



## Vegetable Group



### Vary your veggies.

- Vitamin A, vitamin C, iron, potassium and fiber are found in many of the vegetables you eat.
- Vegetables are low in fat and calories and are a good source of fiber.
- Eat at least 2 1/2 cups of vegetables each day.
- To get the most for your money, buy fresh vegetables in season.
- Rinse vegetables before peeling and/or eating.
- Get the most iron from plant foods by serving it with meat or a vitamin C-rich food.

#### **A 1/2 cup serving of vegetables is equal to:**

- 1/2 cup of cooked or chopped raw vegetables
- 1 cup of leafy raw vegetables, such as lettuce or spinach
- 1/2 cup vegetable juice
- 1/2 medium potato
- 1/2 cup of beans
- 1 small ear of corn (6-inches long)



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
**EXTENSION**  
FOOD STAMP NUTRITION EDUCATION  
EXPANDED FOOD AND NUTRITION  
EDUCATION PROGRAM

**University of Illinois \* United States Department of Agriculture  
\* Local Extension Councils Cooperating**

University of Illinois Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.  
This material was funded by USDA's Food Stamp Program.

## Buying Vegetables

- ◆ **Demand freshness.** Check for signs of freshness such as bright color and crispness.
- ◆ **Handle with care.** Bruising and damage to vegetables will cause them to spoil quicker.
- ◆ **Shop in season.** This can help save you money
- ◆ **Don't buy a lot just because of low price.** It doesn't pay to buy more than you can properly store or use without waste.
- ◆ **Avoid buying foods with bruises or mold.**
- ◆ **Don't buy on size alone.** Large sized vegetables may be too mature and could be hard with little flavor.
- ◆ **Avoid dented or bulging cans.**
- ◆ **Look for firm frozen packages.** There should be no stains or ice on the outside. Sacks of loose vegetables should be loose, not solid.

## Storage

- ◆ **Store properly to maintain quality.** Refrigerate most vegetables (not potatoes, sweet potatoes, onions, hard winter squash or tomatoes) for longer storage, and arrange them so you'll use the ripest ones first.

## Preparation

- ◆ **Rinse vegetables with water** just before cooking or eating.
- ◆ **Trimming.** Try to eat vegetables with the skin on. Trim only the minimum amount, or rinse thoroughly and leave the food intact.
- ◆ **Heat.** The B vitamins and vitamin C can be easily destroyed by heat. Cook vegetables as little as possible.
- ◆ **Water.** Some vitamins dissolve in the water used to cook and soak them. Avoid soaking vegetables. Cook in very little water and cover tightly to decrease cooking time.

## Eat More Vegetables

- ◆ Have pre-cut vegetables (carrots, celery, etc.) in the refrigerator for easy snacking.
- ◆ Add chopped peppers, tomatoes, zucchini, onions and mushrooms to scrambled eggs.
- ◆ Top baked potato with chopped vegetables of choice, sprinkle with low fat cheese and microwave until cheese melts.
- ◆ Add frozen or canned vegetables to rice or pasta dishes during the last 5 to 10 minutes of cooking time.
- ◆ Combine tomato soup with cooked vegetables.
- ◆ Top sandwiches or burgers with lettuce and tomato.
- ◆ Add chopped vegetables to your salads.



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
**EXTENSION**  
FOOD STAMP NUTRITION EDUCATION  
EXPANDED FOOD AND NUTRITION  
EDUCATION PROGRAM

University of Illinois \* United States Department of Agriculture  
\* Local Extension Councils Cooperating

University of Illinois Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.  
This material was funded by USDA's Food Stamp Program.

## Mini-goals

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_