

HEALTH & WELLNESS LETTER



SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2014

Autumn is often referred to as people's favorite season as it evokes fond memories of past Halloweens and hayrides as well as anticipation for what the new year will bring. Food traditions are a wonderful anchor for memories and for healthy relationships with food. This year try to spice things up by visiting a new fall festival, doing something different with your pumpkin or trying novel recipes with old fall food favorites.

FALL HARVEST

The following chart is a basic summary of commonly grown fruits and vegetables that make their debut in autumn. Regional specialties are not included in this chart but you can find specifics by state at <http://www.pickyourown.org/harvestcalendars.htm>. Regional specialties add personality and opportunities to try new foods and dishes amidst your travels.

FALL FOOD WARDROBE	Vegetable		Fruit
	arugula	radicchio	apple
	broccoli	sweet peppers	Asian pear
	Brussels sprouts	shelling beans	pear
	corn	sweet potato	persimmon
	fennel	winter squashes	pomegranate
	green tomato		

HOORAY FOR PUMPKINS & PUMPKIN PUREE

What is the first thing that comes to mind when you hear the word "pumpkin"? Jack-o-lanterns? Roasted pumpkin seeds? Pumpkin pie? When times required people to be more resourceful, they would make sure they utilized as much of the pumpkin as they could. But, as time has progressed and people's lives have become busy, people have replaced this utilitarian mindset with plastic pumpkins lit by electrical lights, packaged pumpkin seeds and canned pumpkin puree or store bought pies. We challenge you to embrace your forefathers this fall with the following ideas for making the most out of your pumpkins:

- Purchase pumpkins from local growers, farms or farmer's markets
- Look for pumpkins that are firm, uniform in color and have a firm stem
- Whole pumpkins can be stored in a cool dry place for up to 1 month
- If your pumpkin is for culinary endeavors look for sugar, cheese or pie pumpkin varieties as the flesh will be less stringy
- Scoop out the seeds with an ice-cream scooper. Preheat oven to 250 degrees. Clean and rinse seeds, discarding cracked seeds. Gently boil cleaned seeds for approximately 10 minutes, drain and pat dry. In a medium bowl, toss seeds with olive oil and sweet (cinnamon, all-spice...) or savory (garlic, rosemary...) seasonings to your preference. Spread in a single layer onto a baking sheet, bake for ~ 1 hour turning every 10 minutes until crisp. Cool and enjoy alone, mix into a trail mix or as sprinkle on top of a creamy soup or yogurt.



- Cut pumpkin into large pieces and steam by heating 1 inch of water to a boil over high heat; add pumpkin pieces, bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-high; cover and cook until tender, 25 to 30 minutes. Drain, cool, and peel.

- If desired, mash with small amounts of butter, brown sugar, and cinnamon.



- If using for pie filling, puree in a blender or food processor with knife blade attached. Do not add other ingredients. Place in a paper towel-lined sieve set over a bowl and let drain to remove excess liquid; puree should have the same thickness as solid-pack canned pumpkin. One pound of uncooked pumpkin yields about 1 cup puree.

- Pumpkin puree can be used to make:

- Pancakes
- Muffins or scones
- Coulis/topping for poultry or pork tenderloin
- Smoothies
- Soups

- Pumpkin puree can be frozen by placing into freezer bags and eliminating as much air as possible to minimize freezer burn or by using a food saver. You can also put ¼ cup pumpkin puree into muffin tins, freeze and then transfer to a small freezer safe bag for portion controlled on-demand use. To use, thaw, drain excess liquid and use as suggested above.



SPICY COCONUT CORN

- 8 ears fresh corn (about 7 cups corn kernels)
- 1 shallot
- 13.5-ounce can coconut milk
- 1/2 to 1 jalapeño
- 1 tablespoon canola oil
- 3/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 10 fresh chives
- 1/4 cup fresh cilantro leaves

Preparation

Shuck and clean the corn. Hold each ear of corn by its stem and stand it straight up in the bowl. With a serrated knife, shave off the kernels. Using a chef's knife, slice the shallot into thin rings. Slice the jalapeño into very thin rings as well. Add the oil to a medium sized saucepan and heat on medium until it shimmers (about 1 minute). Add the sliced shallot and cook, stirring with a wooden spoon, until softened, 2 to 3 minutes. Add the coconut milk and let come to a boil. Stir in the corn, salt, and the sliced jalapeño half. Let simmer 3 minutes. Taste. If you want it spicier, slice the remaining jalapeño and add. Turn off the heat. Holding the chives over the corn, use scissors to snip them into small pieces. Stir them into the corn along with the cilantro leaves. Serve hot. From Do It Delicious

DRIED APPLE CHIPS

Position racks in the upper and lower thirds of oven; preheat to 200°F. Line 2 large baking sheets with parchment paper. Combine 4 cups water and 1/2 cup lemon juice in a medium bowl. Using a sharp knife or a mandoline, slice 2 large apples as thin as possible, about 1/8 inch thick. Soak the slices in the lemon water for 30 minutes. Drain and pat the slices as dry as possible with paper towels or clean kitchen towels. Place on the prepared baking sheets in a single layer.

Bake the slices on the upper and lower racks for 1 hour. Remove from the oven and turn each slice over; return the pans to the oven. Bake 1 more hour for soft dried apples or about 2 more hours for crispy apple chips. (Timing depends on your oven, the type of apple and thickness of the slices; check periodically and reduce or increase the total time as needed.) Turn off the oven, crack the door and leave the apples in the oven until the oven cools completely, 1 to 2 hours. Store airtight for up to 1 week or refrigerate for up to 1 month. Yield: about 4 dozen apple slices or chips. From Eating Well