



Family Fun Page!!

Veggies...In Disguise!

In many stories, the hero resorts to a disguise to save the day. You can disguise the ultimate "nutrition hero" – vegetables— too, and sneak them painlessly into your children's diets. Here are a few ideas:

- ♦ Add "itty-bitty pieces" to spaghetti sauce.
- ♦ Puree them and use them in soups or spaghetti sauce.
- ♦ Top a pizza with chopped vegetables.
- ♦ Slip chopped tomatoes and other veggies into tacos and burritos.

Kitchen Korner!

BAKED POTATO TOSSED WITH BELL PEPPERS

1 medium potato
1 red, green, or yellow bell pepper, cut into 1/2-inch pieces
1 teaspoon each chopped fresh Italian parsley, chives, and cilantro
3 tablespoons olive oil, divided
Salt and pepper to taste

- Peel a cooled baked potato. Crumble it into 1/2- to 3/4-inch pieces.
- Sauté peppers in 1 tablespoon of the oil over moderate heat. Toss gently with the potatoes and herbs and set aside.
- When ready to serve, heat the remaining oil in a skillet over moderate heat. Add the potato/pepper mixture and sauté just until heated through, about 1 minute. Season with salt and pepper, if desired. (This makes a great breakfast side-dish!)



MAKE IT WITH THE KIDS!

Fun With "Eating the Alphabet"

Here's a tasty way to introduce your children to different fruits and vegetables and learn the alphabet.

What you need:

"Eating the Alphabet," by Lois Ehlert (Read online: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T1oKUf_7BJ0)

Various fruits and vegetables from the book

What you do:

- ♦ Read/watch "Eating the Alphabet"
- ♦ Purchase some of the fruits & vegetables mentioned in the book. (Don't forget the peppers!) Choose some favorites and a few new ones that you and your children can try.
- ♦ Start by showing your children the book and asking them to talk about what fruits and vegetables they see on the cover.
- ♦ As you go through the book, show your children the letter of the alphabet on the page. Have fruits and vegetables from the book (like peppers) on hand for your children to see, touch, and smell as you read about them. Can your children name the fruits and vegetables on each page? Can they tell which ones are grown in New Jersey? (See the "Jersey Fresh" Seasonality Chart at <https://www.nj.gov/agriculture/divisions/fn/pdf/njseasonalitychart.pdf> for help.)
- ♦ As you read, ask your children:
 - Who do you know who eats (name fruit or vegetable)?
 - What does (fruit or vegetable) taste like?
 - What is your favorite fruit or vegetable?
- ♦ Now...slice up some samples and taste a few fruits and vegetables together!





MORE ON GARDENING... FEEDING YOUR GARDEN



Show your children how old food can be recycled to create new food for new plants by starting a compost pile that can “feed” your garden.

You’ll need a leak-proof container with a lid, such as a small garbage pail.

Any food scraps — except meat, bones, dairy products, and grease — can go into the compost pile.

Drain off any liquid, then add the scraps to the container and top with thin layer of soil. You can also add decaying leaves to the pile.

Add more layers of food and soil each day until the compost pile is about four inches deep.

(Keep the lid on to keep animal scavengers away.)

Now, just stir the food-soil mixture daily and mist with water to keep it damp.

After about a month, your composted matter will be ready to fertilize your garden.



Building the Perfect Salad

Let’s talk about lettuce...the foundation of a salad. Some greens are more nutritious than others. In general, darker greens (like romaine, spinach, kale, or arugula) are packed with nutrients like folate, vitamins A and C, calcium, and even fiber. Lighter greens (like iceberg) tend to have fewer of these nutrients.



In general, experts recommend eating darker greens to “pump up” the nutritional value of salad. But, if your children prefer the mild flavor of iceberg lettuce to the sometimes-bitter flavor of darker greens, there’s no reason to skip “iceberg-based” salad. Instead, “pump up” the nutritional value of the salad by tossing in a variety of other veggies.

Many of the most nutritious veggie choices are “Jersey Fresh.” You’ll find them at the grocery store or farm stand...an array of colorful peppers, tomatoes, shredded cabbage, and beans. Carrots also make a nutritious addition.

You may even try mixing iceberg with a darker green, like spinach or romaine, to introduce a new “green” without taking away the milder iceberg!

Ultimate Pepper Tongue Twister

Slowly read this famous tongue twister to your children:

Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers. If Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers, how many pickled peppers did Peter Piper pick?

Help your children practice this until they can say it without help.

How many times can they say it quickly without a mistake?

This can be a fun activity when your children are getting bored in the car, at the market, or any other time you need a fun distraction!

