

NUTRITION NEWS

Optimal You Dietitians Bringing Nutrition Straight to You.



June 2021

Venture outdoors this summer to farmer's markets, roadside stands, or your own backyard to pick a variety of delicious seasonal produce. Our tips this month include part three of our gardening series, recipes to prepare your fresh finds and a guide to create spice and marinade combinations for a flavorful, unique dish all your own.





KEEPING IT FRESH

Properly caring for your vegetable garden is key for optimal production. After all of your efforts planning, preparing, and planting, the third installment of our gardening series encourages strong productive crops.

Stop Weeds in Their Tracks

Weeds compete with your vegetables for light, water and nutrients, so it's important to keep them to a minimum. Use a hoe or hand fork to lightly stir or cultivate, the top inch of soil regularly to discourage weed seedlings. A mulch of clean straw, compost or plastic can keep weeds at bay around larger plants like tomatoes.

Feed Your Future Food

Fertilizing helps to maximize yields. Organic gardeners add high-quality compost once at planting time. Other gardeners apply a packaged warm-season vegetable fertilizer according to the directions on the box or bag.

Resist Pests

Keep animals out. Big pests, such as deer and rabbits, can disrupt vegetable gardens of all types. It takes an 8-foot-tall fence to keep deer from jumping into the garden. A fence needs to extend 6 inches beneath the soil to stop rabbits from digging their way in.

Deter Destructive Insects

Picking off large insects and caterpillars by hand is a safe effective way to deal with limited infestations. For bigger quantities of insects, try insecticidal soap sprays that you can find at most garden centers carefully follow the manufacturers' directions.

Fight Fungal Diseases

Reduce the likelihood of fungal diseases by watering the soil, not the leaves of the plants. If you use a sprinkler, do it early in the day so the leaves will dry by nightfall. If a plant falls prey to a disease, promptly pull it and throw it in the trash; don't add sick plants to your compost pile (more on this next month). Additional disease preventatives include growing vegetable varieties listed as disease-resistant and changing the location of your plants each year. The latter idea helps stop diseases from gaining a permanent foothold in your garden.



Tools of the Trade

Invest in valuable tools to tend your garden. In the long run, you'll spend less than having to replace cheap, inadequate versions. Stock your easy to reach box or shelf with the following staples:

- Trowel – Dig and turn soil in small spaces. Choose a sturdy metal option with a comfortable handle.
- CobraHead Weeder – A versatile tool to weed, cultivate and sow seeds.
- Garden Scoot – A seat on wheel to save your back and knees when gardening.
- Garden Gloves – Look for water-resistant, thick but breathable material with a reinforced grip
- Honorable Mentions: soil knife, shovel, spade, hoe, rake, garden hose, sprinkler, watering can, short stakes and strings to mark rows, plant supports, a duster or spray nozzle.

GARDEN FRESH EXTRAS



Your garden can be a wealth of flavor. Have fun this season using your backyard bounty. Create tasty sauces and sides using finely chopped or ground produce. Kitchen tools can ease in preparation. A food processor, food chopper, herb scissors and variety of blenders make fine chopping a breeze. If nothing else, have a secure cutting board and a sharp knife on hand to do the job!



Pesto

- 2 c basil
- 1/2 c parmesan cheese
- 1/2 c olive oil
- 1/3 c pine nuts or walnuts
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 18 tsp pepper

Pulse basil and pine nuts in a food processor. Add garlic and cheese, pulsing a few more times and scraping the sides down. Slowly pour in olive oil with the processor running. Stir in salt and pepper.

Uses: Serve with cut vegetables, whole wheat pita, spread on chicken or salmon, stir into soup or add to hummus.

Pico de Gallo

- 1 c white onion, chopped
- 1 jalapeño, seeded & chopped
- 1/4 c lime juice
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 4 large tomatoes, chopped
- 1/2 c cilantro, chopped

In a large bowl, combine the onion, jalapeño, lime juice and salt and let sit for 5 minutes. Add chopped tomato and cilantro.

Uses: Serve with sautéed shrimp, atop baked whitefish or grilled chicken. Also great with tacos, mixed with avocado for a quick guacamole or on a grain bowl.



Tabbouleh

- 1 c bulgur or quinoa
- 1/4 c lemon juice
- 1/4 c olive oil
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 c scallions, minced
- 1 c mint leaves, chopped
- 1 c parsley, chopped
- 1 cucumber, seeded & diced
- 2 c tomatoes, diced

Prepare the bulgur or quinoa as directed. Drain (if applicable) and add lemon juice, oil and salt. Stir well. Add scallions, mint, parsley, cucumber and tomatoes. Cover and refrigerate at least 30 minutes.

Uses: Serve with hummus, tzatziki, whole wheat pita, falafel or enjoy on it's own!



SEASON WITHOUT SALT

Spices and herbs can enhance your grilled meats, fish and produce. Take a Southwest flair with cumin, paprika, cayenne pepper, oregano and chili powder. Go Greek with dried dill, garlic, lemon and black pepper. Try Tuscan with basil, oregano, rosemary, marjoram, fennel seeds and garlic.

Make Your Own Marinade

From vegetables to fruit, chicken and fish, marinades of oil and spices add flavor AND can reduce possible carcinogens (HCA's and PAK's) that develop with meats cooked at high temperatures. Try this fool-proof formula for your next grilling experience:

Marinade Components

- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 2-3 TBSP fresh or 1 TBSP dried herbs
- 2-10 garlic cloves, peeled and crushed (based on preference)

Directions:

Place vegetables or protein in shallow dish, cover with marinade and let stand 30 minutes —34 hours for optimal flavor. If grilling raw meat items, avoid cross-contamination by initially saving a portion of marinade to brush on proteins throughout the grilling process, or create a new batch of marinade to provide ample flavor from start to finish!

Add Variety with Vinaigrettes

Go beyond salads with DIY vinaigrette dressings. Drizzle over a grain bowl, add to grilled vegetables, or mix into bean or fruit salads.

Add 3-4 TBSP red wine vinegar, 1 TBSP honey or spicy Dijon mustard to marinades. Whisk and savor the flavors!

Save the Date: July 13th, 4:00pm — 5:00pm EST

Event: Grilling with the OY TEAM

Use your grill to prepare balanced nutrient-dense meals. Join the entire Optimal You team virtually for tips, recipes and more. Information & registration in July newsletter.

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-WILLIAM COOPER

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COMING UP!

Nutrition classes & events

7/13/2021

Backyard Grilling with the Optimal You Team

4:00pm—5:00pm EST

Join your Registered Dietitians and your Fitness Facility team as we create and share delicious summer dishes.

Additional information and TEAMS link to be shared in the July Nutrition Newsletter.
Stay tuned!

LEARN MORE

fitnessamway.com

The Optimal You Fitness Facility website has tips on nutrition, well-being, physical activity, managing disease & more. Visit our nutrition & cooking pages for cooking classes, recipes, videos, and tips to include nutrient-dense foods in meals & snacks.



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DID YOU KNOW?

All Michigan Amway employees, spouses and their dependents receive **FREE** Nutrition Consultations? We are available virtually, by phone and email to address your nutrition questions & concerns.

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OPTIMAL YOU
REGISTERED
DIETITIANS
FOR AN
APPOINTMENT
TODAY!

