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# HEALTHY CHOICES FOR HEALTHY FAMILIES



University of Kentucky  
College of Agriculture,  
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## Summer nights and outdoor bites

**C**ooking outdoors on the grill is a favorite activity in the summer months. Grilling is a great way to cook and enjoy foods in a new way. Here's how to build a healthy plate at your next barbecue.

### Grill lean:

- To find some new favorites, choose meat that has little to no fat. Try turkey burgers, skinless chicken, and lean beef or pork.
- Don't forget to use a meat thermometer when cooking meats. Cooking to the correct temperature lowers your risk of getting sick. It also helps prevent dried out, overcooked meats.
- Since it is best to eat fish twice a week, get your summertime Omega-3 fatty acids by grilling up salmon, cod, or tilapia.
- For those who don't eat meat, try grilling tofu or bean burgers.

### Flavorful veggies:

- The best grilling veggies are zucchini, squash, peppers,



mushrooms, eggplant, onions, and corn. Also try cauliflower, broccoli, asparagus, artichokes, and tomatoes.

- When slicing veggies, try to make them the same thickness. This way they will cook at the same rate.
- Drizzle veggies with oil before placing them on the grill. They

can also be seasoned with fresh herbs or a little salt and pepper.

- Use tin foil or place food directly on the grill grate. Cook until tender.
- Marinate portabella mushrooms and grill whole. They make a tasty plant-based "burger" or side item.

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## BASIC BUDGET BITES

### Per unit pricing

**S**aving money at the grocery store takes planning and thought. Make a list to stay on track with your spending at the store. Use coupons, sales flyers, and unit pricing to get the best price. Unit pricing can help you compare two products to find the better buy. Sometimes this type of pricing is on the price tag. If not, you can use the nutrition label to find the total

servings per box. Just divide the price by the number of servings. The product with the lower cost per serving is the best buy. For more tips on how to figure unit pricing, call your local Extension office.

Source: Amy Singleton, MS, RDN, Regional Extension Agent for the University of Kentucky Nutrition Education Program.

## PARENT CORNER

### You're hungry!?!

**D**uring the summer months, children are often home more. And it can seem like they are always hungry! Here are some tips to keep summer snacking, and your grocery costs, under control.

- **Set routine meal and snack times:** When family members know when meals will be served, the day can be better planned. Snacks help provide children the nutrients they need. Each 3 to 4 hours, offer a meal or snack.
  - **Protein, fat, and fiber:** Building snacks around these three things will help keep children full
- until their next meal. Snacks like chips, crackers, and snack cakes are empty calories. Not only are they not healthy, they don't help with hunger. Instead, try healthy, filling snacks like carrots and hummus, yogurt and fruit, or a cheese stick and whole-wheat crackers.
  - **Eat in the kitchen:** Skip mindless munching in front of the TV. Ask your family to eat in the kitchen. This will also help cut down on wrappers and crumbs all over the house.

Adapted from: Iowa State University Extension and Outreach



## FOOD FACTS

### Bell peppers

#### Season:

Bell peppers come in many colors from June through September.

#### Nutrition facts:

They are high in vitamin C and a good source of vitamin A. One raw, medium-sized pepper has only about 20 calories. Red peppers are higher in both vitamins C and A than green peppers.

#### Selection:

Select peppers that are heavy for their size, with bright, shiny skins. Stay away from flabby, wrinkled, or soft peppers.

#### Handling:

Store in the refrigerator for three to five days. Place them in the vegetable crisper or in plastic bags.

Source: Adapted from [fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov](http://fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov)



## COOKING WITH KIDS

# Colorful Quesadillas

- 8 ounce package fat-free cream cheese, softened
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
- 8 (8-inch) whole-wheat tortillas
- 1 cup red or green bell pepper, diced
- 1/2 cup red onion, diced
- 1 cup shredded low-fat cheese
- 2 cups fresh spinach leaves, OR 9 ounces frozen spinach, thawed and squeezed dry

1. Wash hands with warm water and soap, scrubbing for at least 20 seconds.
2. Rinse spinach and pat dry. Gently scrub the bell pepper under running water.
3. Dice 1 cup bell pepper, 1/2 cup onion, and chop 2 cups of spinach.
4. In a small bowl, mix 8 ounces of cream cheese with 1/4 teaspoon of garlic powder.

5. Spread about 2 tablespoons of the cream cheese mixture on each tortilla using a butter knife.
6. Sprinkle about 2 tablespoons bell pepper, 1 tablespoon of onion, 2 tablespoons cheese, and 1/4 cup of spinach on one half of each tortilla.
7. Fold the tortilla in half.
8. Heat a large skillet over medium heat until hot.
9. Put 2 folded tortillas in the skillet and heat for 1 to 2 minutes, flip and heat another 1 to 2 minutes or until golden brown.
10. Remove quesadillas from the skillet, place on a platter and cover with foil to keep them warm while cooking the remaining quesadillas.
11. Turn off the stovetop when you're done cooking.

12. On a cutting board, use a knife or pizza cutter to cut each quesadilla into 3 or 4 wedges. Serve warm.
13. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours. Eat within 3 to 4 days.

**Makes 8 servings**  
**Serving size: 1 Quesadilla**

**Nutrition facts per serving:** 190 calories; 4.5g fat; 1.5g saturated fat; 0g trans fat; 5mg cholesterol; 620mg sodium; 26g carbohydrate; 1g fiber; 3g sugar; 0g added sugar; 11g protein; 0% Daily Value of vitamin D; 15% Daily Value of calcium; 0% Daily Value of iron; 2% Daily Value of potassium.

Source: Adapted from United States Department of Agriculture, What's Cooking USDA Mixing Bowl. March 2015.  
<https://www.myplate.gov/recipes/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap/colorful-quesadillas>



## RECIPE

# Balsamic Stir-fry Vegetables

- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1 small eggplant, unpeeled
- 1 medium zucchini
- 1 small onion
- 2 medium carrots
- 1 green bell pepper
- 1 red bell pepper
- Cooked rice or pasta, optional

1. Wash hands with warm water and soap, scrubbing for at least 20 seconds.
2. In a large bowl combine olive oil, soy sauce, balsamic vinegar, salt, and pepper.
3. Chop eggplant, zucchini, onion, carrots, and bell peppers into bite-size pieces.
4. Add vegetables to bowl with balsamic mixture. Stir to coat.
5. In a large pan or electric skillet, cook vegetables over medium-high heat until crisp tender, about 10 minutes.

6. Remove from heat, and serve over rice or pasta.

**Makes 8 servings**  
**Serving size: 1 cup**

**Nutrition facts per serving:** 110 calories; 7g fat; 1g saturated fat; 0g trans fat; 0mg cholesterol; 230mg sodium; 10g carbohydrate; 3g fiber; 6g sugars; 0g added sugars; 2g protein; 0% Daily Value of vitamin D; 2% Daily Value of calcium; 0% Daily Value of iron; 6% Daily Value of potassium.

(Analysis does not include optional rice or pasta.)

Source: Plate it up! Kentucky Proud Project

## SMART TIPS

### Get more groceries with these programs

**A**sk about the Double Dollars program at your farmers' market. You can buy twice as much by using your SNAP benefits. WIC and Senior Farmers' Market coupons give you extra to spend on fruits and veggies. Buying local is farm-to-table fresh. You'll be serving your family the healthiest Kentucky grown food.

Adapted from: CalFresh Healthy Living



## LOCAL EVENTS

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### Quick side salads:

- A crisp, green salad is the perfect side dish.  
Make ahead of time with seasonal produce.
- Don't be afraid to try fruit on your next salad.  
Watermelon, peaches, apples, and berries can add flavor.

### A new spin on desserts:

- Enjoy the rare flavor of grilled watermelon.  
Simply grill each side for 30 seconds and enjoy!
- Using low heat, grill fruit kabobs, sliced pineapple, or peaches. The warm sweetness will make this your new, favorite summertime treat!

Adapted from: Eatright.org

**If you are interested in nutrition classes, contact your Extension office.**

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**EXTENSION.CA.UKY.EDU/COUNTY**