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Plant a Salsa Garden!



Planning to plant a garden? How about planting vegetables specifically for making salsa!

In its basic form, salsa could include tomatoes, peppers, onions, parsley, basil, and cilantro. But the options are many! What varieties of vegetables work best for salsa?

For tomatoes, paste tomato varieties are best because of their meaty texture. The 'Roma' variety is the most common paste tomato. Others include 'La Ro-

ma,' Mamma Mia,' 'San Marzano' and 'Rio Grande.' Slicing tomato varieties produce more juice.

A variety of peppers can be used which can turn a mild salsa into one with a hot kick! Use a variety of colors to add visual appeal. A mix of peppers can be used such as bell peppers, jalapenos, and 'Habanero' just to name a few.

Any variety of onions can be used from white, yellow, to purple. Some varieties have a stronger flavor than others.

Any salsa recipe can be consumed fresh or frozen for later use. Always use safe, tested recipes for canning salsa.

Learn more at:

www.ag.ndsu.edu/pubs/yf/foods/fn584.pdf

www.bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/MF3171.pdf

2016 Kansas State of Wellness Symposium

The second annual Kansas State of Wellness Symposium brings together several state partners to promote wellness in Kansas

The program is a joint effort between WorkWell

KS, Kansas Alliance for Wellness, and many communities and organizations that emphasize healthier environments to live, work and play in Kansas.

This symposium is free! Learn more and register at:

<http://conta.cc/1N962tG>



The Science of Soap

Hands on activities help people of all ages learn about science. The American Cleaning Institute wants to help you teach about "The Science Behind Soap."

This new video and classroom activity is a part of the STEM program to get youth interested in science, technol-

ogy, engineering and math.

The activity includes various stations to learn about different soap ingredients. With the use of colored sand, they can make their own "soap" and see how it works.

There is a lesson guide with detailed instruc-

tions, handouts for students, soap station printouts, a video about soap, and the Soap and Detergents book.

Learn more and get the free materials at:

www.cleaninginstitute.org/science/soapclassroom.aspx



Handwashing helps protect you from food-borne illness and other illnesses.



For teaching, download the free Powerpoint presentation "Feeding without the Fuss."

Food Fun for Young Children

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln has a resource to help parents and caregivers prepare healthy meals and snacks for kids ages 2 to 5.

Food Fun for Young

Children includes recipes, newsletters, and other resources including topics for table talk and information on choking hazards. Sign up for their newsletter and follow their Pinterest board.

Learn more at:

<http://food.unl.edu/food-fun-young-children>

Are Avocado Pits Edible?

A current topic of interest is consuming avocado pits. While there are purported health benefits, there is not enough research to back up those proposed benefits.

Penn State University did some research and state "although the currently available data is promising, for most indications, it remains very preliminary and further studies are needed" and "In addition, the safety of the various extracts of the avocado seeds must be assessed in order to more fully estimate the usefulness of this resource."

Therefore, it is not recommended to consume avocado pits.

Source: www.californiaavocado.com/blog/march-2016/is-it-safe-to-eat-the-avocado-seed



Source: USDA ARS



Petroleum-based plastics take up about 25 percent of the volume of landfills.

Would You Eat an Edible Fork?

Add a little extra crunch to your meal by eating your cutlery! Sound crazy? Maybe not. A company in India, called Bakey's, has developed edible cutlery to help reduce environmental waste.

The edible cutlery is made of a mix of sorghum, rice, and wheat flours. Flavors can be added, such as onion, tomato, garlic, and ginger. They are baked until dry but are not so hard they cannot be chewed. The unflavored cutlery does not dominate the flavors of the meal. They also hold up to liquids because of the high sorghum content. If eating them is not an option, they will degrade safely in any outside environment.

By eating the cutlery, the added benefit is nutrition. They contain fiber, iron, protein, calcium, folic acid and B vitamins.

Currently, edible cutlery is in the initial stages of production.



Learn more at www.bakeys.com/.

Therapeutic use of Apple Cider Vinegar

While vinegar has many culinary and household uses, drinking it as a "magic cure" for many illnesses or chronic illnesses may not be beneficial.

A few studies have been conducted, but none are

conclusive of the health benefits. One study showed promise in weight loss. Another showed improvement in insulin action with diabetes. Another had improved blood sugar control, insulin levels, and

high triglyceride levels in Type 2 diabetics. Other studies are not as positive. Consuming large amounts of vinegar can interact with medications, cause tooth decay, and gastrointestinal issues.

Learn more at:

<http://bit.ly/1MymuUr>
www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1785201/

Tips on Vitamin Supplements

If a vitamin supplement is needed to improve health, here are some tips when shopping for supplements. Look for the USP (U.S. Pharmacopeial Convention) Verified Mark. This mark means that the supplement:

- Contains the ingredients listed on the label, in the declared strength and amounts;
- Does not contain harmful levels of specified contaminants; and
- Is made according to FDA and USP Good Manufacturing Practices, using sanitary and well-controlled processes.

USP standards are enforced by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. But, the use of the USP label is voluntary. Using the label signifies a commitment to good quality supplements. Learn more at www.usp.org/usp-verification-services



Some supplements may not be safe with medications.

<http://1.usa.gov/1T9Uvd6>

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IFT Food Facts



Consumers are bombarded every day with messages related to food. The challenge is knowing if those messages are fact or fiction.

To help clear the muddy messages, the Institute of Food Technologists (IFT) has launched a new Food Facts website for consumers.

The resource features videos and fact sheets about food science for

consumers. IFT member experts answer questions, address food myths and misconceptions, and talk about many topics within food science such as food safety, nutrition food chemistry and more.

Check out this new resource at:

www.ift.org/knowledge-center/learn-about-food-science/food-facts.aspx



Karen Blakeslee, M.S.



On the Web at
www.rrc.ksu.edu



BBQ 101 is Back!

Kansas State University will be hosting a series of Barbecue 101 workshops this April, May,



Details and registration
[www.asi.k-state.edu/
barbecue101workshop.html](http://www.asi.k-state.edu/barbecue101workshop.html)

and June. These one day workshops will focus on teaching the basics of grilling and smoking for consumers of all ages and experience levels.

The topic areas will cover the

basics of grill selection and use, the fundamentals of meat selection and preparation, discussion of new and innovative cuts for barbecue, and the science of smoking. Additionally, these workshops will include several hands-on demonstrations, tastings of different sauces, meat cooked with different woods, spices, and rubs. The day will conclude with a question and answer session with several barbecue experts.