranges, tangelos, tangerine, ugli fruit

WINTER VEGETABLES:

Artichokes, avocado, beets, bok choy, broccoli, broccoli rabe, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery root, chicories (endive, escarole, radicchio), Jerusalem artichokes, kale, kohlrabi, lettuce, mushrooms, parsnips, potatoes, radishes, rutabaga, snow peas, spinach, squash (winter), sweet potatoes, turnips (white), watercress

WINTER GARDENS

Try growing a few of winter's bounty in your own garden.

Broccoli: A relative of cabbage, Brussels sprouts and cauliflower, broccoli grows well in any fertile,

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Farmer Fran's Fun Facts



Mushrooms

- A mushroom is the fleshy, spore-bearing fruiting body of a fungus, typically produced above ground, on soil or on its food source.
- Mushrooms have long been a culinary delight. They have been found in 13,000-year-old archaeological sites in Chile and both the ancient Romans and Greeks as well as the Chinese have long enjoyed their flavors.
- Over 20 species of mushrooms, are commercially cultivated on mushroom farms worldwide. Wild mushrooms, the varieties much harder to cultivate such as the truffle or morel, are harvested by smaller scale private gatherers.
- The *agaricus bisporus* dominates the cultivated market in North American and Europe. In its youngest form it is known as the common button mushroom, as it becomes semi-mature it is sold as the "cremini" or "baby-bella" and when fully mature becomes the "portabello".
- Known for their unique savory "umami" flavor, mushrooms make a great substitute for meat. Try marinating and grilling on a skewer, add to pastas, stews and risottos, stuff with spinach and cheese, or toss with veggies in a quick stir fry.
- Mushrooms are full of fiber, antioxidants and are rich in B vitamins.

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well-drained soil with deep watering. Fertilize once or twice before heads begin to form. One planting may produce for as long as three months. Rotate this crop from year to year.

Brussels sprouts: Plant in a sunny spot with ample water and fertilize once or twice before sprouts develop.

Kale: Plant in full sun and water deeply. Fertilize before heads begin to form. Plant successively to ensure a steady availability. Pick individual leaves or harvest the entire plant.

Spinach: An excellent cool weather crop that will produce huge yields of tasty leaves throughout the winter. Be sure to remove the flowers to prevent it from running to seed.

Root vegetables such as carrots, radishes, onions and beets can be harvested in winter. Plant in late July or early August and permit them to grow until they reach a large enough size for eating. Hold in the garden over the fall and winter months, harvesting slowly enough so you can make them last.

HEALTHY WINTER COOKING

Incorporate winter produce into your meals every day with simple, delicious ideas:

- **Roast winter vegetables** – Using a large variety of whatever you have on hand, such as cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, winter squash, carrots, onions, potatoes or sweet potatoes and parsnips. Rinse, scrub or peel and slice into 1-inch pieces. Toss with 2–3 Tbsp olive oil and salt and pepper to taste. Spread on an oiled, rimmed baking sheet and bake at 400°F for 30 minutes tossing once during baking time.
- **Use your slow cooker or a large stock pot** – Make hearty soups and stews packed with a variety of winter veggies, including squash, carrots, turnips, kale and potatoes, with or without meat.
- **Stir-fry winter vegetables** – Rinse and trim a variety of winter vegetables such as broccoli rabe, bok choy, celery



root and snow peas. Heat oil in a large pan; stir fry for 5 minutes or until crisp-tender. Add soy sauce to taste or another sauce for flavor.

- **Winter salad combination ideas** – Rinse greens, dry, tear into bite-sized pieces, prepare the other fruits and vegetables, toss with an all-purpose vinaigrette and top with toasted nuts, raisins and feta cheese, if desired. Try kale with pomegranate seeds, spinach with tangerines, endive with pear and avocado, fennel with persimmon or lettuce with cooked beets.
- **Winter fruit salad** – Rinse, trim, peel and slice any combination of fruit from winter's bounty, toss and serve.

On your next shopping trip, pick up a full bag of fresh produce to add valuable nutrients and get the added immune system boost your family needs to have a healthy diet and stay well throughout the cold winter months.

— Catherine Stafford, *Child Health and Nutrition Manager, CocoKids*

KIDS' HEALTH & SAFETY

Never Too Early, Anti-Bias Activities for Young Children

ANTI-BIAS EDUCATION is a way of teaching that supports children and their families as children develop a sense of identity in a diverse society. It helps children learn to be proud of themselves and their families, respect a range of human differences, recognize unfairness and bias and speak up for the rights of others. These activities can help children learn acceptance and appreciate differences.



DIVERSITY EGG LESSON

Talk with the children about how people are alike (we all have two eyes, one nose) and how we differ (blue eyes vs. brown eyes, long hair vs. short).

Place a brown and white egg in a bowl and ask the children what difference they notice between the eggs. When they answer the color, crack the egg open and show the children how the eggs are the same on the inside even though they look different on the outside.

EXPLORING SKIN COLOR

All colors are beautiful. Lead an activity making puppets using a collection of beige, cream, brown, peach and other skin-colored socks, felt scraps, assorted fabric trim, yarn, buttons and glue. Let the children select the color of sock they want to use for making a puppet. Talk about the similarities and differences between the puppets.

BREAD TASTING PARTY

Gather various “breads from around the world” such as naan, cornbread, tortillas, matzo, pita, scones, etc. Introduce the name of the bread and from which culture it originates. Then invite the children to taste it. Talk about the traditions of those cultures. Maybe even make your own bread together.

ALL KINDS OF FAMILIES

Introduce various types of families by having diverse paper dolls that include Black, Asian, Hispanic and people with differing ages and abilities. Role play: “This is Joe. He is married to Bill. They have a daughter, Melissa. They are a family.” or “This is Rosa. She lives with her grandmother, Helena. They are a family.” There are lots of different kinds of families. People make many different choices about who they love and who

they live with. Follow up with children’s books which feature different kinds of families.

MUSICAL CHAIRS WITH A TWIST

Instead of removing children from the game, the goal is to make space for everyone and share the seats as more chairs are removed. At first it may not seem to work as the children are accustomed to competing with each other. However, after several tries, the new way catches on. Children may enthusiastically say, “You can share this seat with me, come here!” This can spill over into many other classroom activities as children feel the thrill of sharing rather than the tension and disappointment from competing.

Anti-bias activities nurture and value all children, teach them to be friends with others who are different from them, help them resist unfairness and uproot our own biases as adults.

Sources:

Carrots Are Orange,
Penn State Cooperative Extension,
Washington-Beech Community Preschool,
Phi Delta Kappan: Never Too Early to Learn,
Cooperative Sports and Games Book,
Anti-Bias Education, Derman-Sparks & Edwards,
TheCurriculumCorner.com

Lentil & Mushroom Bolognese Sauce

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| Olive oil | 4 Tbsp | Tomatoes, crushed | 1 (28 oz) can |
| Onion, minced | 1 large | Broth, chicken or vegetable | 2 cups |
| Carrots, chopped fine | 2 | Tomato paste | 1/4 cup |
| Celery, chopped fine | 1 stalk | Lentils, brown or green | 1 cup |
| Mushrooms, chopped fine | 24 oz | Italian seasoning, dried | 2 tsp |
| Salt | 1 tsp | Parsley, fresh, chopped | 1/4 cup |
| Pepper | 1 tsp | Pasta, whole-grain, cooked | 8 oz |
| Wine, red or white (optional) | 1/2 cup | Parmesan cheese, shaved | 8 oz |
| Garlic, minced | 3 cloves | | |

1. Heat the olive oil in a large, wide pot. Add onion, carrots, celery, mushrooms, salt and pepper and sauté until the mushrooms have given off most of their liquid and vegetables are turning golden, about 10 minutes.
2. Add wine, garlic, tomatoes, paste, broth, lentils and herbs. Combine well and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low and simmer for 45 minutes, until the sauce is thickened. Stir in parsley.
3. Serve over pasta, topped with Parmesan.

Yield: 8 servings

Meets requirement for vegetable, whole grain rich and meat/meat alternate

— *Tasty Team*

Sauteed Spinach & Mushrooms

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| Olive oil | 2 Tbsp |
| Garlic, smashed | 3 cloves |
| Mushrooms, sliced | 2 cups |
| Salt and pepper | to taste |
| Baby spinach | 10 ounces |
| Balsamic vinegar | 1-2 Tbsp |

1. Heat oil in a medium sauté pan over medium heat. Add garlic and cook about 2 minutes, do not let the garlic brown. Push the garlic to the side and add mushrooms. Increase heat, season with salt and pepper and cook, stirring occasionally until they begin to become golden, 10–12 minutes.
2. Add the spinach with an additional pinch of salt and turn with tongs until wilted.
3. Transfer to a serving platter, drizzle with vinegar and serve warm.

Yield: 6 servings

Meets requirement for vegetables

— *Foodnetwork.com*

ACTIVITY CORNER

Physical Activity Around the World

CAPOEIRA

Capoeira is an Afro-Brazilian martial art that uses elements of music, dance and acrobatics. It originated in 16th century Brazil by enslaved Africans who disguised practicing fighting techniques by incorporating music and dance. Today, playing capoeira can be seen worldwide. The game takes place in a “roda”, a circle formed by capoeiristas with musical instruments, where two capoeiristas compete against each other using a mix of gymnastic-style kicks, flips and dance to combat their opponent. During the game, the energy is raised with singing, chanting and music by those around the circle. The focus of the game is not to knock down the opponent, rather it emphasizes skill in outwitting your opponent.



To play, gather children in a circle with musical instruments, have them make music, sing and take turns in the center showing off their acrobatic and dance moves.

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Food **Q.** How do you truly savor a hotdog?
Funny **A.** With relish!