

Harvest News You Can Use

Quick and Easy Recipes For Fresh Produce

Spinach

Baha Rolls

- 1 cup uncooked quick-cooking rice**
- 1-1/2 cups chicken (or vegetable) broth**
- 1/4 cup reduced-calorie mayonnaise or salad dressing**
- 1 tablespoon rice vinegar or white wine vinegar**
- 1 tablespoon minced green onion**
- 2 teaspoons grated gingerroot or 1/4 teaspoon ground ginger**
- 4 (8-inch) flour tortillas**
- 1/2 pound fresh spinach (1 bunch), stems removed**
- 3 ounces tuna**
- 3/4 cup thin julienne-strip, peeled cucumber**
- 1/4 medium-ripe avocado, pitted, peeled and thinly sliced**
- 1 egg white, beaten**
- Pickled ginger strips, thin julienne-strip carrot and fresh cilantro or parsley for garnish (optional)**



Cook rice according to package directions, using broth in place of water. Fluff rice; cool or cover and chill if preparing ahead. In a small bowl, combine mayonnaise, vinegar, onion and gingerroot; stir mixture into cooked rice until well combined. To assemble rolls, place tortillas on flat surface. Spread 1/4 of the rice mixture evenly over each tortilla to within 1/2 inch of edge. Arrange spinach leaves, overlapping slightly, over rice layer. Sprinkle tuna and cucumber evenly over spinach. On each tortilla, place 2 slices of avocado crosswise over center of filling. Starting at bottom edge of each tortilla, roll up tightly, enclosing filling and avocado in center. Moisten opposite edge of tortilla with egg white; press edges together to seal. Wrap in waxed paper and twist ends; chill at least 2 hours before serving

To serve, unwrap rolls; slice each roll crosswise into eight 1-inch slices. Garnish as desired.

Chicken, Vegetable and Rice Soup

- 1/2 cup dried navy beans**
- 2 tablespoons olive oil**
- 1 4- to 4-1/2 pound chicken, cut into serving pieces**
- 1 teaspoon salt**

1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 cup chopped yellow onions
1/2 cup chopped carrots
1/2 cup chopped celery
1 tablespoon minced garlic
1/2 cup chopped zucchini
1/2 cup chopped yellow squash
2 quarts (8 cups) chicken stock or canned low-sodium chicken broth
(vegetable can also be used)
1/2 cup seeded and chopped plum tomatoes
4 sprigs fresh parsley
3 bay leaves
1/4 teaspoon cayenne
1/3 cup uncooked long-grain white rice
1/2 cup chopped green onions (green and white parts)
1 tablespoon minced fresh thyme
1/4 cup chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
1 cup torn spinach leaves

Put the beans into a bowl and add enough water to cover by 2 inches. Soak for 8 hours, then drain. (For a quick soak, bring the beans and water to a boil over high heat and cook for 2 minutes, then remove from heat and let stand for 1 hour. Drain.)

Heat the oil in a large heavy pot or Dutch oven over medium-high heat. In batches, cook the chicken, seasoning with the salt and pepper and turning once, until evenly brown, about 10 minutes. Transfer the chicken to a platter. Pour off all but 2 tablespoons of the fat from the pot.

Add the onions, carrots, and celery. Cook, stirring often, until softened (about 3 minutes). Add the garlic and stir until fragrant, about 1 minute. Stir in the zucchini and yellow squash and cook for 1 minute. Add the stock, drained beans, tomatoes, parsley, bay leaves, and cayenne. Return the chicken to the pot. Bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer, uncovered, until beans are almost tender, about 1 hour.

Using a long-handled slotted spoon or tongs, carefully transfer the chicken pieces to a plate. Cool slightly, then remove the meat from the bones, discarding the skin and bones. Return the chicken meat and any accumulated juices to the pot. Add the rice, green onions, thyme, parsley, and spinach and simmer until the rice and beans are tender, about 15 minutes. Discard the bay leaves.

Yield: 12 servings.

Cold Spinach Soup

16 ounces (2 cups) plain yogurt
9 cups fresh spinach
2 cups milk
1 cup diced cooked chicken
1/2 cup chopped onion
2-1/2 tablespoons fresh dill, chopped

In a blender, combine 3 cups of fresh spinach, 1 cup of milk, the onion, dill and any additional seasoning. Cover and process until almost smooth, then pour into a large serving bowl. Blend the remaining milk and spinach with the yogurt; then cover and blend until smooth. Stir the new mixture into the serving bowl, and then stir in the cooked chicken. Refrigerate, then serve when ready.

Beet and Potato Salad

**3 medium-sized potatoes
3 beets
6 tb white distilled vinegar
4 tb olive oil**

Cook potatoes and beets in separate medium pots of boiling salted water until tender (30-35 minutes). Drain; cool slightly. Peel vegetables and thinly slice into rounds. Whisk vinegar and oil in bowl. Season generously with salt and pepper, add vegetables, and toss to coat.

Greek Scramble

**6 to 8 large eggs
3 tablespoons fresh mint, minced
1 tablespoon minced parsley
1 teaspoon minced fresh oregano
2 tablespoons minced scallion
Freshly ground black pepper
1 tablespoon olive oil
2 cups (packed) spinach
1 cup crumbled feta
1 cup diced ripe tomatoes or halved cherry tomatoes**

Break the eggs into a medium-sized bowl and beat with a whisk until smooth. Stir in the herbs and scallion and add black pepper (to taste).

Place a 10-inch skillet or sauté pan over medium heat. After several minutes, add the olive oil, wait about 10 seconds, then swirl to coat the pan. Turn the heat up to medium-high, add the spinach, and sauté for 2 to 3 minutes, or until the spinach has wilted and turned a deep green.

With the heat still at medium-high, pour the eggs into the pan, scrambling them slowly. As the eggs begin to set, push the curds from the bottom to one side, allowing uncooked egg to flow into contact with the pan. The spinach will blend into the eggs.

When the eggs are mostly set but still slightly wet, sprinkle in the crumbled feta. Continue scrambling slowly, allowing the cheese to melt slightly into the eggs. After about a minute, stir in the tomatoes.

Cook for just a few seconds longer, or until the eggs are done to your liking. Serve right away.

Yield: 4 servings.

Lasagna Primavera

1 (8-ounce) package lasagna noodles
3 carrots, cut into 1/4-inch slices
1 cup broccoli flowerets
1 cup zucchini, cut into 1/4-inch slices
1 crookneck squash, cut into 1/4-inch slices
1 pound fresh spinach, stems removed
1 (8-ounce) container ricotta cheese
1 (26-ounce) jar pasta sauce
3 cups shredded mozzarella cheese
1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese

Bring 3 quarts water to a boil in a 6-quart saucepan over high heat. Add lasagna noodles and cook 5 minutes. Add carrots; cook 2 more minutes. Add broccoli, zucchini and crookneck squash; cook 2 minutes or until pasta is tender. Drain well.

Combine spinach and ricotta cheese. In a 3-quart rectangular baking pan, spread one third of the pasta sauce. Line pan with lasagna noodles. Layer half each of the vegetables, spinach mixture and mozzarella cheese over the noodles; top with half of the remaining pasta sauce. Repeat layers. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese.

Place baking pan on 10*15-inch baking sheet which has been lined with foil. Bake uncovered in a 400 degree F oven about 30 minutes or until hot in the center. Let stand 10 minutes before serving. (Casserole may be prepared up to 2 days before baking. Refrigerate, covered, until 1 hour before baking. If cold, bake for 1 hour.)

Spanakopita

3 tablespoons olive oil
1 onion, chopped
1/2 cup chopped green onions, greens and whites
3 cloves garlic, minced
2 pounds spinach, trimmed, rough chopped
1/2 lemon, juiced
2 eggs, lightly beaten
1-1/2 cups crumbled feta cheese
1 tablespoon coriander seeds, toasted, ground
1/2 teaspoon fresh grated nutmeg
1/2 pound unsalted butter, melted
1 pound phyllo pastry sheets
1/4 cup finely chopped fresh oregano
1/4 cup finely chopped fresh chives
1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese

Heat olive oil in a large skillet and place over medium heat. Sauté onions and garlic for 3 minutes (until soft). Add spinach, season with salt and pepper, and continue to sauté until the spinach is limp, about 2 minutes. Add lemon juice, remove from heat and place in a colander, and squeeze out excess liquid. Set aside to cool. [The filling needs to be cool and dry to prevent the phyllo from becoming soggy.] In a medium bowl, beat the eggs with feta, coriander, and nutmeg. Season, then fold in the cooled spinach mixture until well blended.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Brush 2 baking sheets with some melted butter. Unroll the phyllo dough and lay a sheet flat on a work surface. Take care to keep the phyllo covered with a damp, not wet, towel as you work to prevent drying out and becoming brittle. Brush the sheet with melted butter, then sprinkle evenly with some oregano and chives. Repeat with 2 more sheets of phyllo, stacking on top of each other. With a sharp knife or pizza cutter, cut the sheets lengthwise into thirds to form 2-1/2-inch strips. Do this with all the sheets of dough.

Place a heaping teaspoon of filling near 1 corner of the layered phyllo strip. Fold the end at an angle over the filling to form a triangle. Continue to fold the triangle along the strip until you reach the end, like folding up a flag. Brush the top with butter and dust with Parmesan, place on prepared baking sheet, and cover while preparing the remaining pastries. Repeat until all the filling and phyllo strips are used up. Bake for 20 to 30 minutes until the triangles are crisp and golden. Serve hot, warm or cold.

Yield: approximately 40 triangles

Spinach Curry

1 pound fresh spinach, chopped
2 tablespoon oil
1/2 teaspoon mustard seed
6 cloves garlic, minced
1/4 cup tomato paste
1/2 teaspoon turmeric
1 teaspoon coriander powder
1/2 teaspoon cumin powder
3 tablespoons water
Salt to taste

Heat oil in a frying pan over medium heat until hot. Add mustard seeds, and let cook until they pop; add garlic and tomato paste; stir and sauté 2 minutes. Add spinach and all remaining seasonings; stir well and reduce heat to medium low. Cover and cook for 5-8 minutes.

Spinach Soufflé

1 pound fresh spinach or Swiss chard
1/4 cup butter
1/4 cup all-purpose flour
1-1/4 teaspoon salt (divided use)
1/4 teaspoon pepper
1 cup milk
1/8 teaspoon nutmeg
3 eggs, separated
1/4 teaspoon cream of tartar

Prepare and cook spinach or Swiss chard; chop and drain thoroughly.

Heat oven to 350 degrees F. Butter a 1-quart baking dish or casserole.

Melt butter in saucepan over low heat. Blend in flour, 1/4 teaspoon of the salt, and the pepper. Cook over low heat, stirring, until mixture is smooth and bubbly. Remove from heat and then stir in milk. Heat to boiling, stirring constantly. Boil and stir 1 minute. Remove from heat. Stir in remaining salt and nutmeg.

In a large mixer bowl, beat egg whites and cream of tartar until stiff; set aside. In a small mixer bowl, beat egg yolks until very thick and lemon-colored; stir into white sauce mixture. Stir in spinach. Stir about 1/4 cup of the beaten egg whites into the sauce mixture, then gently fold in the remaining egg whites.

Carefully pour into casserole dish. Set dish in a larger pan of water (1 inch deep). Bake 50-60 minutes or until puffed and golden, and a silver knife inserted halfway between the edge and center comes out clean. Serve immediately.

Makes 4-6 servings.

Summer Squash and Spinach Gratin with Ricotta Custard

2 large leeks or a combination of leeks and onions, sliced into rounds or chopped

2 garlic cloves, thinly sliced

1-1/4 pounds summer squash, including zucchini and crookneck, thinly sliced

1/4 pound mushrooms, thinly sliced

1 large bunch spinach, well washed, the stems trimmed

1 to 2 tablespoons virgin olive oil

2 tablespoons chopped dill or 1 tsp dried

2 tablespoons chopped parsley

1 cup ricotta cheese

2 eggs

1 cup milk or cream

1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese

Salt

Freshly ground pepper

Wash and cut all the vegetables as described above. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Warm the oil in a large skillet and add the leeks. Sauté for about 1 minute; then add the squash, mushrooms, half the herbs, and several pinches of salt. Cook over medium-high heat for about 4 or 5 minutes, stirring frequently, until the squash begins to color just a little in places; then transfer the mixture to a gratin dish.

Add the spinach to the same skillet and cook just long enough to wilt it down. Press out as much of the liquid as possible, roughly chop the spinach, and distribute it over the vegetables.

Beat the ricotta with the eggs; then stir in the milk or cream, the cheese, and the remaining herbs. Season with salt and pepper; then pour it over the vegetables. Bake until the custard is set and lightly browned on top, about 40 minutes. Allow the gratin to stand ten minutes before serving. Serve warm.

Yield: 4 servings.

Summer Squash/Zucchini

Cajun Summer Squash/Zucchini

1/2 teaspoon salt
3/4 teaspoon sweet paprika
1/2 teaspoon ground white pepper
1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper, to taste
1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
1/4 teaspoon dried thyme leaves
1 1/2 pounds summer squash or zucchini, cut in rounds
1/2 cup whole wheat pastry flour
1/2 cup cornmeal
1/2 cup milk
1 egg
Safflower or peanut oil for frying



Combine the salt, spices, and thyme in a small bowl. Sprinkle the squash rounds with a teaspoon of the spice mix. Divide the remaining spice mix in half and stir one half into the flour and the other half into the cornmeal. Beat together the egg and milk. Heat 1 inch of safflower or peanut oil in a deep saucepan or frying pan to 350 degrees. Using your hands, quickly toss the squash in the flour and shake off excess. Toss in the milk and egg, then dip in cornmeal to coat, shaking off excess. Deep-fry for about 2 minutes. Drain on paper towels and serve at once.

Yield: 4 servings.

Spicy Squash Cakes

1 whole egg plus 2 egg whites (or use 3 eggs)
4 cups grated summer squash
1 cup fresh corn kernels, cut from 2 ears
1/4 cup chopped green onions, tops included
1 large jalapeno pepper, chopped
1/3 cup parmesan cheese
1/2 cup grated sharp cheddar cheese
1/2 cup all-purpose flour
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 teaspoon ground cayenne pepper or black pepper
Canola oil for sautéing
Low-fat sour cream (optional)
Fresh tomato salsa (optional)

In a large bowl, beat the eggs. Beat in squash, corn, green onions, jalapeno, the cheeses, flour, olive oil and ground pepper. Heat two tablespoons canola oil in a heavy 10-inch skillet over medium-high heat. For small cakes, spoon one tablespoon squash mixture per cake into the hot oil and flatten to uniform thickness. For large cakes, use two tablespoons of squash mixture per cake. Do not over crowd the skillet. Leave about an inch between cakes. Cook until edges turn golden brown, turn and cook the other side until golden brown, about three minutes total cooking time per cake. Transfer to a paper towel lined plate. Place in a warm oven and continue cooking the remaining cakes.

To serve, arrange two or more cakes on individual plates. Serve with some of the salsa and a dollop of low-fat sour cream. Sprinkle with salt if desired.

Yield: 6 servings.

Stuffed Summer Squash

**6 small summer squash
1 tablespoon unsalted butter
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 cup finely diced onion
2 teaspoons minced garlic
2 large squash blossoms (optional), slivered
1 cup whole-milk ricotta cheese
1/3 cup grated Parmesan cheese
3 tablespoons dry bread crumbs
1 large egg, beaten
2 tablespoons minced marjoram or basil
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon freshly-ground black pepper**

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Butter a 9-by-13-inch baking dish. Slice squash in half lengthwise. Scrape out seeds and discard. Slice a little off the bottoms so squash rest flat, cut side up. In a skillet, heat butter and oil over medium heat. Cook onion and garlic until soft. Add squash blossoms, if using; sauté 1 minute. Transfer to a bowl and cool slightly. Stir in ricotta, 1/4 cup of Parmesan, 2 tablespoons bread crumbs, egg, marjoram, salt, and pepper until blended. Spoon into squash shells. Sprinkle remaining Parmesan and bread crumbs over tops. Bake 25 minutes, until sides are tender; broil 3 minutes, until tops are golden. Serve hot.

Serves 12 as an appetizer, 6 as a side dish.

Summer Squash Pancakes

**3 cups grated yellow summer squash or zucchini
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon fresh chopped parsley
1 medium clove garlic, minced
3/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
1 large egg
1 cup biscuit mix
Dash pepper
Milk, as needed**

Combine all ingredients in a mixing bowl. Add enough milk as necessary to make a thin pancake-like batter. Drop by spoonfuls onto hot oiled griddle or skillet. Turn over when bottom is golden and cook until browned on both sides.

Zucchini Bread

**2 cups shredded raw zucchini
3 eggs**

1-3/4 cups sugar
1 cup vegetable oil
2 cups flour
1/4 teaspoon baking powder
2 teaspoons baking soda
2 teaspoons cinnamon
1 teaspoon salt
2 teaspoons vanilla
1 cup chopped walnuts

Put zucchini in strainer and press or squeeze with hands to get excess liquid out. Beat eggs, sugar, and oil together. Add flour, baking powder, soda, cinnamon, salt, vanilla, and walnuts. Mix together by hand.

Zucchini Casserole

2 medium zucchini, unpeeled, sliced in 1/4-inch slices
1 medium onion, thinly sliced
1 green bell pepper, sliced
1/2 red bell pepper, sliced
2 tomatoes, sliced
Salt and pepper, to taste
Garlic powder, to taste
Basil and oregano, about 1/4 teaspoon each
6 ounces shredded Cheddar cheese

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Butter a 2-quart casserole dish. Arrange zucchini slices in casserole dish. Top with onion slices, green and red pepper slices, tomato slices, then sprinkle with herbs. Top with cheese. Bake for 50 to 60 minutes.

Yield: 6 servings.

Zucchini Creole with Tomatoes and Peppers

1-1/2 to 2 pounds sliced zucchini
8 ounces (1 cup) sliced mushrooms
1 large green bell pepper, cut into thin strips
1 clove garlic, minced
2 teaspoons dried leaf basil, crumbled
1 tablespoon melted butter
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper
1/2 teaspoon sugar or equivalent sugar substitute
1/4 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
2 medium tomatoes, peeled and chopped

Combine zucchini, mushrooms, green pepper, garlic, basil, butter, salt, pepper, sugar, and Worcestershire sauce in a large skillet; cook for 5 minutes over medium heat. Add tomatoes and cook for 5 minutes more, or until tender.

Yield: 8 servings.

Swiss Chard, Creamy Vegetable Pasta

12 ounces tomato fettuccine
1 1/4 pounds Swiss chard, trimmed and cut into strips
2 1/2 cup half & half
8 ounces (1 cup) goat cheese
1/2 cup toasted walnuts, coarsely chopped
1/2 teaspoon cracked black pepper

In large saucepan, cook fettuccine according to package directions. During last 2 minutes of cooking, stir in Swiss chard. Drain pasta and Swiss chard. Wipe saucepan clean. In saucepan, over medium heat, cook half & half, goat cheese, 1/4 cup walnuts and black pepper for 5 minutes or until cheese melts. Return pasta and Swiss chard to pan; toss to coat well and heat through. Pour in serving bowl. Garnish with remaining nuts.

Serves 6.

Mediterranean Swiss Chard

2 large bunches Swiss chard, chopped
1 medium clove garlic, pressed
1/2 tablespoon balsamic vinegar or fresh lemon juice
Extra virgin olive oil to taste
Salt and black pepper to taste

Bring lightly salted water to a rapid boil in a large pot. Cut off tough bottom part of stems. Add the chopped leaves to the boiling water and simmer for only 3-5 minutes, until tender. Strain through colander and press out excess water. Toss with rest of ingredients.

***Make sure you don't toss chard with dressing until you are ready to serve, or else the flavor will become diluted.**

Minestrone Soup

1 pound (or more) beef with bones
4 1/2 quarts (18 cups) cold water
2 tablespoons salt
1 cup kidney beans
2 tablespoons oil
Garlic to taste
1/2 pound ground beef
Chopped onion to taste
1/2 cup fresh parsley, chopped
1 cup celery, chopped
1 bunch Swiss chard, finely chopped
Pepper to taste
1 1/2 cups diced carrots
1 (28 oz.) can tomatoes or equal amount of fresh tomatoes, chopped
1 cup macaroni, shells or elbows
1 cup zucchini, chopped (~2 medium)

Bring first four ingredients to a boil and simmer 3 hours. Brown garlic, ground beef, and chopped onion in oil. Add vegetables and cook until tender, add to mixture of first four ingredients. Add macaroni and zucchini; cook until done.

Quiche Florentine

**1 (10 inch) pre baked pastry shell
2 tablespoons minced onion
1/4 cup butter
3 tablespoons flour
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon seasoned pepper
1 cup milk
4 to 5 beaten eggs
10 ounces spinach or Swiss chard, steamed lightly and chopped
1/2 cup finely diced ham or cooked bacon (optional)
1 cup shredded Jarlsberg or Swiss cheese**

Sauté onion in butter until tender. Blend in flour, salt, and pepper. Add milk; cook until smooth and thickened. Gradually add small amount of hot mixture to eggs. Return to saucepan and cook 1 minute. Remove from heat and stir in other ingredients, except for 1/3 cup of cheese. Pour into pastry shell and top with remaining cheese. Bake at 375 degrees for about 25 minutes until knife inserted comes out clean.

Swiss Chard Wraps

**9-10 Swiss chard leaves, at least 9 inches
1 large tomato, sliced and cut in half
1/2 cup Mozzarella cheese, shredded
2 tablespoon olive oil
1 tablespoon onion flakes
Salt and pepper**

Steam Swiss chard for a few minutes. Do not overcook. Open leaves and brush on olive oil lightly. Put tomato slice in center of leaf, top with pinch onion flakes, salt and pepper, and one tablespoon cheese. Fold leaf around tomato.

Put on grill until hot, turn once – this works best if you use a 2 sided grill that holds food in place. Wraps can also be cooked in 400 degree oven for 10 minutes on a cookie sheet.

Fennel

Apple-Fennel Compote

**2 small fennel bulbs
6 baking apples
1 tablespoon butter
1-1/2 tablespoon olive oil
1/4 cup apple cider vinegar
3/4 cup orange juice
1 cinnamon stick
10-12 peppercorns**



1-2 tablespoon Pernod

Cut fennel into thin slices. Peel, core, and slice apples. Heat butter and olive oil in skillet over medium high heat, add fennel and cook until softened, about 5 minutes. Add apples and cook several more minutes. Add vinegar, orange juice, and cinnamon stick. Lower heat and simmer until apples are tender but not mushy, about 15-20 minutes. Season to taste with Pernod.

Yield: 8 servings.

Baked Fennel Parmesan

**2 fennel bulbs
1 clove garlic, minced
1 tablespoon olive oil
2 tablespoon butter
Salt and pepper, to taste
Parmesan cheese**

Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. Grease glass baking pan (9*9) with olive oil. Cut fennel bulbs vertically into 1/4 inch thick slices. Lay flat in the baking pan. Sprinkle minced garlic evenly over fennel. Salt and pepper to taste. Drizzle margarine over fennel. Top with heavy sprinkling of Parmesan cheese. Cover with aluminum foil and bake at 325 degrees F for 1 hour and 15 minutes. Serve as a side dish.

Yield: 4-6 servings.

Baked Fennel with Potatoes

**2 fennel bulbs
1-1/2 tablespoons virgin olive oil
30 g butter
2 medium potatoes
2 tablespoon fresh parsley, chopped
Salt and pepper to taste**

To trim fennel, remove hard base and any bruised outside leaves. Cut into thin lengthwise slices and rinse with cold water. Scatter slices over the bottom of a buttered baking dish. Drizzle with 1 tablespoon oil and dot with butter. Bake in a 400 degree F oven for 20 minutes, turning fennel with a spatula halfway through cooking.

Meanwhile, peel potatoes and cut into thin slices. Add to baking dish and mix with fennel. Drizzle with more oil and season with salt and black pepper. Cover with foil and bake for 30-45 minutes, removing foil during the last 15 minutes. Serve hot, sprinkled with chopped parsley.

Brown and Wild Rice with Sausage and Fennel

**2 cup water
1/2 cup wild rice
8 ounces (1 cup) sweet Italian sausage, casings removed
3 tablespoons olive oil**

1 fennel bulb, trimmed and diced (~12 oz)
1 large red bell pepper, diced
1/4 teaspoon chopped fennel seeds
2 large leeks (white and pale green parts only), chopped
3 large garlic cloves, minced
1-1/3 cup long-grain brown rice
2 (14 1/2 ounce) cans low-sodium chicken (or vegetable) broth

Simmer water and wild rice in small saucepan 20 minutes. Drain. Heat large, heavy saucepan over medium-high heat. Fry sausage until cooked through, breaking up sausage with fork, about 4 minutes. Using slotted spoon, transfer sausage to large bowl. Add 2 tablespoons oil to same saucepan. Mix in fennel, bell pepper and fennel seeds and sauté until tender, about 10 minutes. Add to sausage. Heat remaining 1 tablespoon oil in same saucepan. Add leeks and garlic and sauté until tender and golden, about 8 minutes. Add brown rice and stir 1 minute. Mix in broth and wild rice. Season with pepper. Bring to boil. Reduce heat to low. Cover and simmer until rice is tender and liquid is absorbed, about 40 minutes. Add hot rice to sausage mixture and toss well. (Can be prepared 1 day ahead. Cover and chill.) Serve hot.

Yield: 2 Main-course or 6 side-dish servings.

Creamy Fennel and Leek Soup

30 g unsalted butter
2 large fennel bulbs, thinly sliced
3 leeks, 2 thinly sliced, 1 cut in half lengthways, then cut into 4 cm strips (for garnish)
3 garlic cloves, finely chopped
4 cups chicken or vegetable stock
2 rosemary sprigs
1/3 teaspoons dried thyme
1/8 teaspoons ground nutmeg
1/3 cup sour cream + 1 cup for garnish
1/4 cup Parmesan cheese + 1/2 cup for garnish
Salt and pepper, to taste
1 tablespoon olive oil

Heat the butter in a large, deep (preferably non-stick) sauté pan over a medium heat. Add the sliced fennel, sliced leek, and finely chopped garlic. Sauté, stirring occasionally, for 3-4 minutes or until the fennel, leeks, and garlic are beginning to soften. Remove from the heat, and set aside. In a large pot, heat the stock. Add the rosemary sprigs, thyme and nutmeg, and bring to the boil. Simmer over a low heat for about 15 minutes. Remove the rosemary sprigs. Add the fennel, leek and garlic mixture to the pot, and stir to combine all the ingredients. Set the pan in which the fennel, leek and garlic were sautéed aside, for re-use later. Allow the soup to cool slightly (10 minutes cooling time should be ample), then blend it in batches in a blender or food processor until smooth. As each batch is blended, pour the blended soup into another pot or pan, perhaps the deep pan used earlier to sauté the fennel, leeks and garlic. Once all of the soup has been blended, stir it to ensure that it is of an even consistency (inevitably some batches were probably thinner than others). Stir the sour cream and the 1/4 cup of parmesan into the soup. Reheat the soup over a medium heat

until it is hot, but do not allow it to come to the boil. Season to taste with salt and black pepper. Turn off the heat and leave the soup covered so it stays warm.

In a small non-stick pan, heat the oil and sauté the extra leek for 2-3 minutes – until softened but not browned. Ladle the soup into warm soup bowls and top with the sautéed leek. Garnish with the extra parmesan and sour cream, and serve immediately with warm crusty rolls.

Fennel & Escarole Stuffing with Pine Nuts

4 tablespoon olive oil

1-1/2 cups chopped onion

4 cups chopped fresh fennel

2 tablespoon finely chopped garlic

1 tablespoon chopped fresh rosemary or 1 teaspoon dried

1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme or 1 teaspoon dried

1 teaspoon fennel seeds, lightly crushed

1 teaspoon salt

1 medium head escarole, washed thoroughly and cut into 1-inch pieces (about 6 cups)

1/2 cup dry white wine

8 cups stale or lightly toasted 1/2-inch bread cubes, preferably from a chewy sourdough loaf

1/2 cup pine nuts, lightly toasted

2 teaspoon grated lemon zest

Freshly ground black pepper to taste

Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium-low heat. Add the onion, fennel, garlic, rosemary, thyme, fennel seeds, and salt. Cook, covered, until the onion is soft and translucent, 5 to 7 minutes. Add the escarole, cover, and cook until the escarole is wilted. Add the wine and let it simmer until some of the liquid has evaporated, 2 or 3 minutes. In a large bowl, combine the vegetables with the bread cubes, pine nuts, and lemon zest. Season with pepper; toss to combine. The stuffing should just hold together when mounded on a spoon.

If baking some or all of the stuffing in a casserole, pour a cup or two of stock over the stuffing to replace the juices the stuffing would have absorbed from the bird. Bake it covered until heated through, 45 minutes to 1 hour. For a crunchy top, uncover it for the last 15 minutes of baking.

Yield: 12 to 14 cups.

Fennel Slaw

3 fennel bulbs, finely shaven

1 small red onion, finely shaven

1 tablespoon fresh dill

1-2 garlic cloves

1/4 cup rice wine vinegar

2 teaspoon honey

1 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon black pepper

1 tablespoon olive oil

Combine the shaved onion and fennel in a bowl and add the chopped, fresh dill. With a mortar and pestle, smash the garlic with salt and pepper, adding the honey, vinegar and oil slowly. When well combined, drizzle over vegetables, toss well, and chill for at least 1 hour to wilt onions slightly. Check seasoning.

Serving suggestion: I serve this in a bowl with warm lentils in the bottom, crispy fish (Salmon or Rockfish) on the lentils and the slaw on top.

Green Beans

Brown Rice Pilaf with Vegetables & Garlic

**1 tablespoon olive oil
1 cup chopped onion
1-1/2 cups brown rice
8 large garlic cloves, pressed
3 cups water
1 teaspoon salt
1 cup fresh green beans, cut into 2-inch pieces
1 cup yellow crookneck squash, cubed
1 cup broccoli florets
1 cup fresh corn kernels or frozen, thawed
1/3 cup chopped red bell pepper
1 tablespoon sesame seeds, toasted
2 teaspoon light soy sauce**



Heat oil large, heavy skillet over low heat. Add onion; sauté until golden and tender, about 10 minutes. Add rice and garlic; sauté 1 minute. Add 3 cups water and salt; bring to boil. Reduce heat to low, cover tightly and cook until rice is tender and almost all liquid is absorbed, about 35 minutes; do not stir. Uncover skillet and place green beans, squash, broccoli, corn and carrot evenly over surface of rice. Cover and cook until vegetables are crisp-tender, about 10 minutes. Remove from heat. Stir in red bell pepper and sesame seeds. Mix in soy sauce. Toss to coat.

Dilled Green Beans & New Potatoes

**1/2 pound small new potatoes, quartered
1/2 pound fresh green beans, trimmed, broken into 2? pieces
1/4 cup nonfat sour cream
2 tablespoons chopped fresh dill weed
1/8 teaspoon salt
Dash pepper
1/2 teaspoon olive oil
1 clove garlic, minced**

In medium saucepan, bring about 2 cups water to a boil. Add potatoes and green beans; return to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer 9-11 minutes or until beans are crisp-tender. Meanwhile, in a small bowl, combine all remaining ingredients; blend well. Drain

vegetables; rinse with cold water to cool slightly. Place in serving bowl. Add sour cream mixture, toss to coat.

Serve immediately or refrigerate until serving time. Makes 8 (1/2 cup) servings.

Grilled Green Beans with Gorgonzola Vinaigrette

6 cups lightly salted boiling water
1 pound green beans (approximately 5 cups), ends trimmed
1 tablespoon olive oil, divided
1/4 cup balsamic vinegar
1/4 cup crumbled gorgonzola cheese
1 tablespoon firmly packed brown sugar
4 cloves garlic, minced
1 green onion, chopped
1/2 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme
1/2 teaspoon chopped fresh basil
Salt and pepper to taste

In a medium saucepan over medium-high heat, bring water to a boil. Add the beans and partially cook for 4 to 5 minutes (depending on the degree of doneness you want). Remove from heat. Drain the beans in a colander and immediately immerse them in an ice water bath to stop from cooking; drain and set aside.

In a small saucepan over medium heat, combine 1 1/2 teaspoons of the olive oil and vinegar, gorgonzola, brown sugar, garlic, green onion, thyme, and basil. Cook just until the ingredients start to combine, approximately 7 minutes. Remove from heat.

Toss the green beans in the remaining 1 1/2 teaspoons olive oil and season lightly with salt and pepper. Lightly grill the beans on the barbecue grill approximately 1 to 2 minutes, stirring constantly. Remove from barbecue and toss in the warm vinaigrette.

Transfer to a serving platter and serve immediately. Makes 6 servings.

Green Bean Croquettes

2 to 2-1/2 cups cooked green beans
2 tablespoons butter
2-1/2 tablespoons flour
2/3 cup milk
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 teaspoons onion, finely minced
1/4 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
2 cups bread crumbs, coarse whole wheat
3/4 cup bread crumbs, fine whole wheat
1 egg, slightly beaten with 2 tablespoons cold water

Melt margarine in small saucepan; blend in flour. Add milk slowly; cook, stirring constantly, until very thick. Add salt, onion and Worcestershire sauce. Chop or mash beans; add coarse bread crumbs and hot white sauce. Mix well. Chill. Shape mixture into croquettes, using 1 tablespoon for each. Roll in fine bread crumbs; dip into egg mixture.

Roll again in fine crumbs. Fry in small amount of hot oil in skillet until browned. Serve with chili sauce.

Serves 4.

Green Bean and Potato Salad

1 1/2 pounds fresh green beans, trimmed and cut in half crosswise

6 small red potatoes, cubed

1 small purple onion, halved lengthwise and thinly sliced

1/4 cup vegetable oil

1/4 cup red wine vinegar or garlic red wine vinegar

1/4 cup seasoned rice vinegar

1 teaspoon garlic powder

1 teaspoon salt

1 1/2 teaspoons seasoned pepper

1 teaspoon sugar

In large pot of boiling water, cook prepared green beans for about 7 minutes or until crisp-tender. Drain and immerse in ice water for 5 minutes to stop cooking process. Completely cool and drain well.

In large pot of boiling water, cook potatoes until tender. Repeat cooling procedure with potatoes. Place beans in large serving bowl. Add potatoes and onion. In small bowl, whisk together oil, vinegars, garlic salt, seasoned pepper and sugar. Pour dressing over vegetables; toss gently to coat. Cover and refrigerate 2 hours, stirring or tossing a few times while chilling. Remove salad from refrigerator about 30 minutes before serving; toss just before serving. Taste and adjust seasonings.

Makes 6 servings.

Green Beans and Red Bell Pepper in Balsamic Vinaigrette

1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil

1 medium red bell pepper, cored, seeded, and cut into 1/4-inch strips

2 cloves garlic, minced

1-1/2 pounds green beans, ends trimmed

Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

1/2 cup dry sherry

1/4 cup Balsamic Vinegar

Freshly grated Parmesan cheese

In a medium saucepan over medium-high heat, bring water to a boil. Add the beans and partially cook for 4 to 5 minutes (depending on the degree of doneness you want). Remove from heat. Drain the beans in a colander and immediately immerse them in an ice water bath to stop from cooking; drain and set aside.

In a small frying pan over medium heat, sauté red bell pepper in olive oil until tender. Add garlic, partially cooked green beans, sherry, balsamic vinegar, salt, and pepper. Heat until beans are warmed. Transfer to a serving platter, top with Parmesan cheese, and serve immediately.

Makes 6 servings.

Impossible Green Bean Pie

8 ounces fresh green beans, cut lengthwise into strips

1-1/2 cups milk

4 ounce can mushrooms, stems and pieces, drained

3/4 cup Bisquick Baking Mix

1/2 cup onion, chopped

3 eggs

2 garlic cloves, crushed

1 teaspoon salt

1 cup cheddar cheese, shredded

1/4 teaspoon pepper

Heat oven to 400 degrees F. Grease a 10-inch pie plate. Heat beans and 1 inch salted water (1/2 teaspoon salt to 1 cup water) to boiling. Cook uncovered 5 minutes. Cover and cook until tender, 5 to 10 minutes; drain. Mix beans, mushrooms, onion, garlic and cheese in plate. Beat remaining ingredients until smooth, 15 seconds in blender on high or 1 minute with hand beater. Pour into plate.

Bake until knife inserted between center and edge comes out clean, 30 to 35 minutes. Cool 5 minutes.

Makes 6 to 8 servings.

Shanghai Stir-Fried String Beans

1 pound fresh green beans

2 teaspoons sesame seeds

1 tablespoon sugar

2 tablespoons rice wine vinegar

1/4 teaspoon white pepper

2 teaspoons light soy sauce

1/2 teaspoon sesame oil

1/4 teaspoon MSG

2 1/2 tablespoons vegetable oil

1/2 teaspoon salt

Trim, wash and parboil beans for 2 minutes in rapidly boiling water. Drain and rinse with cold water. Heat sesame seeds in a dry frying pan over moderate heat. Remove when seeds begin to pop. Combine the sugar, rice wine vinegar, white pepper, soy sauce, sesame oil and MSG for the seasoning mixture.

Put a wok on very high heat. When very hot, add oil, salt and then the beans and stir-fry for 1 minute. Add the seasoning mixture and stir-fry for another minute. Add sesame seeds and blend well. Transfer to a heated platter.

Kale



Austrian Kale

2 bunches kale, washed
1 clove garlic, minced
1/2 medium onion, coarsely chopped
2 tablespoon oil
1 1/2 cup chicken (or vegetable) stock or bouillon
4 medium potatoes, quartered
1 stalk celery, chopped
Sour cream (garnish)

Cut the kale leaves into 1/2-inch-wide strips. Blanch them in lightly salted boiling water for one minute. Set aside. Sauté the garlic and onion in the oil until lightly browned. Add chicken stock, potatoes, celery, and blanched kale. Simmer together until potatoes fall apart and lose their shape. Stir; season with salt and pepper. Garnish with sour cream and serve.

Servings: 4

Bean and Kale Soup

1/2 pound dried Great Northern beans
Water as needed
Olive oil as needed
1 onion, chopped
2 small carrots, diced
1 celery stalk, diced
4 cups shredded kale (1 small bunch)
1 boiling potato, diced
2 cups chopped Swiss chard bunch (1 small bunch)
1 large tomato, diced
2 garlic cloves, minced
2 teaspoon minced fresh rosemary leaves
1 tablespoon minced parsley
1 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves
Salt to taste
Ground black pepper to taste
1 cup grated Parmesan cheese

Place beans in large saucepan with enough cold water to cover. Let stand at room temperature overnight. Drain beans and return to saucepan. Add enough water to cover and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat and simmer until tender, 1 hour 30 minutes, reserving liquid. Transfer half of beans to food processor or blender and puree. Reserve remaining whole beans. Heat 1/4 cup oil in large pot over medium-high heat. Add onion, carrots and celery and sauté 5 minutes. Stir in kale, potato, pureed beans and enough reserved bean cooking liquid and water to make 6 cups. Heat over medium heat and simmer for about 30 minutes until vegetables are tender. Add chard, tomato, garlic, rosemary, parsley, thyme and salt and pepper to taste. Simmer until chard is tender and flavors are well blended, at least 1 hour, adding additional bean liquid if soup is too thick. (Soup should be quite thick.) Stir in reserved whole beans and simmer until heated through, 5 to 10 minutes. (Can be cooled and refrigerated overnight.) Ladle into heated

soup bowls and sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. Top each bowl of soup with spoonful of olive oil, if desired.

Braised Kale, Potatoes, and Mushrooms

1 cup diced uncooked red potatoes, with skin
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 cup chopped or sliced Portobello mushrooms
2 medium shallots, minced
2 cloves garlic, minced
Salt and pepper to taste
1 pound kale, stemmed and torn into large pieces
1/4 cup water

Place potatoes in a medium saucepan of salted water. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer until tender, about 7-10 minutes. Drain and set aside. In a large wide skillet, heat oil over medium heat. Add mushrooms, shallots, and garlic, and cook, stirring often, until shallots are soft and mushrooms are tender, about 5 minutes. Add salt and pepper to taste. Add kale to mushrooms and cook, stirring often, 1 minute. Add water and cooked potatoes. Cover and cook until kale is bright green, about 5 minutes.

Caldo Verde

1 large yellow onion, peeled and finely minced
1 large garlic clove, peeled and minced
4 tablespoons olive oil
6 large potatoes
2 quarts (8 cups) cold water
1 pound chorizo or similar sausage
2 1/2 teaspoons salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper
1 pound kale, chopped

Sauté the onion and garlic in three tablespoons of oil. Add potatoes and sauté for five minutes. Add water, cover, and boil gently for 20 minutes until potatoes are falling apart.

Meanwhile, chop and fry the sausage in a skillet and drain, then add the kale, remaining tablespoon of olive oil, salt and pepper, and simmer for five minutes. Stir sausage and kale into pot of boiled potatoes. Cook for about 20 more minutes and serve with dark bread.

Greens Galore

10 cups kale, Swiss chard, mustard greens, or a combination
2 medium onions, thinly sliced
2 teaspoon olive oil
1/3 cup water
Salt & pepper to taste
Juice of 1/2 lemon (optional)

Wash the greens well and chop some of the stems with the leaves. In a large saucepan, cook onions in oil or butter until golden. Add greens and water. Cover and cook over medium

heat, stirring occasionally, just until the greens are tender. Season with salt & pepper. Sprinkle with lemon juice if desired.

Italian Pork Chops with Kale

2 lbs kale
1/4 cup olive oil
2 large cloves of garlic, minced
4 thick pork chops
2 teaspoons fennel seeds
1 cup hot water
1 small can tomato paste

Soak kale and rinse it thoroughly, then simmer for 20 minutes in pot of salted water. While kale is cooking, heat oil in large, deep skillet. Add garlic and cook for 2 minutes over low heat. Add pork chops and sauté for 5 minutes on each side, then season with salt, pepper, and fennel seeds. Dissolve tomato paste in hot water and add to pork chops. Cover and cook on low for 30 minutes, adding water if sauce gets too thick. Drain kale and stir into tomato sauce. Cover and cook for another 10 minutes.