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Microgreens Pack a Punch



Red cabbage microgreens
USDA/ARS

“Microgreens” is a marketing term used to describe tiny, tender, edible greens that germinate in soil or a soil substitute from the seeds of vegetables and herbs. Smaller than “baby greens,” and harvested later than “sprouts,” microgreens can provide a variety of leaf flavors, such as sweet and spicy. They are also known for their various colors and textures.



Among upscale markets, they are now considered a specialty genre of greens that are good for garnishing salads, soups, plates, and sandwiches.

USDA Agricultural Research Service researchers determined the concentration of essential vitamins and carotenoids in 25 commercially available varieties of microgreens. Key nutrients measured were ascorbic acid (vitamin C), tocopherols (vitamin E), phyloquinone (vitamin K), and beta-carotene (a vitamin A precursor), plus other related carotenoids in the cotyledons.

In general, microgreens contained considerably higher levels of vitamins and carotenoids—about five times greater—than their mature plant counterparts, an indication that microgreens may be worth the trouble of delivering them fresh during their short lives.

Source: <http://1.usa.gov/1jiBXI1>

Testing Pressure Canners

Canning season is approaching so now is the time to evaluate equipment. One important evaluation is the accuracy of dial gauge pressure canners.

Presto Testing Units from National Presto Indus-

tries, Inc. can be used on a few brands. They include:

- National
- Magic Seal
- Maid of Honor
- Presto

The tester should not be used on All American canner gauges or any other brand of canner.

Source: <http://bit.ly/1q7DYBQ>

How to use a canner tester: <http://bit.ly/1IXtmMT>

Reduce, Replace, Reformulate

It can be done. What is it? Reducing sodium in restaurant meals.

On average, fast food items contain 1,848 mg sodium per 1,000 calories. Dine-in restaurant items average 2,090 mg sodium per 1,000 calories. The recommendation is to limit sodium to less than 2,300 mg each day.

In Philadelphia, PA, Chinese restaurants worked with health department dieticians to offer lower-sodium choices. After a nine month period, two popular dishes offered in 20 restaurants reduced sodium by 20 percent.

Other ways to reduce sodium include:

- Looking for lower sodium ingredient options yet maintain flavor.
- Post nutrition information at order counters and on menus.
- Lower the cost of lower sodium foods.
- Help employees learn why lower sodium foods are healthier.



<http://1.usa.gov/1qt8d rp>

www.cdc.gov/salt/infographic.htm



Calendar of Food

Subscribe to the food calendar listserv at <http://food.unl.edu/subscribe-to-food-calendar>

For some foodie fun, learn about what days, weeks, or months are food-themed events. There are many!

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension has

put together a list that includes tips, recipes and resources for that event. Sign up on the listserv to receive notifications on updates to the calendar.

For March, go to <http://>

food.unl.edu/fnh/march. Click on the specific event to see more information.

Cleaning Up After a Disaster

Disasters happen in many ways and leave many problems in their wake. To help guide consumers through these difficult events, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have a resource with many topics of information.

There are also educational materials on many topics that are written in English and several other languages. There are also public service announcements to help get messages out easily.

For the complete list, see <http://emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/cleanup/>.



For more information on preparedness, see www.ready.gov/.



Using more mono- and polyunsaturated fats are healthy choices to keep cholesterol levels low.



What is the Hype about Coconut Oil?

Coconut oil is a saturated fat made of medium-chain fatty acids (MCTs). These MCTs provide energy when converted in the liver into ketones. These provide food for the brain, provide immediate energy, and are not stored as fat in the body.

Many theories suggest that coconut oil can help slow or even reverse the progression of Alzheimer's Disease. The ketones from coconut oil could give the brain an alternative source of energy to those cells that can no longer use glucose. Currently, the science to prove this is not available.

Coconut oil is high in calories, 115 calories per tablespoon. It is suggested that effective doses are 4 to 8 tablespoons per day. This can lead to diarrhea and gastrointestinal problems.

MCTs can affect both HDL and LDL cholesterol levels. Coconut oil comes in two forms, virgin coconut oil and refined coconut oil.

Sources: <http://bit.ly/LVq0sZ>, <http://bit.ly/1fZzCfV>, <http://bit.ly/1hgCOAV>

Myth: Cutting Meat from Diet is Healthy

While not a must in every meal, meat does provide essential amino acids for good health. Replacing meat protein would mean eating a wide variety of plant protein foods to equal the

nutrition from a single portion of meat.

Federal data shows that, on average, consumers eat 6.08 ounces of meat protein each day. The Dietary Guidelines for

Americans recommends 5-7 ounces.

Protein offers hunger satisfaction that can help reduce overeating and weight loss benefits.

Learn more about this myth from the American Meat Institute at
<http://bit.ly/1qb08TH>



Promote National Nutrition Month® along with [Walk Kansas!](#)

March is National Nutrition Month®

The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics is once again highlighting March as National Nutrition Month®. The focus this year is "Enjoy the Taste of Eating Right."

Taste is the main factor that drives purchasing decisions. If you enjoy your food, those foods are most likely the ones you eat most often. With this campaign, learn to use taste and nutrition to build healthy meals.

The toolkit, promotional items, handouts, tipsheets and more can be found at www.eatright.org/NNM/default.aspx.

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Some Like Food Really Hot!



Volatile oil compounds provide heat to release endorphins that bring pleasure to pain from fiery foods.

Move over jalapeno peppers! Competition is heating up to satisfy taste buds begging for fiery foods.

Sriracha flavored foods have grown 225% from 2009-2013 as part of restaurant menu items. Besides the "burn" these hot ingredients provide, they also give fla-

vor, pungency, and color to foods.

Characteristics can vary by growing environment, human handling, and exposure to heat and light. Cooking method also changes the flavor of hot ingredients. The process of extracting and stabilizing volatile oils is highly specialized. Pepper crops vary from year to year.

Besides peppers, horseradish, wasabi, ginger and hot mustards are growing in popularity to provide heat to foods. Chili seed oil is being added to traditional foods like hot chocolate, ice cream, tea and lemonade to kick up the flavor.

Source: Prepared Foods, February 2014



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On the Web at
www.rrc.ksu.edu



Consumers Want Fresh, Safe Livestock Products

Fresh, safe, healthy, high-quality. Those are the primary attributes consumers want from livestock products.



K-State Research and Extension Ag Economists surveyed 1,950 people

for food values of milk, ground beef, beef steak and chicken breast. Safety was the most

important factor consumers value. Less important factors included environmental impact, animal welfare, origin and convenience. Price fell in the middle of the list.

Products that provide a high-quality eating experience influence what consumers purchase. All of these factors influence marketing and production focus.

Source: <http://bit.ly/1nwwdb3>