

# Smart Choices

## Nutrition News

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## Join the Fruit and Vegetable Extravaganza!!

### Why do you choose the fruits and vegetables you eat?

Is it because of the taste, the crunchiness, the juiciness or the color? Or is it because of the nutrition and health provided by fruits and vegetables?

No matter the reason for your choices, it's important to get a variety of fruits and vegetables in your diet on a daily basis. MyPyramid recommends that we eat approximately 2 cups of fruit and 2 1/2 cups of vegetables a day. (\* Based on a 2000 calorie diet).

Think of eating fruits and vegetables like painting a picture using the following colors: blue and purple; yellow and orange; green; red and white.

Remember, eating a variety of fruits and vegetables as part of an overall diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol will reduce your risk of cancer, heart disease and other conditions associated with aging.

### Is there a difference between fresh, frozen and canned?

Canned and frozen fruits and vegetables start as fresh produce picked at the peak of ripeness. Fresh picked produce travel a few miles to the cannery or freezing plant and is processed within hours of harvest.

Canned and frozen fruits and vegetables are packed full of nutrition—equally or even more nutritious than fresh. They offer an inexpensive way to get your fruit and vegetable servings each day.

### Choosing Fresh

You can help keep produce safe by making wise buying decisions at the grocery store.

- ◆ Purchase produce that is not bruised or damaged.
- ◆ When selecting fresh cut produce - such as a half a watermelon or bagged mixed salad greens - choose only those items that are refrigerated or surrounded by ice.

- ◆ Bag fresh fruits and vegetables separately from meat, poultry and seafood products when packing them to take home from the market.

### Ways to Increase Intake

If you have a hard time getting enough fruits and vegetables in your diet try these tips:

- ◆ Have two servings of fruit at breakfast
- ◆ Choose 2 different colored vegetables at lunch and dinner
- ◆ Enjoy fruits and vegetables as snacks

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**Aim for 2 cups of fruit and 2½ cups of vegetables a day**

**1 cup from vegetable group =**

- ◆ 1 cup raw or cooked vegetables
- ◆ 1 cup 100% vegetable juice
- ◆ 2 cups of raw, leafy greens

**1 cup from the fruit group =**

- ◆ 1 cup of fruit
- ◆ 1 cup 100% fruit juice
- ◆ ½ cup of dried fruit

**Choose a variety of different fruits and vegetables every day.**



## Cajun Spiced Corn

### Ingredients:

- 1 (10 ounce) package frozen whole kernel corn**
- 1 small onion, chopped**
- 1 cup chopped tomatoes**
- ¾ cup chopped green bell pepper**
- 2 teaspoons Cajun low sodium seasoning**
- 1 tablespoon butter or margarine**

### Directions:

**Preheat oven to 450° F. Arrange the corn, onion, tomatoes, and bell pepper in the center of the foil. Sprinkle with Cajun seasoning and stir lightly with a rubber spatula to blend. Top with butter. Bring up the sides of the foil. Double fold the top and ends to seal the packet, leaving room for heat circulation inside. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes or until the vegetables are crisp tender.**

**Serves: 4**

**Total fat per serving: 3.7 g**

**Carbohydrates per serving: 20 g**

**Protein per serving: 2.9 g**

**Calories per serving: 126**

**Saturated fat per serving: 0.6 g**

**Dietary fiber per serving: 3.2 g**

**Sodium per serving: 40 mg**

## How To Peel a Kiwi With a Spoon

On the outside a kiwi looks like a fuzzy brown egg while the inside is filled with a rich, velvety bright green flesh sprinkled with a ring of tiny edible black seeds. The taste of kiwi varies from tart to sweet and is similarly to other fruits, such as strawberries, nectarines, and melons.

Kiwi fruit blends well with other fruits and can be used for garnish to make dishes look more appealing. One large kiwi has more vitamin C than a cup of strawberries, a medium-sized orange, or half a grapefruit.

Here's a quick and easy way to peel a kiwi. Trim off both ends of the fruit using a knife. Take a tablespoon and ease the spoon between the fresh and the peel. Turn the kiwi while pressing the back of the spoon against the peel as you turn. The fruit will slide right out in one piece and can then be easily diced, sliced, chopped, etc.



## What's the Purpose of Food Stamps?

The goal of the Food Stamp Program is helping people with limited incomes improve their nutrition for better health and disease prevention. The program is available to all eligible persons.

Food stamp coupons have been replaced by an electronic card that looks and works just like a typical debit or credit card used by any grocery shopper. No one but you and the grocery check-out clerk will know you are using food stamps. To find out more contact 1-888-LAHELPU or visit [www.dss.state.la.us](http://www.dss.state.la.us).

Provided by LSU AgCenter Community Nutrition Programs

Visit our Web Site: [www.lsuagcenter.com](http://www.lsuagcenter.com)

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To find out how to apply, call 1-888-LAHELPU or visit: [www.dss.state.la.us](http://www.dss.state.la.us) to download an application for Food Stamps