

## FOCUS ON FRUITS

At this time of year, you may be enjoying fresh apples from a nearby tree or other fresh fruit available at your local farmers market or grocery store.

Most people enjoy the natural sweetness of fruits.

Besides tasting great, fruits provide nutrients such as potassium, fiber, vitamin C and folate.

Fruits also are naturally cholesterol-free and low in fat, sodium and calories.

### Try these 10 tips from [www.ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://www.ChooseMyPlate.gov) to help you eat more fruits.

- 1. Keep visible reminders.**  
Keep a bowl of whole fruit on the table or counter or in the refrigerator.
- 2. Think about taste.**  
Buy fresh fruits in season when they may be less expensive and at their peak flavor.
- 3. Think about variety.**  
Buy fruits that are dried, frozen and canned (in water or 100 percent juice), as well as fresh, so you always have a supply on hand.
- 4. Don't forget the fiber.**  
Make most of your choices whole or cut-up fruit instead of juice. Whole fruit contains more dietary fiber.
- 5. Be a good role model.**  
Set a good example for children by eating fruit every day with meals or as snacks.
- 6. Include fruit at breakfast.**  
Top your cereal with bananas, peaches or strawberries or add blueberries to pancakes. Try a fruit smoothie or fruit parfait made with fat-free or low-fat yogurt.
- 7. Try fruit at lunch.**  
Pack an apple, orange, grapes or a container with applesauce or canned peaches.
- 8. Enjoy fruit at dinnertime.**  
Add fruit to recipes. For example, add pineapple to coleslaw or dried cranberries to a tossed salad.
- 9. Snack on fruits.**  
Enjoy raisins, dried plums or cranberries. Learn about making your own fruit leathers or dried fruit using your oven or an electric dehydrator by visiting the NDSU Extension Service food preservation publications at [www.ag.ndsu.edu/pubs/preservation.html](http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/pubs/preservation.html) (See FN-1587 and FN-1587)
- 10. Keep fruits safe.**  
Rinse fruits (even those with peels you don't eat) thoroughly under cool, running water before preparing or eating them. If needed, use a produce brush.

This program is funded in part by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. SNAP provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more contact your county Social Services office or call 1-800-755-2716.

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I have some extra apples and plums that I do not want to go to waste. The last time I froze fruit, it turned brownish. What did I do wrong?

Freezing is a great way to preserve fruits and other foods, but some fruit needs special pretreatment to prevent it from changing color. The natural chemicals in some fruits (enzymes) cause changes in color. In the case of apples, you can add ascorbic acid and/or sugar syrup to the fruit to prevent browning. You can find ascorbic acid in the canning section of many grocery stores.

**Here's how to freeze apples without added sugar:**

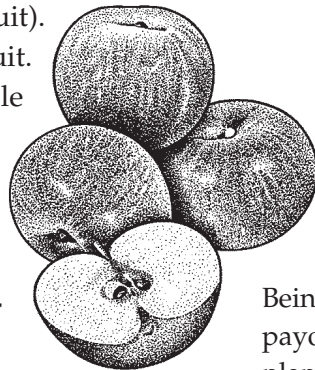
Select firm, crisp apples. Prepare a steamer before you begin slicing apples. (You can use a metal strainer and large pot of boiling water.) Wash, peel and core the apples. Slice medium apples into 12 slices or large apples into 16 slices.

Dissolve ½ teaspoon of ascorbic acid in 3 tablespoons of water (per 4 cups of fruit). Sprinkle this liquid mixture over the fruit. To slow down darkening, place the apple slices in a single layer in the steamer; steam 1½ to two minutes, depending on the thickness of the slices.

Cool in cold water and drain. Pack apples into freezer containers or freezer bags. Press the fruit down. Leave some "head space" (room between the fruit and the container lid) to allow for expansion during freezing. Seal the container and freeze.

**You can learn more about freezing fruit by downloading the publication at this website:**

[www.ag.ndsu.edu/pubs/yf/foods/fn182.pdf](http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/pubs/yf/foods/fn182.pdf)



**Fall Fruits and Vegetables**

These fruits and vegetables are in season and usually are at their best quality and price.

- |                |           |                |
|----------------|-----------|----------------|
| Apples         | Garlic    | Pomegranate    |
| Asian pears    | Grapes    | Pumpkins       |
| Broccoli       | Key limes | Squash         |
| Butter lettuce | Kohlrabi  | Sweet potatoes |
| Cauliflower    | Mushrooms | Swiss chard    |
| Cranberries    | Pears     | Winter squash  |
| Endive         | Pineapple |                |

**Apple Crisp\***

- 4 to 5 medium apples
- ¼ c. quick cooking oatmeal
- ¼ c. flour
- ½ c. brown sugar
- 1 Tbsp. cinnamon
- ¼ c. margarine or butter

This recipe provides fiber from the apples and whole-grain oatmeal. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the approximate cost of this recipe is \$2.20, or 28 cents per serving.

Preheat the oven to 350 F.

Grease the bottom and side of an 8- or 9-inch square pan. Rinse the apples, then remove the cores. Slice the apples. Spread the sliced apples on the bottom of the pan. Cut the margarine or butter into small pieces and put in a medium-sized bowl. Add the oatmeal, flour, brown sugar and cinnamon. Using two knives, cut the margarine or butter into the mixture until the mixture looks like small crumbs. Sprinkle the mixture over the top of the apples. Bake for about 20 minutes.

\* You can substitute cherries, pears, peaches or plums for apples.

*Makes eight servings. Each serving has 160 calories, 6 grams (g) of fat, 28 g of carbohydrate, 2 g of fiber and 50 milligrams of sodium*

**Just for Fun**

How do you make an apple turnover?  
Push it down a hill.

**Tip of the Month**

Being a smart shopper takes a little planning, but the payoff can be big. To maximize savings, use store ads to plan nutrient-rich meals. Next, look for coupons in the newspaper or online to use when buying the sale items. Most importantly, try to stick to the list and avoid impulsive buying. Also watch how much money you spend for food at locations other than the grocery store. Almost half of the American food dollar is spent outside of the home, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. (Provided by Trish Jessen, Ward/Renville)

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**McKenzie and Williams Counties Family Nutrition Program**  
Please call for more information on nutrition, food purchasing or food safety.



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