



Farm to School NEBRASKA

Harvest of the Month

NEWSLETTERS

Harvest of the Month NEBRASKA MELONS



Melon is our Nebraska Harvest of the Month item! Locally grown melon will be featured this month as part of the school meal program.

SELECTION, STORAGE & COOKING

- Wash the outer surface of melons thoroughly under cool, running tap water. Scrub melons with a clean produce brush before cutting. Cut away any bruised or damaged areas before serving.
- Cantaloupe: Check for ripeness by looking for the stem to be hollowed inward or concave. The melon will yield to light pressure and have a sweet, musky aroma.
- Try watermelon by cold or fry smoothies, cold soups or simply eat from the rind.
- Make eating melon even more fun by using small cookie cutters to shape the fruit. Use different types of melon to give your fruit a festive look!

WATERMELON YOGURT POPS

Ingredients:

- 3 cups cubed watermelon
- 1/2 cup Greek yogurt
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1 Tbsp. lemon juice
- 6 popsicle sticks

Directions:

- Mix watermelon, yogurt, sugar and lemon juice in a blender. Pour into popsicle molds and insert sticks. Freeze until firm, about 4 hours or overnight. Enjoy!


Note: If your watermelon contains black seeds, remove them. If you do not have popsicle molds, use a cookie disposable cups.

SEASONAL AVAILABILITY

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Harvest of the Month NEBRASKA CABBAGE



This Nebraska Harvest of the Month newsletter highlights locally grown cabbage. Your school will be preparing recipes featuring cabbage as part of the school meal program this month!

SELECTION, STORAGE & COOKING

- Choose cabbage with crisp, firmly packed leaves. Avoid soft, yellow, or brown leaves. A good cabbage should feel heavy for its size.
- Keep cabbage whole until you plan to use it. When you cut cabbage, it begins to lose its vitamin C. Store in the crisper of your fridge for a couple of weeks!
- Chop or shred cabbage with olive oil, cracked black pepper and minced garlic.
- Try adding cabbage to salads, soups, and stews.

BRANDED CABBAGE

Ingredients:

- 1 medium cabbage, cut into wedges
- 1 large onion, sliced
- 1 large carrot, sliced into 1/4" pieces
- 1/2 cup olive oil or butter
- 1/2 cup chicken stock
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

- Preheat oven to 325°F.
- Place cabbage wedges into a large, greased baking dish. Sprinkle carrots and onions on top.
- Pour chicken broth over vegetables. Drizzle oil or butter on top of vegetables and broth. Season with salt and pepper.
- Cover with foil and bake for 1-2 hours. After the first hour, carefully turn cabbage wedges with tongs. Be sure to replace foil after flipping cabbage wedges.
- When cabbage is tender, discard the foil and increase the heat to 400°F. Roast for 15 minutes or until the cabbage edges begin to brown. Serve warm. Enjoy!

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Harvest of the Month NEBRASKA APPLES



Our Nebraska Harvest of the Month item is Apples in Nebraska are harvested from August to November, and if properly refrigerated, they can store for as long as 4 months! Some varieties are a bit when crunched into raw and others best baked with spices. Try adding thinly sliced apples to a sandwich, or add sliced apples to a fresh salad.

SELECTION, STORAGE & COOKING

- Stored properly, apples can last for months. Keep at about 32 degrees, 90% humidity, and in the dark.
- Apples release a natural gas called ethylene that triggers other fruits like bananas, avocados and peaches to ripen. To prevent rapid ripening, apples are best stored separately from other fruit.

FRESH APPLE SALSA

Ingredients:

- 2 cups diced apples
- 1/2 cup diced red bell pepper
- 1/2 cup fresh lime juice
- 1/4 cup minced red onion
- 1/4 cup minced fresh cilantro
- 1 TBL. honey
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1/4 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 1 jalapeño pepper, seeded and minced

Directions:


Combine all ingredients in a bowl, and let stand for at least 30 minutes. Use this as a condiment on your favorite taco recipe, or serve alongside pork, chicken or rice dishes.

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Harvest of the Month NEBRASKA CARROTS



Carrots are shining in the spotlight as our Nebraska Harvest of the Month item. This versatile veggie can be eaten raw, roasted, baked into cakes, or added to smoothies.

SELECTION, STORAGE & COOKING

- If carrots come to you with greens attached, remove the greens before storing. Carrot greens are edible and delicious - They can be used to make pesto or as an addition to soup stock.
- For long term storage, keep carrots in a plastic bag, stored in the refrigerator.
- Carrot skin is very thin and doesn't need to be peeled - just wash well to remove any dirt or debris.
- While cooking marinara sauce, add diced carrots for a hint of sweetness!

HONEY GARLIC BUTTER ROASTED CARROTS

Ingredients:

- 2 lbs carrots, cut into thirds
- 1/2 cup butter
- 3 TBL. honey
- 4 garlic cloves minced
- 1/2 - 1 tsp. salt plus more for seasoning
- Cracked black pepper

Directions:


- Preheat oven to 425°F. Lightly grease a large baking sheet with nonstick cooking spray, set aside.
- Trim carrot ends to a 1/2 inch. Peel carrots. Wash and dry carrots. Cut carrots into 2-3 inch pieces.
- Add carrots and allow the sauce to thicken for 1 minute. Season to taste.
- Transfer carrots to a baking sheet in a single layer. Roast to evenly cook.

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Harvest of the Month NEBRASKA TURNIPS



This Nebraska Harvest of the Month newsletter highlights locally grown turnips. Your school will be preparing recipes featuring turnips as part of the school meal program this month. We invite you to try the turnip recipes in this newsletter at home. Include the whole family in cooking and food preparation as these skills provide a foundation for a lifetime of healthy eating.

SELECTION, STORAGE & COOKING

- Small and medium sized turnips are sweeter.
- Refrigerate for up to 3 weeks in a plastic bag.
- Boil, steam, sauté, or roast pre-cooked before adding to soups and stews to avoid overpowering the dish.

CLAPSHOT

A TRADITIONAL SCOTCH RECIPE SIMILAR TO MASHED POTATOES

Serves 4

Ingredients:

- 1 pound Russet potatoes, peeled and cut into cubes
- 1 pound turnips, peeled and cut into cubes
- 2 tsp. butter
- 1 Tbsp. chopped onion (optional)
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Directions:

- Peel potatoes and turnips. Cut both into one-inch cubes.
- Fill a 3-quart saucepan half full with water. Add potatoes and cook for 10 minutes or until they start to soften. Add turnips and cook until both vegetables can be easily pierced with a knife. Drain.
- While hot, beat vegetables together. Mix in the butter, onion, salt and pepper. Enjoy!

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Harvest of the Month NEBRASKA WINTER SQUASH



Winter squash can be grown locally in Nebraska, and your school is highlighting this vegetable in the cafeteria and classroom this season! Winter squash are colorful, flavorful and nutrient packed. Explore roasting, mashing or adding this vegetable into a soup at home. Why not have your family members vote for their favorite way to eat this food, and then help in finding a favorite recipe and assist in the preparation?

SELECTION, STORAGE & COOKING:

- Winter squash have hard skin and a fleshy inside. They should be heavy and free of spots.
- To cure winter squash after picking: hold at 70-80 degrees for 10-20 days, then remove to a dry place at 45-50 degrees. Store up to 6 months.
- Store squash only if it has a stem attached, as stemless squash won't keep well. Avoid storing whole squash in the refrigerator because the humidity causes the squash to deteriorate rapidly.

ROASTED PUMPKIN SEEDS

A FAMILY-FRIENDLY SNACK

Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 cups raw unsalted pumpkin seeds
- 1 Tbsp. butter, melted
- Pinch salt

Directions:


- Preheat oven to 300°F.
- Toss seeds in a bowl with the melted butter and salt.
- Spread the seeds in a single layer on a baking sheet and bake for about 45 minutes or until golden brown, stir occasionally. Enjoy!

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Harvest of the Month NEBRASKA SWEET POTATOES



Sweet potatoes are the Nebraska Harvest of the Month item at your school! Locally grown sweet potatoes include varieties like red jewel, beauregard, murasaki, orleans, and stokes purple. Include your children in cooking and food preparation, which provides skills needed to support a lifetime of healthy eating.

SELECTION, STORAGE & COOKING

- Choose firm, smooth roots with flat, evenly colored skins. Avoid holes or scars, a source of decay.
- Store in a cool, dry place. Do not refrigerate as it causes a hard core and unpleasant taste.

ROASTED SWEET POTATOES

Serves 6

Ingredients:

- 3 pounds sweet potatoes, about 4 medium
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. black pepper

Directions:


- Preheat oven to 425°F. Line a rimmed baking sheet with foil.
- Wash and peel sweet potatoes. Cut into cubes.
- Toss with oil, salt and black pepper. Put potatoes in a single layer on baking sheet.
- Bake for 35 minutes, stirring halfway through. Serve warm!

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Harvest of the Month NEBRASKA POTATOES



Nebraska Harvest of the Month is highlighting locally grown potatoes in the school cafeteria this month! Check out how local potatoes are being highlighted on your school's menu.

SELECTION & STORAGE

- Look for firm potatoes without sprouts. Avoid potatoes with green coloring.
- Store potatoes in a cool, dark, humid place with good air circulation. Do not store in refrigerator.

NUTRITION TIPS

Most of the nutrients are contained right below the skin of the potato, so avoid peeling when possible. Potatoes are a good source of vitamin C, fiber, potassium, complex carbohydrates, and antioxidants.

DID YOU KNOW?

Wild potatoes originated in the Andes mountain range and were first cultivated about 7,000 years ago. There are thousands of varieties of potatoes. Potatoes come in different colors including: white, red, russet, yellow, and blue.

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Harvest of the Month NEBRASKA DRY BEANS



Nebraska Harvest of the Month celebrates dry beans this month! Pinto, Black and Great Northern beans are just a few versatile varieties grown in our state. School Nutrition Staff at your school will be preparing recipes featuring locally grown beans.

SELECTION, STORAGE & COOKING

- Dry beans are allowed to mature and then harvested from the vine or bush.
- Dry beans come in many colors, shapes and sizes and can be stored for months in a cool dry location.
- Dry beans are soaked to absorb water and will become double to triple their size when soaked. Cook to make them edible and digestible.
- Dry beans can be eaten raw, sprouted or cooked, ground into flour, curried into tofu, fermented into soy sauce, tempeh and miso. They are excellent in chili, soup and salad.

HUMMUS

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1/4 cup dried chickpeas, chopped
- 1 cup dry Great Northern beans, prepared and cooked or two 15.5-oz. cans, drained and rinsed
- 1/2 cup fresh lemon juice
- 1 tsp. ground garlic
- 2 Tbsp. chopped fresh parsley
- 1/2 Tbsp. salt and pinch of pepper

Directions:

- In a small saucepan, combine olive oil and garlic over medium-low heat and lightly brown garlic. Cool, strain and reserve the oil and garlic separately.
- In a blender, blend beans, garlic, lemon juice, onion and parsley until smooth. Carefully pour in oil with blender running until light and smooth.
- Salt and pepper to taste. Serve with raw veggies or pita chips, or add to a sandwich! Enjoy!

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Harvest of the Month NEBRASKA LEAFY GREENS



Locally-grown greens are highlighted this season for Nebraska Harvest of the Month and being offered on your school's menu! Leafy greens like collard greens, chard, spinach, kale and a variety of lettuce are spring favorites for Nebraska gardens. Did you know some "greens" are also edible, like turnips and beet greens? Try them in smoothies or mixed into a salad!

SELECTION, STORAGE & COOKING:

- Select greens that have fresh, green leaves and avoid any rot on the leaves.
- Keep un-rinsed greens in plastic bag in refrigerator for about 3 days; 5 days if wrapped in moist paper towels.
- Each type of greens has a different flavor and popular cooking method. Most greens make great additions to stir fry, soups or stews.

BEAN SMOOTHIES

Ingredients:

- 1 cup spinach
- 1 cup water
- 1/2 cup frozen mango
- 1/2 cup frozen berry blend
- 1 banana

Directions:


- Place spinach and water in blender. Pulse until smooth.
- Add fruit and blend again. Enjoy!

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Harvest of the Month NEBRASKA ASPARAGUS



Nebraska Harvest of the Month highlights asparagus this month! Your school will be preparing recipes featuring asparagus as part of the school meal program. We invite you to try the asparagus recipe included in this newsletter with your family. Involve your family in selecting and preparing the asparagus. Children will have fun snapping the bottom of the asparagus stems to remove the woody portion of the plant. When kids help make healthy food, they are more likely to try it (adults too).

SELECTION, STORAGE & COOKING

- Choose firm, closed stalks with green to purplish tips.
- Trim stems and stand stalks in a glass of 1-2 inches of water to help maintain freshness. Cover with a plastic bag and use within 2-3 days.
- It can be eaten raw, steamed, sautéed, grilled, and roasted.

ROASTED GARLIC PARMESAN ASPARAGUS

Ingredients:

- 1 pound fresh asparagus
- 3 cloves minced garlic
- 2 Tbsp. shredded parmesan cheese
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Olive oil

Directions:

- Preheat oven to 425°F. Line a rimmed baking sheet with foil.
- Preheat asparagus and trim bottom. Spread in one layer on the foil-lined baking sheet.
- Lightly drizzle the asparagus with olive oil. Sprinkle with salt, pepper, garlic, and cheese.
- Bake for 15 minutes and serve immediately. Enjoy!

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