

BROCCOLI

Broccoli Preparation Tips & Alternative Recipes (courtesy of Purdue Extension FoodLinkSM)

Wash under cool running water to remove any dirt before using. Cut off leaves and any woody spots.

Raw: Cut each head into small florets. Peel the large round stem with a paring knife and make sticks with the stem as you would with carrots or celery.

Steam on Stovetop: Trim broccoli into smaller florets and place in a steamer basket. Bring water to a boil. Steam broccoli covered for about 4 minutes. Broccoli should be bright green and tender (not wilting).

Steam in Microwave: Trim broccoli and place small florets in a microwave safe bowl. Add 2 tablespoons of water to the bottom of the bowl and cover with moist paper towel. Cook for about 2 minutes until bright green and tender.

Cook Frozen Broccoli: Place frozen broccoli in saucepan with about 2-3 inches of water in the bottom. As water begins to boil, immediately remove the pan from the burner. Drain the water from the pan and serve.

Sauté: Cut into small florets and sauté on medium heat with olive oil or butter until broccoli is tender when poked with a fork. To quicken the cooking process, add a few tablespoons of water and cover with a lid. Add other vegetables to the skillet such as peppers, onions, zucchini, or carrots to make a stir fry. Season with soy sauce to taste.

Roast: Heat the oven to 350°F. Cut and trim the broccoli into desired sizes. Toss with olive oil and salt in a bowl and spread broccoli on a baking sheet in a single layer. Bake 20-25 minutes, watching carefully so the tops of the florets do not burn.

Broccoli Storage Tips (courtesy of Purdue Extension FoodLinkSM)

Short Term Storage: Wash broccoli and store it in a plastic bag with a damp cloth in the refrigerator. Broccoli will last 5-6 days (discard once it smells bad, is yellow, or is slimy).

Tip: Once you return from the market, cut the heads into smaller spears to make preparation and storage easier.

Long Term Storage: Broccoli will last 3-4 months in the freezer.

Broccoli and Pea Soup (yumytoddlerfood.com)

Ingredients:

- 2 cups low- or no-salt added chicken or vegetable broth
- 1 cup potato, chopped into 1/2-inch pieces (skin on)
- 1 cup fresh or frozen broccoli florets
- 1 cup frozen peas
- Salt
- Parmesan cheese

Directions:

- Bring the broth to a simmer over medium heat in a medium or small pot. Add the potatoes and simmer until soft, about 6-8 minutes.
- Add the broccoli and peas, stir to combine, and simmer until broccoli is soft, about 4 minutes.
- Puree until very smooth in a blender or with an immersion blender.
- Season to taste with salt and serve with Parmesan cheese.

Variations:

Use one cup cooked white beans instead of the potato for more protein and fiber.

Top with a swirl of toasted sesame oil instead of Parmesan.

Stir 1/4-cup shredded cheddar or mozzarella into the soup for a cheesier version.

BRUSSELS SPROUTS

Brussels Sprouts Preparation Tips & Alternative Recipes (courtesy of Purdue Extension FoodLinkSM)

Rinse under cold running water to remove any dust or dirt. Use a small knife to remove the sprout tip, and then remove any leaves that have bad spots.

Raw: Slice thinly and toss with other shredded vegetables like cabbage, carrots, or beets. Add your favorite salad dressing.

Roast: Toss sprouts in olive oil, lay flat on a baking sheet, and roast in a 400°F oven for 40 minutes.

Stove Top: Boil a pot of water with a pinch of salt. Wash sprouts under cold running water and remove any leaves or yellow spots you may see. Place sprouts in a pot and cook for about 10-15 minutes. Sprouts are done when a knife will easily cut through them. Season with butter, salt, and pepper to taste.

Or, steam in a pot with a steamer basket and approximately 2 inches of water until tender.

Sauté: Wash sprouts under cold running water and remove any yellow spots and then cut them in half. Put 1-2 tablespoons of olive oil in a skillet. Place the sprouts flat side down in the skillet. Add salt and pepper to taste. Cook on each side for about 5 minutes or until golden brown.

Brussels Sprouts Storage Tips (courtesy of Purdue Extension FoodLinkSM)

Short Term Storage: Fresh Brussels sprouts are sold in two forms: attached to the stem and off of the stem.

Attached to the Stem: Remove Brussels sprouts from the stem and discard the stem. Store with a damp towel in a plastic bag in the refrigerator.

Off the Stem: Store with damp towel in a plastic bag in the refrigerator. Brussels sprouts can be refrigerated in a ventilated plastic bag for about a week. Do not wash or peel sprouts until ready to use.

Long Term Storage: **Root Cellar:** Store in a cool 32-40°F cellar with high humidity. Do not store Brussels sprouts in the refrigerator long-term due to the low humidity. However, you can freeze them.

Brussels Sprouts Gratin (Allrecipes.com)

Ingredients:

- 1 pound Brussels sprouts, cleaned and trimmed
- 2 slices bacon, cut into 1/2 inch pieces
- Salt and ground black pepper to taste
- 1/2 cup heavy cream
- 1/4 cup bread crumbs
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 tablespoons butter, cut into tiny pieces

Directions:

- Preheat an oven to 400 degrees F. Lightly grease a baking dish.
- Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil. Add the Brussels sprouts and cook uncovered until tender, about 8 minutes. Drain in a colander, then immediately immerse in ice water for several minutes until cold to stop the cooking process. Once the Brussels sprouts are cold, drain well, and cut in halves or quarters, depending on size. Set aside.
- Meanwhile, place the bacon in a large, deep skillet, and cook over medium-high heat, turning occasionally, until limp and lightly browned, about 5 minutes. Reduce heat and stir in the Brussels sprouts. Season with salt and pepper then toss for about 1 minutes to evenly distribute the seasonings. Arrange bacon and Brussels sprouts on the prepared baking dish. Pour cream evenly over the Brussels sprouts, then sprinkle breadcrumbs and Parmesan cheese on top. Distribute pieces of butter over the bread crumbs.
- Bake in the preheated oven until golden brown and heated through, 20 to 25 minutes.

Creamy Parmesan Brussels Sprouts (Allrecipes.com)

Ingredients:

- 1 tablespoon butter
- 4 cups sliced Brussels sprouts
- 1 1/4 cups heavy cream
- 1/4 cup freshly shredded Parmesan cheese
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- Salt and ground black pepper to taste
- 1 pinch ground nutmeg

Directions:

- Preheat oven to 300 degrees F (150 degrees C). Generously grease a 9x9-inch baking dish with butter.
- Spread the sliced Brussels sprouts out into the prepared baking dish in an even layer. In a bowl, whisk together the cream, Parmesan cheese, garlic, salt, and black pepper until thoroughly combined; pour the cream mixture over the Brussels sprouts. Sprinkle the top with nutmeg.
- Cover the dish with foil, and bake in the preheated oven for 1 hour; remove foil, and bake uncovered until the top has browned, 15 more minutes.

CABBAGE

Cabbage Preparation Tips & Alternative Recipes (courtesy of Purdue Extension FoodLinkSM)

Peel off the outer leaves if they are soft or wrinkled. Cut the cabbage head in halves or quarters. Cut around the core and remove it, then shred or slice the remaining cabbage.

Raw: Cabbage is the main ingredient in coleslaw and you can add cabbage to lettuce salads for extra crunch. Use shredded cabbage for tacos.

Stove Top: Boil or steam cut cabbage for about 10-15 minutes; or microwave it for about 7-13 minutes.

Sauté: Cut cabbage into slices or chunks and discard the core. Add 1-2 tablespoons of olive oil to a large frying pan, and sauté the cabbage until tender. Add salt to taste. You can add other market vegetables for a delicious and easy side dish. Try red peppers and zucchini.

Cabbage Storage Tips (courtesy of Purdue Extension FoodLinkSM)

Remove outer leaves that are not compacted around the head, and store the head in the refrigerator for 5-6 days. You can place raw chopped cabbage in a plastic container of water and store it for 2-3 days in the refrigerator.

Bacon and Cabbage (MrFood.com)

Ingredients:

- 1/4 pound bacon
- 1 head cabbage, coarsely chopped
- 1/4 cup (1/2 stick) butter
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper

Directions:

- In a large pot, cook bacon over medium-high heat until crisp. Remove bacon from pot and crumble; set aside.
- Add remaining ingredients to pot. Reduce heat to low, cover and cook for 30-35 minutes, or until cabbage is tender, stirring frequently.
- Sprinkle with crumbled bacon, toss, and serve.

Beef and Cabbage (extension.purdue.edu/foodlink)

Ingredients:

- 1 cabbage head (washed and cut into bite-size pieces)
- 1 medium onion (chopped)
- 1 pound lean ground beef (15% fat)
- Non-stick cooking spray
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- Salt to taste (optional)
- Red pepper flakes to taste (optional)

Directions:

- Chop cabbage and onions, then set aside.
- In a large saucepan (4 ½ quart), cook the ground beef on medium heat until browned. Drain the fat and set the beef aside.
- Spray saucepan with non-stick cooking spray. Cook onions on medium heat until soft.
- Add cabbage to the onions and cook until cabbage starts to brown.
- Stir the beef into the cabbage and onion mixture.
- Season with garlic powder, salt (optional), and black pepper. Add red pepper flakes (optional) to the cabbage if you like it spicy.

Cheesy Cabbage Casserole (University of Illinois Extension)

Ingredients

- 1/2 small head cabbage, cut into big pieces
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1/4 cup water
- 1/2 cup skim milk
- 1/4 cup reduced fat cheddar cheese
- 1/2 Tbsp. flour
- 1/4 cup croutons

Directions:

- Preheat oven to 325 degrees F.
- Steam cabbage in salted water for approximately 5 minutes. Drain and set aside.
- In a medium saucepan, heat milk over low-medium heat. Slowly whisk in cheese and flour.
- Bring to a boil. Remove from heat.
- In a small casserole dish, layer cabbage and cheese sauce. Sprinkle croutons or bread crumbs on top.
- Bake for 15-20 minutes.

CAULIFLOWER

Cauliflower Preparation Tips & Alternative Recipes (courtesy of Purdue Extension FoodLinkSM)

When ready to use cauliflower, wash under cold running water. Pull or cut all the leaves from the florets. Use a sharp paring knife to carefully cut off each floret from the main stem. Discard the stem. Cut each floret into smaller spears if desired, or keep them intact.

Raw: You can eat small florets or spears raw with a dip. Chop florets into tiny pieces and add them raw to any salad for an added crunch.

Microwave: Place a bit of water in a microwave-safe bowl, add cauliflower, put a lid on the bowl, and microwave on high for about 3 minutes. Cauliflower should be fork tender but not soggy and falling apart.

Sauté: Heat a little olive oil, garlic, and salt in a pan, then add the cauliflower and sauté on medium heat. Add a bit of water to the pan at the end to help cook the florets.

Boil: In a saucepan, bring water to a boil, add florets, and cook for about one minute. Then, plunge the cauliflower into cold water to stop the cooking. These barely cooked florets are a great addition to any pasta salad, broccoli salad, or served with a cheese sauce.

Stir-fry: Add cauliflower with other vegetables over high heat. Add harder vegetables like cauliflower and carrots to the pan first. Once these have cooked for a while, add softer vegetables like peppers and zucchini. Season with soy sauce.

Cauliflower Storage Tips (courtesy of Purdue Extension FoodLinkSM)

Short Term Storage: Store heads in refrigerator in a plastic bag with a damp paper towel. Alternatively, cut the cauliflower into florets (see above preparation) for easier meal prep later. Cauliflower stored correctly (damp and cool) will last a long time in the refrigerator. Discard if the florets begin to yellow or turn gray, or they become soft or slimy. You can trim the cut ends before use if they start to discolor.

Long Term Storage: Cauliflower can be frozen or pickled.

Baked Cauliflower Tots (gimmedelicious.com)

Ingredients:

- 2 cups cauliflower florets
- 1 large egg
- ½ cup onion, minced
- ¼ cup bell pepper, minced (optional)
- ½ cup cheddar cheese, shredded
- ¼ cup Parmesan cheese
- ¼ cup breadcrumbs
- ¼ cup minced cilantro or parsley (optional)
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Cooking spray or oil

Directions:

- Preheat oven to 375°F. Spray a nonstick cookie sheet with cooking spray or lightly grease with oil. Set aside. Steam cauliflower in hot water for 3-5 minutes or until nice and soft, drain and chopped with a knife or blend in the food processor (just a few seconds.)
- In a medium bowl, combine all of the ingredients and season with salt and pepper to taste.
- Spoon about 1 tablespoon of mixture in your hands and roll into small oval shaped tots.
- Place on the cookie sheet ½ inch apart and bake for about 20 minutes, turning halfway through cooking until golden.

EGGPLANT

Eggplant Preparation Tips & Alternative Recipes (courtesy of Purdue Extension FoodLinkSM)

Salting: Traditionally, salting removes the bitterness and some of the water from an eggplant. Salt an eggplant about 1 hour before cooking. Slice the eggplant either lengthwise or across into the desired thickness for your recipe. Sprinkle each slice with salt and set aside for 45 minutes. Before cooking, rinse the eggplant well, squeeze gently, and dry with lint-free cloth. This process will alter the nutrition information (below) by increasing the sodium content. Fresh eggplants from farmer markets (especially Asian and Italian eggplants) tend not to be as bitter as supermarket eggplants. Salting these less-bitter eggplants is unnecessary.

Raw: Some people are sensitive to a compound in raw eggplant. Raw eggplant is also bitter.

Pan Fry: Slice eggplant to desired thickness. Sprinkle with salt and let sit 20 to 30 minutes, then rinse with water. Combine 1 beaten egg and 2 or 3 tablespoons of milk. Dip eggplant slice in flour, then in egg mixture. Dip again in flour, season with salt and pepper, then fry in small drop of oil until browned on each side.

Bake Halves: Cut off the tip of the eggplant, and then cut in half lengthwise. Salt the eggplant as explained above (unless using Italian or Asian eggplant, then no salt needed). Heat oven to 350°F, and place the eggplant on a baking sheet. Drizzle with 1-2 tablespoons of olive oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper to taste. Bake for 20 minutes or until edges are brown and crispy.

Bake Whole: Heat an oven to 350°F. Prick unpeeled eggplant with a fork and lay on a cookie sheet. Bake until the eggplant is soft and has collapsed. Scrape the flesh from the skin. Use in any recipe that requires pureed eggplant, like baba ghanoush.

Grill: Heat grill. Peel eggplant, and cut lengthwise into slices that are ½-1 inch thick. Brush one side with oil and lay onto hot grill. Brush top side with oil and salt. Flip after about 2 to 3 minutes. Continue to grill until the slices begin to look glossy and begin to bubble a bit. Grilled eggplant can be used as a sandwich stuffing, eaten with pesto and cheese, used in eggplant Parmesan, or in most eggplant recipes.

Roast: Heat oven to 475°F. Cut eggplant into 1-inch cubes and drizzle with 1-2 tablespoons olive oil, and salt and pepper to taste. Spread out in a single layer and bake until golden brown and tender, about 25 to 30 minutes. Turn at least once while cooking.

Sauté: Cut eggplant into cubes and cook in a skillet with 1-2 tablespoons of olive oil over medium-high heat. Cook eggplant until it begins to collapse and become soft. Add onions, garlic, tomatoes, and/or peppers to taste. NOTE: Eggplant tends to absorb oil, so be careful not to add too much. Using a nonstick skillet can help. Use sautéed eggplant in recipes for ratatouille or caponata, or use as a pasta topper.

Eggplant Storage Tips (courtesy of Purdue Extension FoodLinkSM)

Short Term Storage: Store eggplant in a cool spot away from direct sunlight, and use it as soon as possible. You may also store eggplant in a refrigerator crisper up to 5 days. Do not use if you see soft spots or if the internal flesh has become beige or discolored.

Long Term Storage: Eggplant can be frozen. You can freeze grilled eggplant in freezer bags up to 8 months. You can freeze raw eggplant slices for frying, soups, sauces, and dips.

Eggplant Chili (Mother Hubbard's Kitchen – Bloomington, IN)

This chili is the bomb. It is sooooo simple, yet LOVED by my family. I just toss the ingredients into my slow cooker, and come home to dinner. I'm not sure if I should admit this, but I often cook this chili on low for more than 24 hours, and it turns out fantastic. The longer you cook it, the less recognizable the eggplant is; so if you have picky eaters, cook it until the eggplant breaks down. For that matter, if you have picky eaters, you may want to hide this recipe and just call it "Chili".

Ingredients:

- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 large bell pepper, chopped
- 1 large eggplant, peeled and chopped
- 1 – 2 cloves crushed garlic
- 2 cups cooked or canned beans, any variety or mixture
- 1 28-oz canned tomatoes, diced with juice
- 3 – 4 tablespoons cumin powder
- Chili powder, red pepper or chipotle powder to taste
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

In a large slow-cooker, layer onions, peppers, eggplant, garlic, beans and tomatoes. Cook on low all day (or longer if you wish). Before serving, stir in cumin, chili powder, salt and pepper.

Serve with the following optional, but highly-recommended toppings: cilantro pesto, chopped avocado, diced onions, plain Greek yogurt, hot sauce, and shredded cheddar cheese.

KALE

Kale Preparation Tips & Alternative Recipes (courtesy of Purdue Extension FoodLinkSM)

Remove stems and rinse the leaves under cold running water. Raw kale can be used for smoothies, salads, and soups.

Steam: Bring water to a boil in a pan with a steamer basket. Reduce heat to low, add kale, and cover. Steam until tender (about 10 minutes).

Microwave: Place kale in a microwave-safe bowl with about 1 teaspoon of water. Cover the bowl and cook for about 2 minutes for every 2 cups of kale. Drain and serve.

Sauté: Heat 1-2 tablespoons of olive oil in a skillet. Add kale, turn heat to medium-high, stir, cover, then cook for approximately 5 minutes.

Kale Storage Tips (courtesy of Purdue Extension FoodLinkSM)

Kale can be stored in a plastic bag in the refrigerator crisper drawer for up to 5 days.

White Bean & Kale Soup (adapted from MarthaStewart.com)

Ingredients:

- 1 pound kale, stems removed and leaves washed
- 1 tablespoon oil (olive, vegetable, or canola)
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 cans cannellini beans, (14.5 ounces each), drained and rinsed
- 4 cups water
- 2 cups canned chicken broth or chicken stock
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder OR Italian seasoning
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 4 slices of bread

Directions:

- Cut or tear the kale into 1/2-inch strips. In a medium saucepan, heat 1 tablespoon oil over medium-high heat. Add onion, and cook until softened, about 5 minutes.
- Add about half of the beans, and lightly mash with a fork. Add water, broth or stock, and bring to a boil. Stir in kale, remaining beans, 1 teaspoon garlic powder or Italian seasoning, 1/2 teaspoon salt, and 1/4 teaspoon pepper. Partially cover, reduce heat, and simmer until kale is tender, about 20 minutes.
- Toast bread. Ladle soup into bowls, top with toast. Sprinkle with shredded cheese, if desired.

Kale and Potato Soup (UK Extension)

Ingredients:

- 4 teaspoons olive oil
- 1 chopped yellow onion
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 box (48 ounce) low-sodium chicken broth
- 6 red potatoes, diced
- ½ cup chopped carrot
- 4 cups shredded kale
- ½ pound cooked chicken breast, shredded
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper

Directions:

- In a large saucepan, heat the olive oil over medium heat for 1 minute. Add chopped onion and garlic and cook uncovered for 5 minutes.
- Add chicken broth, potatoes and carrot; cover and bring to a boil.
- Reduce heat and simmer for 20 minutes.
- Mix in the kale, chicken and black pepper. Cover and simmer for 15 minutes or until kale is tender.

Braised Kale (health.com)

Ingredients:

- 1 large (14-oz) bunch kale
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 8 garlic cloves, chopped
- ¾ cup lower-sodium chicken broth
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- ¼ ounce grated Parmesan (optional)

Directions:

- Strip the kale leaves from the tough stems. Discard the stems; coarsely chop the leaves. Rinse well in a colander, leaving the water on the leaves.
- Heat the oil in a large skillet over low heat. Add the garlic and cook, stirring, until it's golden and aromatic (3-4 minutes). Transfer the garlic to a dish and reserve.
- Reheat the oil over medium heat, then add the kale and the broth. Cover and simmer until the kale is tender (3-4 minutes). Season with the salt and pepper. Transfer to a serving platter and top with the garlic and Parmesan, if desired.

OKRA

Okra Preparation Tips & Alternative Recipes (courtesy of NC Cooperative Extension)

Wash okra pods and dry thoroughly before cooking. Cut off stem end. Cut into slices (1/4, 1/2, or 1 inch wide) or leave small pods whole.

Steam: Place small pods in steaming basket and place over boiling water. Cook 5-8 minutes, depending on size. Remove and season as desired.

Sautéed: In a heavy skillet, heat 1 tablespoon olive oil (or 1 teaspoon butter and 2 teaspoons olive oil) over medium-high heat until hot, but not smoking. Add about 1/2 pound washed, dried, and sliced okra. Sauté 3-4 minutes or until okra is bright green with slight browning. Sprinkle with salt and pepper, to taste. Serve hot.

Okra Storage Tips (courtesy of UK Extension)

Refrigerate unwashed, dry okra pods in the vegetable crisper, loosely wrapped in perforated plastic bags. Okra will keep only 2 to 3 days before it starts to deteriorate.

Oven Roasted Okra (adapted from Farm-Fresh and Fast)

Ingredients:

- 1 pound okra, trimmed and cut into 1-inch slices
- 1–2 tablespoons oil (olive, vegetable, or canola)
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder OR Italian seasoning

Directions:

Preheat an oven to 400°F. Toss the okra with the oil, spread it in a single layer on a rimmed baking sheet, and sprinkle with the salt and the garlic powder or Italian seasoning. Roast for 15 minutes or until the okra becomes slightly browned on the edges, shaking the sheet once halfway through the cooking time.

Oven Baked Okra (Mecklenburg County (NC) Extension Master Gardeners)

Ingredients:

- 1 medium egg
- ½ teaspoon hot pepper sauce
- 1 pound fresh okra, stem ends trimmed, sliced into ½-inch thick rounds
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- ½ cup breadcrumbs or yellow cornmeal
- ½ teaspoon salt (optional)

Directions:

- In a large pot, three-quarters full with salted boiling water, boil okra until tender (don't over boil), about 5 minutes; drain well.
- Preheat oven to 450 °F.
- In large bowl, beat together egg, 1 tablespoon water and pepper sauce; add okra to bowl.
- In large food storage bag, brown paper bag or large bowl, combine bread crumbs or cornmeal, pepper, and (if desired) salt.
- Using slotted spoon, remove okra from egg mixture, allowing excess egg mixture to drip back into bowl. Add okra to crumb mixture in bag. Rotate bag to coat okra evenly.
- On nonstick baking sheet or large shallow pan, spread okra in single layer. Spray okra with nonstick cooking spray. Bake until crisp and golden brown, about 12 minutes.

PEPPERS

Pepper Preparation Tips & Alternative Recipes (courtesy of Purdue Extension FoodLinkSM)

Wash peppers in cool running water before use.

Fresh: Cut sweet peppers and add them to a salad, use them to top off a sandwich, or use them in a dip.

Roast: Heat the oven to 425°F. Cut peppers in half, and remove the seeds and stems. Place peppers open side down on a foil-lined baking sheet. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes and remove from oven. Wrap peppers in the foil and let sit for 15 minutes. When cool, pull skins off with a knife.

Pepper Storage Tips (courtesy of Purdue Extension FoodLinkSM)

Refrigerate dry peppers in a plastic bag in a crisper drawer. Use within 1 week.

Stuffed Peppers (adapted from Iowa State Extension)

Ingredients:

- 1/2 pound ground sausage OR ground beef
- 1 onion, chopped (about 1 cup)
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder OR Italian seasoning
- 1 can (15 ounces) spaghetti sauce
- 3 cups cooked rice (brown or white)
- 1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese, divided
- 4 green or red peppers (softball size)

Directions:

- Preheat oven to 350°F. Sauté sausage or beef with the onion in a large skillet over medium heat until browned. Pour off any fat. Stir in garlic powder or Italian seasoning, spaghetti sauce, rice, and 1/2 cup cheese.
- Wash and dry peppers, cut in half lengthwise, and remove seeds. Arrange in a 9 x 13 inch baking dish.
- Spoon the meat mixture into the peppers, mounding on the top. Cover the pan with foil and bake for 30 minutes.
- Remove the foil and sprinkle remaining 1/2 cup cheese on top. Place back in the oven and cook for another 10 minutes.

Grilled Bell Peppers with Goat Cheese (Allrecipes.com)

Ingredients:

- 2 green bell peppers
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/2 cup goat cheese
- 1 tablespoon lemon pepper seasoning

Directions:

- Core and seed the bell peppers. Cut each into six wedges, and place into a resealable plastic bag. Add the garlic and drizzle with olive oil. Toss, seal, and set aside to marinate at least 20 minutes.
- Preheat an outdoor grill for medium heat, and lightly oil the grate. Stir the goat cheese and lemon pepper seasoning together in a small bowl; set aside.
- Cook the peppers, skin-side-up on the preheated grill until lightly charred, about 3 minutes. Flip the peppers over, and carefully spoon the cheese onto each pepper. Close the lid of the barbecue, and continue cooking until the bottoms are lightly charred and the cheese is warm, 2 to 3 minutes.

POTATOES

Potato Preparation Tips & Alternative Recipes (courtesy of Purdue Extension FoodLinkSM)

Scrub potatoes under cold running water.

To Dice: Cut the peeled or unpeeled potato in half lengthwise and lay each half cut-side down on a cutting board. Make cuts up and down and side to side to create the desired sized dice.

Roast: Heat oven to 450°F. Cut potatoes into similar-sized pieces. Toss in a pan with 1-2 tablespoons of oil, salt, pepper, and rosemary to taste. Spread cut potatoes in a single layer on a roasting pan. Bake for about 20 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Boiled: Small red potatoes (“new potatoes”) can be boiled in salted water until easily pierced with a fork. Always start the potatoes in cold water, and bring to a boil (do not add potatoes to boiling water or the exterior cooks before the interior is done). Boiled potatoes can be eaten hot (whole or mashed), or cooled down quickly in cold water and used for potato salad.

Fry: Potatoes can be shredded in a food processor or by hand for hash browns. Heat a heavy-bottomed skillet with 1-2 tablespoons of oil and cover with a layer of shredded potatoes. Fry at medium heat for 10 minutes, then carefully flip with a spatula to fry the other side. Top with a lid to ensure all the potato shreds are cooked through.

Potato Storage Tips (courtesy of Purdue Extension FoodLinkSM)

Do not store potatoes in the refrigerator or anywhere that exposes them to light and cold. The best place to store potatoes is in a dark cupboard in a brown paper bag. Use new or young potatoes within 2 weeks. Large potatoes that have thick skins can be stored for up to 1 month.

Pizza on a Potato (adapted from Iowa State Extension)

Ingredients:

- 1 potato (scrubbed clean)
- 2—3 tablespoons pizza sauce OR tomato sauce
- 1/2—1 teaspoon garlic powder OR Italian seasoning
- 1/2 cup chopped raw vegetables like peppers, onions, mushrooms (or substitute 1/2 cup frozen vegetables, thawed)
- 1/4 cup cheese, shredded (mozzarella or Monterey Jack)

Directions:

- Poke small holes in the potato skin with a fork. Bake potato at 425° F for about 60 minutes or microwave on high about 10 minutes, flipping potato over halfway through cooking.
- Cut potato in half lengthwise. Spread 1 - 1 ½ tablespoons pizza sauce or tomato sauce on each potato half. Sprinkle 1/4 – 1/2 teaspoon of garlic powder or Italian seasoning on each potato half.
- Spread vegetables on each half of potato. Sprinkle cheese evenly over vegetable layer. Microwave until cheese bubbles or bake at 375° F for 5-10 minutes (until cheese is melted).

Quick and Easy Mashed Potatoes and Broccoli (yummytoddlerfood.com)

If you want to make these creamier, you can add a little milk or broth, but if your potatoes are moist, they should be pretty creamy as is. The cooking time on the potatoes might vary slightly based on the variety you use. See my note at the bottom for our favorite kinds.

Ingredients:

- 4 medium potatoes, chopped into 1/2-inch pieces (or about 2 cups chopped)*
- 1 large head of broccoli, chopped (or about 2 cups chopped)
- 1 tablespoon butter or olive oil
- 1/4-1/2 teaspoon salt

Directions:

- Place the potatoes into a medium-large pot and cover with 2 inches of cold water. Bring to a boil, then simmer until almost tender, about 6-8 minutes. Add the broccoli, stir, and simmer until the broccoli and the potatoes are cooked through and soft (but not mushy), about 3-4 minutes more. Drain.
- Add the butter and salt and mash with a potato masher, making the mixture as rustic or smooth as you like.

Variations

Top with crumbled cooked bacon.

Stir in shredded cheese and/or grated Parmesan.

Try with cauliflower.

*We like to use Yukon Gold or a similarly buttery potato in recipes like this since they are naturally creamier than something like a Russet.

Loaded Potato Soup (Iowa State Extension)

Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 pounds potatoes, cooked (approx. 4 large potatoes)
- 1 tablespoon tub margarine
- 1 medium onion (coarsely chopped) (about 1 cup)
- 1/2 cup green pepper, chopped (optional)
- 2 cups homemade chicken broth, or 1 can (14.5 ounces) low sodium chicken broth
- 1 cup nonfat milk
- 1 cup frozen peas, thawed
- 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 4 slices (3 ounces) American cheese
- Optional garnishes: Sliced green onion, bacon bits, shredded cheese

Directions:

- Remove skins and mash potatoes into small pieces to make about 3 cups. Set aside.
- Melt margarine in a large saucepan over medium heat. Stir in onion and green pepper, if desired. Cook until the vegetables begin to soften (about 5 minutes).
- Stir in the broth and heat to a boil. Stir in milk, potatoes, peas, and pepper. Heat through, stirring occasionally.
- Add the cheese slices. Cook and stir about 2 minutes until cheese melts. Add more milk if soup is thicker than you prefer.
- Add garnishes, if desired, and serve immediately.

SQUASH

Squash Preparation Tips & Alternative Recipes (courtesy of Purdue Extension FoodLinkSM)

Wash squash under cool running water to clean just before use.

Roast: Slice squash in half, remove seeds, and poke a few holes in the skin. Sprinkle the squash with salt and pepper to taste and drizzle with 1-2 tablespoons of olive oil. Place the squash cut side down on a roasting pan. Roast for 30 to 45 minutes. It should be done when you can easily pierce the flesh with a fork. Scoop out flesh and enjoy.

Microwave: Cut squash in half, pierce the skin, season with salt and pepper, and place face down in microwave-safe bowl. Cover with a damp paper towel and cook for 5 to 20 minutes (depending on squash size). It should be done when you can easily pierce the flesh with a fork. Scoop out flesh and enjoy.

Squash Storage Tips (courtesy of Purdue Extension FoodLinkSM)

Whole squash can be stored at room temperature, unwashed, for 2 to 3 months.

Microwaved Sweet Squash (The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts)

Ingredients:

- 1 squash (acorn or butternut)
- 3 teaspoons butter
- 4 teaspoons brown sugar
- Ground cinnamon or nutmeg

Directions:

Wash squash and pierce in several places with a fork. Cook the whole squash in microwave for 4 minutes, turn over, cook another 4 minutes. Carefully cut squash in half and remove seeds. Fill each center with 1 ½ teaspoons butter and 2 teaspoons of brown sugar. Place back into microwave for another 3 minutes or until tender. Sprinkle with ground cinnamon or nutmeg.

Orange Honeyed Acorn Squash (USDA.gov)

Ingredients:

- 3 acorn squash (small)
- 1/8 cup orange juice
- 1/4 cup honey
- 2 tablespoons butter or margarine
- 1/8 teaspoon nutmeg (optional)

Directions:

- Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
- Cut squash in half. Remove seeds and place halves in shallow baking pan.
- Combine orange juice and honey. Mix well. Put some of the orange juice/honey mixture in each squash cavity.
- Add 1 tablespoon of the margarine to each squash half. Sprinkle with nutmeg, if desired.
- Cover pan with aluminum foil to keep steam in and speed cooking.
- Bake 30 minutes. Remove foil and continue baking 30 minutes more, or until squash is tender.

Cheese and Herb Acorn Squash

Ingredients:

- 1 medium squash (acorn, butternut, or spaghetti)
- 2 tablespoon oil
- 1 teaspoon dried herbs (sage, thyme, basil, and/or oregano)
- 4-5 tablespoon cheese
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- Black pepper to taste

Directions:

- Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
- Cut squash in half and remove seeds.
- Oil the cut side of squash and season with salt and pepper. Place on pan, cut side up.
- Cook squash for 30-35 minutes. Flip and cook for additional 5-10 minutes or until squash is able to be easily pierced with a knife. Flip squash back and add cheese and herbs. Cook for an additional 5 minutes to toast cheese.
- Serve half squash on plate. It will be easy to scoop out squash from skins to eat.

Microwave Directions:

- Place squash that has been pierced with a knife on a microwave-safe dish.
- Cook on high for 5 minutes. Flip squash and cook 5 more minutes or until soft.
- Scoop out squash and cut in cubes or mash. Add remaining ingredients.

SWEET POTATOES

Sweet Potato Preparation Tips & Alternative Recipes (courtesy of Purdue Extension FoodLinkSM)

Before using, rinse sweet potatoes under a cool stream. Depending on the recipe, peel the potatoes. You can use a vegetable peeler or knife.

Bake: Heat oven to 450°F. Clean potatoes by scrubbing with a vegetable brush and laying on an oven rack. Bake for 30 to 45 minutes.

Mash: Bring a pot of water to a boil. Leave skin on or off as desired. Dice potatoes into chunks and place in the boiling water for 20 to 30 minutes or until they are tender when you poke them with a fork. Drain the water, then add milk, butter, salt, and pepper to taste. Mash and serve.

Sweet Potato Storage Tips (courtesy of Purdue Extension FoodLinkSM)

Short Term Storage: Store sweet potatoes in a cool, dark location for 3-5 weeks.

Long Term Storage: Sweet potatoes can be frozen, canned, or stored in a basement storage room.

Sweet Potato Fries (Iowa State Extension)

Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 pounds sweet potatoes (about 4 medium)
- 1 tablespoon oil (canola or vegetable)
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 cup light mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon ketchup
- 1/8 to 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper, chili powder, or paprika

Directions:

- Preheat oven to 425° F.
- Rinse potatoes under running water. Scrub potatoes well and peel, if desired.
- Cut the potatoes in half lengthwise.
- Lay each potato half flat and slice into half-round shapes about 1/4" thick.
- Combine potatoes, oil, and salt in a bowl. Stir so potatoes are covered with oil.
- Grease cookie sheet with oil and lay potato slices in a single layer.
- Bake for about 30 minutes, turning after 15 minutes.
- Mix the dip ingredients while potatoes are baking.
- Serve immediately.

TURNIPS

Turnip Preparation Tips & Alternative Recipes (courtesy of Purdue Extension FoodLinkSM)

Rinse turnips under cool running water to clean.

Sauté: Heat 1 tablespoon of olive oil in a skillet. Slice turnips into thin strips and add them to the skillet, then add another tablespoon of oil. Cook and stir turnips constantly for 5 minutes. Reduce heat and continue to cook until tender. Spritz with lemon juice to taste.

Roast: Heat oven to 500°F. Peel and slice turnips. Toss turnips in mixture of olive oil or butter and a little salt and pepper, then roast for 25 to 30 minutes or until brown and tender.

Turnip Storage Tips (courtesy of Purdue Extension FoodLinkSM)

Turnips should be stored in a plastic bag in the refrigerator drawer for up to 2 weeks, unwashed. If you want to cut the leaves off, leave about 1 inch to ensure you don't cut into the turnip.

Cheesy Turnips (usda.gov)

Ingredients:

- 4 cups turnips (peeled and cubed)
- 2 tablespoons butter (melted)
- 1/4 cup flour
- 1 1/2 cup milk
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese

Directions:

- Boil turnips in a large pot until just soft, about 20 minutes. Drain well.
- Combine butter and flour in a separate bowl, and stir until there are no lumps.
- Add the flour mixture, milk, and cheese into the turnips and mix well, mashing with a fork.

Bacon Turnip Mash (Allrecipes.com)

Ingredients:

- 2 pounds of turnips
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 pinch salt
- 1 pinch ground black pepper
- 1 dash garlic powder
- 1/2 pound of bacon, cooked and crumbled
- 2 tablespoons bacon fat

Directions:

- Peel and cube the turnip. Cook in a saucepan in salted water until very tender. Drain then mash with the butter or margarine, salt, pepper and garlic powder to taste. Set aside.
- In a skillet fry the bacon until nice and crispy. Remove from the skillet and crumble. Reserve 2 tablespoons of the bacon grease.
- To the skillet with the 2 tablespoons of bacon grease add the mashed turnip and crumbled bacon. Stir and heat to the desired temperature before serving.

ZUCCHINI

Zucchini Preparation Tips & Alternative Recipes (courtesy of Purdue Extension FoodLinkSM)

Cutting Zucchini: To make rounds, simply make parallel cuts across the zucchini, anywhere from very thin to about 1/4 inch thick. To make strips, cut the zucchini across into the length of the strips you would like. Take each section and cut lengthwise in half. Place each half cut-side down on a cutting board and make additional lengthwise cuts at the desired width. To dice, hold all the sticks together and cut them across to create the size dice desired. Older large zucchini will have large seeds in the center that are not desirable to eat, in which case you may want to remove the center seed area before cooking.

Raw: Cut raw zucchini into rounds or sticks and eat with dip or yogurt. Larger raw zucchini can also be shredded (by hand or in a food processor) and used in quick breads, muffins, or fritters.

Roast: Heat oven to 425°F. Cut zucchini to preferred size pieces. Place in roasting pan and drizzle with 1—2 tablespoons olive oil, then add a pinch of salt and pepper. Roast for about 15 minutes or until squash is tender.

Microwave: Cook in a microwave-safe dish with 1/4 cup water for about 4 minutes, stirring occasionally, until tender.

Sauté: Heat 1—2 tablespoons of olive oil or butter in a skillet over medium heat and place zucchini rounds flat onto the skillet. Flip after 2 to 3 minutes, once zucchini begins to brown. Continue to cook until the other side browns. Sprinkle with salt to taste and serve.

Steam: Place cut zucchini into steamer basket over a pot of 1 inch of boiling water. Cover and steam for about 4 minutes or until tender.

Zucchini Storage Tips (courtesy of Purdue Extension FoodLinkSM)

Keep zucchini refrigerated and use within 4 to 5 days.

Crunchy Zucchini Fries (adapted from Manna Food Bank)

Ingredients:

- 3 medium zucchini
- 1 egg
- 1 cup yellow corn meal OR crushed corn flakes cereal
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder OR Italian seasoning
- Oil (olive, vegetable, or canola)

Directions:

- Preheat oven to 400°F. Wash and dry zucchini and cut into strips.
- Beat egg in a bowl and season with salt, pepper, and garlic or Italian seasoning.
- Toss the zucchini in with the beaten egg until the strips are coated.
- In a Ziploc bag, add corn meal (or crushed corn flakes cereal) and coated zucchini and toss until the corn meal/corn flakes cereal sticks to the zucchini.
- Line a baking sheet with parchment paper or coat with the oil. Spread zucchini out on the pan and bake 22—24 minutes or until crisp and tender.

Zucchini Corn Fritters (FARM-FRESH and FAST)

Ingredients:

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1 1/2 cups fresh corn kernels, cut from the cob
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 cups grated zucchini
- 1/4 cup butter, melted
- Black pepper to taste
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1 cup finely shredded cheddar
- 1 cup milk
- Oil for frying

Directions:

- In a large bowl, stir together the flour, baking powder, cumin, sugar, salt and pepper.
- In a small bowl, whisk together the eggs, milk and butter. Whisk the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients. Stir in the zucchini, corn and cheese: mix well.
- Fill the bottom of cast-iron skillet with 1/2 inch of oil. Heat the oil over medium-high heat then drop the batter by tablespoonfuls into the hot oil. Frying batches, adding more oil as necessary, until the fritters are fluffy, crisp and golden brown, turning once with tongs. Remove to drain on paper towels.