

Tomatoes

Food Facts

- Because a tomato has seeds and grows from a flowering plant, botanically, it is classified as a fruit, not a vegetable.
- There are more than 7,500 tomato varieties grown around the world. Most varieties are red, although there are some that are green, yellow, orange, pink, black, brown, white, and purple!

Buying and Storing

- A ripe tomato should be firm, but not rock-hard, and should feel heavy for its size.
- Avoid any sign of mold or bruising. The occasional small surface cracks at the bottom of a tomato won't affect its quality.
- Store at room temperature, away from direct sunlight, to encourage even ripening.

Preparing and Using

- Rinse tomatoes under cool running water, and drain on a clean towel.
- Tomatoes sliced from stem end to bottom will keep their juice better than those sliced crosswise.
- To remove seeds, cut tomatoes in half crosswise and gently squeeze into a sieve over a bowl to catch the seeds, as the juice runs out.

Italian White Beans with Tomatoes and Garlic

serves 4

takes 15 minutes

1 Tbsp olive oil 1 onion, sliced 2 tsp crumbled, dried sage 3 cloves garlic, minced 1 Tbsp water	In a large skillet, heat oil over medium heat. Add onion, sage, garlic and water. Cook, stirring often, for 5 minutes.
1 (540 ml) can white kidney beans 3 tomatoes, diced ¼ tsp each salt and pepper	Stir in beans, tomatoes, salt and pepper. Cover and simmer over low heat for 5 minutes.
1 tsp balsamic vinegar	Stir in vinegar. Taste, and adjust seasoning.

Sugar Snap Peas

Food Facts

- Unlike other peas that have a tough pod, you can eat the whole sugar snap pea, pod and all!
- Sugar snap peas get their name from their sweet flavour and the “snappy” crunch they make in your mouth!

Buying and Storing

- Choose sugar snap peas that have an even, bright green colour. The pods should be firm and crisp, and should snap when bent.
- Store fresh sugar snap peas unwashed in a tightly sealed plastic bag for up to 5 days in the fridge.

Preparing and Using

- To prepare, cut off the very ends of the pods with a sharp knife, removing any stem present.
- Sugar snap peas can be enjoyed raw, steamed, or stir-fried.

Chicken and Vegetable Stir Fry

serves 4

takes 35 minutes

<p><i>Stir-Fry Sauce:</i> 2/3 c chicken broth 2 Tbsp corn starch 1 Tbsp sugar ½ tsp crushed red pepper flakes 1 clove garlic, minced 3 Tbsp soy sauce 1 Tbsp Hoisin sauce 1 tsp sesame oil</p>	<p>Combine all Stir-Fry Sauce ingredients in a small bowl, whisking until cornstarch has dissolved. Set aside.</p>
<p>2 Tbsp canola oil 1 lb boneless, skinless chicken breast, cut into ½” strips</p>	<p>Heat 2 Tbsp oil in wok or large frying pan over medium-high heat. Add chicken and cook about 5 minutes, or until cooked through.</p>
<p>1 Tbsp canola oil 1 onion, sliced</p>	<p>Add 1 Tbsp oil in same wok/frying pan. Stir-fry onion for one minute.</p>
<p>1 red pepper, seeded and sliced 1 ½ c sugar snap peas and red pepper, cut into strips 1 c sliced mushrooms</p>	<p>Add peppers, sugar snap peas, and mushrooms, and stir-fry 5 minutes.</p>
<p>½ c sliced green onions</p>	<p>Stir sauce mixture again until blended, and pour into wok/frying pan. Add green onions. Stirring constantly, bring to a boil, and boil 1 minute. Serve over rice.</p>

Strawberries

Food Facts

- Strawberries are edible (and rather tasty) but technically, they are receptacles (the thickened part of a stem) rather than berries.
- Making things even more confusing, the little hard pieces that look like seeds on a strawberry are actually a type of dry fruit (called achene)....that each contain their own seed!

Buying and Storing

- Look for berries that are completely red, with no white or green spots, and have a sweet smell.
- Store berries in the fridge with hulls intact, unwashed, and lightly covered in a single layer. Use within 3 – 6 days.
- Just before serving, gently rinse under cool running water, gently pat dry with a clean towel and remove the stem.

Freezing

- To freeze, place in single layer on a large tray. Freeze until firm (at least one hour), pack in freezer bags, squeezing out as much air as possible, and seal.
- Strawberries may be frozen whole, or sliced, for up to 12 months. Thaw at room temperature.

Strawberry Fields Salad

serves 6

takes 15 minutes

<p>¾ c olive oil ¼ c red wine vinegar ¼ c honey 2 Tbsp sugar 1 Tbsp Dijon mustard Salt and pepper, to taste</p>	<p>Whisk oil, vinegar, honey, sugar, mustard, salt, and pepper together for the dressing. Set aside, and whisk again before using.</p>
<p>1 pint strawberries, sliced 1 250g bag mixed baby greens 1 c dried cranberries 1 small red onion, sliced thinly ¼ c crumbled feta cheese (optional)</p>	<p>Toss berries, greens, cranberries, and onion together in a large bowl with dressing. Top with feta, if using, and serve.</p>

Pineapple

Food Facts

- A pineapple is the result of as many as 200 pineapple flowers that have joined around the core, forming the delicious yellow fruit we eat.
- After cleaning and drying, the green, spiky top of a pineapple can be planted in soil and a new plant will grow!

Buying and Storing

- Tug on one of the leaves. If it comes out of the tuft, the pineapple is ripe! The leaves should be green, with no signs of brown. The pineapple skin should be vibrant greens and yellows, with no white or browned areas.
- Store fresh pineapple at home on the counter, if using right away. It can also be stored in the fridge for up to 3 days.
- Once the skin and core have been removed, you can freeze fresh pineapple in airtight containers for up to 12 months.

Preparing and Using

- Remove the leafy crown with a sharp knife, and cut a thin slice from the base. Slice the skin away from top to bottom, removing any brown 'eyes' as you go. Carefully cut the pineapple in half lengthwise, and again into lengthwise quarters. Remove tough central core and discard. Chop each wedge into bite-sized chunks.

Pineapple-Grilled Pork Chops

serves 4

takes 25 minutes

Marinade:

Juice from 227g can pineapple rings, rings saved
 ¼ c brown sugar
 ¼ c reduced-sodium soy sauce
 ¼ tsp garlic powder
 Pinch of ground black pepper

The day before cooking, mix the marinade ingredients together in a large zipper bag, using your hands to massage the marinade together to dissolve the sugar.

4 pork chops

Place pork chops in zipper bag with marinade, squeeze out air, and seal tightly. Massage marinade into pork. Store in a bowl in the fridge overnight, turning and massaging every few hours.

Pineapple-Grilled Pork Chops*serves 4**takes 25 minutes*

4 reserved pineapple rings

Preheat outdoor grill, and lightly oil grate. Remove pork chops from marinade, and grill, turning often, until internal temperature reaches 160°F/71°C. While meat is grilling, place 4 pineapple rings on grill. Cook until hot and rings show grill marks. Serve 1 pork chop with 1 pineapple ring.

Honeydew Melon**Nutrition**

- The ancient Egyptians regarded the honeydew as sacred, and it was only reserved for society's elite.
- The sweetness and flavor of the honeydew goes well with cottage cheese, sweet cream, mint or lime.

Buying and Storing

- Select a melon that is symmetrical in size and shape.
- A good indicator of ripeness is to apply slight pressure to the blossom end of the fruit. When fully ripe, the blossom end should give a little with pressure. Avoid rock-hard melons, those with soft, or yellowing/browning spots.
- Wrap ripe melons in a plastic bag and store in fridge for up to 5 days.

Preparing and Using

- Always wash the outside rind of a melon before cutting into it.
- Slice the honeydew in half, scraping out all the seeds with a spoon, and slice wedges. The outermost yellowish rind should be removed and discarded if cutting into cubes.

Mexican Honeydew Salad*serves 6**takes 10 minutes*

1 honeydew melon

Wash melon. Slice a thin slice off both the blossom and stem ends (so you have a flat place to stand it up). Slice off the rind. Cut melon in half and scoop out seeds. Cube the melon into 1" chunks. Measure 4 cups melon cubes and place in medium bowl.

2 Tbsp fresh lime juice
¼ tsp salt
¼ tsp chili powder

Add melon with lime juice, salt, and chili powder, and toss to combine. Serve topped with crumbled feta cheese, pepitas (pumpkin seed kernels), and cilantro.

Grapes

Nutrition

- Grapes come in many colors, including green, red, black, yellow, pink, and purple. "White" grapes are actually green.
- Grapes are a kind of berry! They have a leathery covering and a fleshy inside, similar to blueberries.

Buying and Storing

- Quality table grapes should be plump and smooth, and have even, full colouring. They should be firmly attached to the stem, which should be flexible, and have light green or yellowish colouring.
- Grapes will keep for a week in a refrigerator, loosely wrapped, or in ventilated plastic, in a single layer.

Preparing and Using

- Wash just before eating – if washed earlier, fruit will deteriorate.
- Enjoy them as-is, or as part of a cheese-and-fruit platter.
- Cooked grapes may be served in a variety of desserts, in juice or jelly forms!

Party Chicken Salad

serves 10

takes 15 minutes

¼ c mayonnaise ¾ c plain Greek yogurt 1 tsp curry powder	Whisk in a small bowl until smooth. Set aside.
1 small apple, finely chopped 1 Tbsp lemon juice	Toss apple and lemon juice together in a large bowl.
4 c shredded, cooked chicken breast 1 c diced celery 1 c seedless grapes, halved ½ c chopped pecans 1 227g can crushed pineapple in juice, undrained	Mix in chicken, celery, grapes, pecans, and pineapple. Pour dressing mixture in, and toss to combine. Cover and refrigerate until chilled through.

Cucumber

Food Facts

- Even though it's a fruit, cucumber is often known, prepared and eaten as a vegetable.
- Pureed or sliced cucumber gives an almost instant relief to sunburnt skin.

Buying and Storing

- Select firm cucumbers that are heavy for their size, with no soft spots or shrivelled skin.
- Plastic-wrapped cucumbers will keep for up to a week in the vegetable drawer of the refrigerator.
- Cut cucumbers should be tightly wrapped and checked daily for signs of decay, as soft spots can develop quickly.

Preparing and Using

- It's not necessary to peel cucumbers – most of the nutrients are found in the skin.
- Cucumbers are usually eaten raw, with dip, in salads, or as a sandwich vegetable.
- Have you ever had cooked cucumbers? They can be gently steeped in stock or cream, or sautéed in butter. Try slicing them lengthwise into “boats” and scooping out the seeds. Cucumbers can then be poached and filled with a savoury mixture of herbs and rice.

Cucumber, Couscous, and Bean Salad

serves 6

takes 10 minutes

1 c couscous 1 ¼ c vegetable or chicken stock	In large skillet, over medium-high heat, toast couscous 3-5 minutes. Stir in stock; bring to a boil. Cover, remove from heat, and let stand for 5 minutes. Fluff with a fork before using.
1 540ml can red kidney beans, drained and rinsed Half of a cucumber, diced 2 green onions, sliced ¼ c fresh parsley, chopped	In a large bowl, combine beans, cucumber, onions, and parsley with couscous.
2 Tbsp fresh lemon juice 2 Tbsp olive oil 1 clove garlic, minced	Pour dressing ingredients over veggies and couscous. Toss well. Season with salt and pepper; serve warm or chilled.

Celery

Food Facts

- Celery was used as ancient “bouquet of flowers”, to reward winners of athletic games in the Ancient Greece.
- Celery seeds are used as spice.

Buying and Storing

- Select celery that is light green in colour, firm, compact, and well shaped. The stalks should be solid, and leaves should be fresh. Avoid purchasing celery with bruising or discoloured areas on the stalks.
- To store, wash celery to remove any dirt, and cut off both ends. Wrap in aluminium foil – your celery will stay fresh for weeks!

Preparing and Cooking

- Celery is a wonderfully crisp vegetable to dip in creamy dip, or to spread with peanut butter. To cook celery, slice stalks across the ribs, and sauté in oil or chicken stock. You can slice the leaves and add to soups or salads.

Chicken and Celery Stir Fry

serves 4

takes 40 minutes

1 large egg white 1 Tbsp cornstarch ¼ tsp salt ¼ tsp ground black pepper	In a medium bowl, whisk egg white, cornstarch, salt, and pepper until smooth.
1 lb boneless, skinless chicken breasts (about 2)	Cut chicken into ½” strips. Add to egg white mixture and toss to coat.
2 – 3 Tbsp vegetable oil	Heat in large non-stick skillet over medium heat. Add coated chicken strips to skillet; cook, turning once, until golden and cooked through. Set aside to drain on paper towel.
1 lb celery (8-10 stalks), thinly sliced diagonally (about 5 cups) 3” piece ginger root, peeled and thinly slivered lengthwise	Add celery and ginger to remaining oil in skillet. Cook, and toss until celery is crisp-tender.
3 Tbsp rice vinegar 1 Tbsp toasted sesame oil 1 Tbsp sugar	Stir vinegar, sesame oil, and sugar into vegetables.
4 green onions, cut into 3” lengths	Add green onions and cooked chicken. Toss to combine, and heat through. Serve immediately.

Cauliflower

Food Facts

- The colour of the cauliflower depends on the variety. The most common type of cauliflower is white, but it can be also be green, purple, orange, brown and yellow!
- Cauliflower-based doughs for making pizza have been 3D printed.

Buying and Storing

- Select heads that are firm and tightly flowered, with fine, white florets, and fresh-looking green leaves. Brown spots on a white cauliflower head are usually just water marks, but yellowish spots mean it's not very fresh.
- Store cauliflower heads unwrapped in the refrigerator's crisper drawer for up to 5 days.

Preparing and Cooking

- Cut cauliflower into florets and rinse under cold running water.
- The florets are great in a salad, or as part of a vegetable platter served with dip.
- Cooked cauliflower florets keep their shape best when steamed 5 – 10 minutes, or roasted (at 350°F (177°C) for about 20 minutes. For either cooking method, cook until tender-crisp.

Cauliflower-Lentil-Rice Bake

serves 6

takes 45 minutes

2 Tbsp vegetable oil 2 onions, chopped 2 cloves garlic, minced 2 c sliced mushrooms 2 tsp cumin ½ tsp turmeric	Heat oil in large saucepan, over medium heat. Add onions, garlic, mushrooms, cumin, and turmeric. Cook 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.
1 796ml can diced tomatoes 4 c coarsely chopped cauliflower 1 c veggie or chicken stock ½ c red lentils ½ c long-grain rice	Stir in tomatoes, cauliflower, stock, lentils, and rice; bring to a full boil. Transfer to a 12-cup (3L) casserole dish; cover and bake at 350°F (177°C) oven for 30 minutes, or to desired doneness.
½ c shredded cheddar cheese	Sprinkle casserole with cheese; bake uncovered, for 5 minutes, or until cheese is melted and bubbly.

Carrots

Food Facts

- Usually, carrots are orange in colour, although there are purple, red, white, and yellow varieties.
- Carrot seeds are so small that about 2,000 seeds can fit in a teaspoon!

Buying and Storing

- Look for firm, crisp carrots, with a smooth, blemish-free exterior.
- Store in plastic for up to 3 weeks in the refrigerator crisper. For longer storage, keep carrots cool and moist in a root cellar, or similarly cool place.

Preparing and Cooking

- To keep carrots firm and crisp for serving raw, cut into strips and place in cold water with a slice of onion for 30 minutes. Remove onion, and drain carrots. Keep in a zippered bag.
- Grated, sliced, julienned, or left whole, the carrot lends itself for a wide range of salads, soups, casseroles, stews, and even sweet cakes and cookies!
- On their own, carrots can be steamed or boiled, served with butter, stir-fried, or roasted with meats or poultry.

Bunny's Best Soup

serves 6

takes 45 minutes

2 lb carrots, peeled and chopped
1 onion, chopped
1 celery stalk, sliced
1 bay leaf
4 c water or vegetable stock

In a large saucepan, bring veggies and bay leaf to a boil in water or stock. Reduce heat, and simmer 20 – 25 minutes, or until vegetables are very tender. Discard bay leaf. In batches, carefully puree mixture in a blender until smooth.

354 ml can evaporated milk
¼ tsp ground black pepper
¼ tsp nutmeg

Stir in evaporated milk, pepper, and nutmeg, until well blended.

Cantaloupe

Food Facts

- Cantaloupes are members of the vine-crop family, including other melons, squash, cucumbers, pumpkins, and gourds. They have plenty of relatives – one big happy family!
- Another name for cantaloupes are ‘muskmelons.’

Buying and Storing

- Tap the melon: a hollow sound indicates the melon is ripe. Choose a melon that seems heavy for its size, and avoid any that have visible damage, such as soft spots, cracks, or bruises. Use your nose: cantaloupes are very fragrant when they are ripe; choose a melon with a sweet aroma
- Store uncut melon at room temperature for up to one week to allow the texture of its flesh to become softer and juicier. Once cut, melon should be refrigerated to preserve its freshness, taste, and juiciness.

Preparing and Using

- Before cutting a whole melon, wash it under running water. Rinse well, and pat dry with a clean towel. Using a clean, sharp knife, slice both ends off the melon, creating flat spots to stand the melon up. Use the knife to remove the rind, and halve the melon lengthwise, using a spoon to gently scoop out the seeds and contents of fruit

Cantaloupe Salad

serves 2

takes 5 minutes

½ cantaloupe, peeled and sliced into wedges	Arrange melon on serving platter.
1 Tbsp honey	Drizzle honey over melon wedges.
1” chunk of ginger root, peeled	Press grated ginger firmly onto bottom of bowl. Tilt bowl away from ginger, to release juices. Pour ginger juice over cantaloupe.
4 mint leaves, torn	Top with pieces of mint leaves and serve.

Broccoli

Food Facts

- Broccoli by invented by crossing cauliflower seeds with pea seeds.
- Broccoli is related to cauliflower, kale, cabbage, and Brussels sprouts.

Buying and Storing

- At its peak, broccoli is tightly budded with bright grey-green leaves and yellow-green stems. Any heads with buds bursting into flower, or yellow florets, are past their prime.
- Look for bunches with slender stems – heavy stems are often woody.
- Broccoli will keep for up to five days in a perforated bag in the fridge crisper drawer.

Preparing and Cooking

- Wash and drain broccoli bunch; remove leaves, and trim stems.
- Steaming florets takes 8 – 12 minutes, while stir-frying cooks pieces more quickly.
- Cook broccoli just to the point of becoming tender, without overcooking.

Broccoli and Beef Fettuccini

serves 4

takes 35 minutes

½ lb fettuccini	Cook pasta according to package directions, while preparing rest of recipe.
2 c beef stock, divided 2 cloves garlic, minced 1 onion, diced	In a large skillet or wok, heat ¼ c beef stock. Add garlic and onion, and cook while stirring, for 1 minute.
1 lb boneless beef grilling steak, cut into thin strips	Add beef to skillet with onions, and cook 2 – 3 minutes, or until beef is no longer pink.
1 bunch broccoli 2 carrots, peeled	Cut broccoli head into florets. Slice tough outer skin from stem, and slice inside of stem thinly. Slice carrots diagonally. Add carrots and broccoli to skillet. Cover and steam 4 – 5 minutes.
2 Tbsp cornstarch 1 Tbsp brown sugar 2 Tbsp soy sauce 1 Tbsp rice vinegar	Whisk cornstarch, sugar, soy sauce, and vinegar into remaining 1 ¾ c beef stock. Pour into skillet; stir and cook 2 minutes, or until sauce has thickened.

Drain pasta, and place on a serving platter. Cover with veggie-beef stir fry mix over top, and serve

Apples

Food Facts

- There are more than 8,000 varieties of apples – the largest variety of fruit to exist!
- Apples are part of the rose family, just like pears and plums.

Buying and Storing

- Look for firm apples, free of wrinkles and bruises.
- Remove any fruit (from your fruit bowl) that are overripe or have soft spots, as they give off ethylene gas, which causes nearby apples to ripen too quickly, and spoil.
- Peel apples to use for pies, or in baking.
- Store in the refrigerator's crisper drawer for up to a month.

Preparing and Cooking

- For a delicious, nutritious snack, rinse apples and eat as-is!
- Apples can be prepared in so many ways:
 - Baked, with granola, brown sugar, and cinnamon
 - Sliced and dried
 - Simmered into applesauce
 - Turned into pies, dumplings, cobblers, crumbles, and Brown Bettys
 - Diced, and added to salads

Apple Coleslaw

serves 6

takes 15 minutes

4 c shredded cabbage
1 c shredded carrot
1 apple, peeled, cored & shredded

Place cabbage, carrot, and apple in a large bowl; toss to combine.

2 Tbsp honey
1 Tbsp brown sugar
2 tsp white vinegar
1 Tbsp pineapple juice
2 Tbsp mayonnaise

Mix all dressing ingredients together until sugar has dissolved completely. Pour over salad and toss to coat. Season with salt and pepper, if desired. Cover and chill until ready to serve.