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Volume 101

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Websites of interest:

- aicr.org
- sparkpeople.com
- fitday.com

What Colors are in Your Produce Palette?

If you hear it on the news then it must be so—avocado is nature's most perfect food. Tomato catsup can prevent prostate cancer. Blueberries are the fruit of the week. What can we make of all this hype!

It's mostly true except for the part about one plant being better than the other. Each plant is its own little medicine chest of phytochemicals as well as vitamins, minerals and fiber. Nature's palette of vibrant colors brings health-promoting, disease-preventing rich nutrition to your table.

Reds—lycopene, anthocyanins for prostate and heart health and memory function

Blues and purples—phenols, anthocyanins for healthy urinary tract and memory function

Greens—lutein, indoles for vision health, bones and teeth

Yellow/orange—carotenoids, bioflavonoids for vision and heart health, and a healthy immune system

Whites, tans, browns—allium, selenium for reducing cholesterol and blood pressure, decreasing tumor reproduction

We have only to go as far as the back yard, the farmers' market or the produce aisle to avail ourselves of this arsenal of "medicinal food".

Water, Water Everywhere!

Are you struggling to keep your exercise routine going in this hot summer weather? It's wonderful to get out of the gym and exercise outside. Don't let high temperatures and humidity drive you back into the air conditioning!

How can you continue to enjoy exercise outside? Try doing it when the temperatures are cooler— early morning or late evening. Or you can head for the water!

Water exercise offers many benefits. Water exercise:

- burns calories
- improves fitness
- is low impact which lowers risk for injury
- provides resistance to help improve strength

Water helps to support your joints and ease the stress on muscles and bones, making it a great choice for people with arthritis. It's the perfect way to workout under the summer sun and stay cool and collected.

You don't have to be an Olympic swimmer, or even a swimmer at all, to exercise in water. For people who do swim, swimming laps is a great aerobic work-out. You can incorporate rest intervals after each pool length while you increase your stamina. You can use any swimming stroke you like, crawl, backstroke, breast stroke, side stroke, or you can alternate strokes. Try to work up to a workout of 30 minutes duration with time out for rest if you need it.

If you are not a swimmer walking or jogging in water is another way to exercise. This can be done in water waist to chest deep. You can even do it using a floatation device like a noodle or a life jacket. The water keeps weight off of your joints yet you get the benefit of a good aerobic workout. Again, try to keep moving for at least 30 minutes.

You can exercise on the side of the pool too. Hold on to the side, extend your legs behind you and kick. Then try sitting on the side of the pool and kicking. You can do this for 30 minutes or you can combine the minutes from all of the above exercises to total 30 minutes and you will have an excellent and cool workout.

Water aerobics classes are available at many health clubs

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"Diet Foods"

Diet food—low-carb cereal bars for breakfast, low fat protein shakes for lunch, diabetic candy for a snack, low sodium frozen dinner, and sugar free ice cream for dessert—is advertised as the key to good health. If it's sugar free, fat free, salt free, it could be flavor free, too!

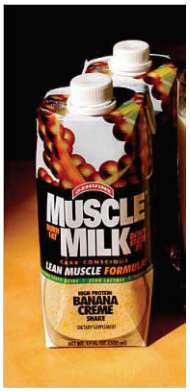
Years ago we had the " diet plate" in the bottom corner of the restaurant menu – cottage cheese and a hamburger patty. Sounds like something you wouldn't want to eat, then or now!

"Diet foods" have come a long way. Every diet plan has had foods for sale that "fit the plan". From the Atkins to the Sugar Busters to the South Beach diet plans we've had packaged foods and restaurant menus to accompany those plans. But has it changed the course of health in our country? Not at all.

Obesity rates are climbing, not falling. More than 2/3 of the US population are overweight and more than 1/3 are obese (overweight to the point of health risk). Type 2 Diabetes is associated with obesity. Diabetes rates are climbing right alongside obesity. No wonder.

Diet foods and restrictive diets have never been the solution. It's a behavior thing. If we eat too much and move too little we are going to store the excess calories as fat. Moving away from diets and diet foods is the key.

Critics of diet foods say the serving size on the package doesn't reflect the serving size we consume. The issue is that we need to get back to real food in sensible portions balanced with the right amount of activity and exercise.



Water, Water Everywhere!

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and recreation centers. Check with your local club for class schedules. Water aerobics classes include a cardiovascular workout plus strength and flexibility exercises. The important thing when it comes to exercise is, to borrow the phrase from Nike: **"Just Do It"!**

Tips from a Master Gardener

When you ask Master Gardener John Romero the secrets of his successful organic garden, he is glad to share three important tips:

- natural fertilizers
- homemade compost
- strong scented plants that keep the bugs away by confusing them!

Using organic fertilizers adds nutrients that chemical fertilizers may not. Putting nature back to work enables gardeners to grow strong healthy plants, improve poor soils and help build up long term strength and stability of the soil and plants.

John's three favorite organic fertilizers are fish fertilizer, "Sea Tea", and aged manure. Fish fertilizer is a well rounded, organic fertilizer with nitrogen, phosphorous, and trace minerals. It comes in liquid form and is easily diluted. The smell is "fishy" but your fruits and veggies will grow by leaps and bounds.

Sea Tea is a liquid fertilizer that promotes lush, vibrant growth and increased resistance to harmful insects and diseases. It can be mixed with water and applied as a soil drench around plants or as a foliar spray. "Sea Tea," is made from seaweed, molasses, and fish emulsion.

Pound for pound the nutrient content of manure may be lower than most synthetic fertilizers. Manure, however provides the carbon compounds that build soil structure. A little bit goes a long way. Most people know that using "raw" un-aged manure will burn plants. Aged manure can be purchased at the local garden center if you don't have access, space, or time to do it yourself.

John puts all plant matter, coffee grounds, and eggshells into his compost piles. In fact, he has three compost piles. When John clears out plants at the end of a growing season, into the compost pile they go.

Some gardeners buy a product called compost maker from the feed store or garden center to speed up the process. John says the composting process happens so fast that fruit seeds don't have time to reappear as

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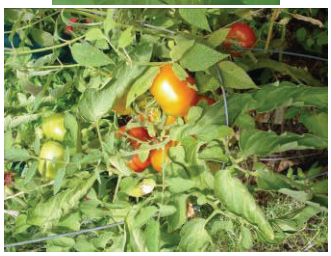

Fresh vegetables are low fat, low sugar, low salt, low calorie delicious "real food".

John Romero (Spanish word for rosemary) with his rosemary patch.

Recipe Corner

In this month's recipe corner there are several light treats using fresh produce and fruits from near, far, and exotic places .

Summer Salad

2-3 pounds fresh tomatoes, quartered

2 cucumbers, peeled and sliced

½ small purple onion, sliced into rings

2/3 cup olive oil

1/3 cup red wine vinegar

1 teaspoon dry yellow mustard

Salt and pepper to taste

Prepare a marinade from oil, vinegar and seasonings. Pour over vegetables and chill for an hour before serving.

Fruit Pizza

1 package Sugar Cookie dough

2 cups fresh fruit, such as strawberries, blueberries, kiwi and pineapple

1 package Neufchatel cheese, softened

2 teaspoons orange zest

3 Tablespoons orange juice

Pat cookie dough out onto round pizza tray. Bake about 30 minutes at 350. Let cool completely, about one hour. Mix together cheese, zest, and juice with mixer. Spread evenly over cookie, then decorate attractively with fruits of the season.

For an easy serving option, bake regular-sized cookies and decorate each one separately.

Mama's Vegetable Stacks

1 purple onion

1 eggplant

2 tomatoes

1 bell pepper

2 Tablespoon olive oil

3 Tablespoons freshly grated parmesan cheese

Salt and pepper to taste

Wash all vegetables before beginning. Peel and thinly slice purple onion. Slice green pepper, and tomato. Remove stem from eggplant and slice about ½ inch thick, leaving peel on. Season vegetables lightly.

Assemble stacks by layering the vegetables one at a time; ending with a tomato slice on top. Drizzle one teaspoon olive oil on each stack and top with a sprinkle of cheese.

Bake for about 20 minutes in an oven preheated to 350. or, to save energy and keep your kitchen cool, place stacks in microwave safe dish, cover with plastic wrap, and cook on high power for about 3 minutes.

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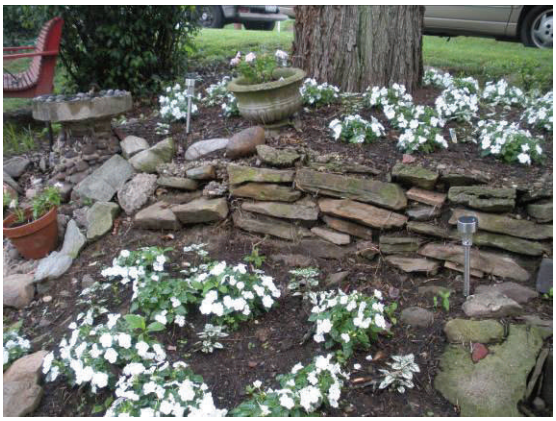

This newsletter is created by Susan M. Poindexter, MS, RD, LD, CDE, Nutrition Consultant to the West Virginia Bureau of Senior Services, and is funded in part by The West Virginia Bureau of Senior Services.

Tips from a Master Gardener (cont'd)

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Bee Balm

seedlings in the compost pile. When John turns over the soil for a new planting, he doesn't have to buy soil supplements in plastic bags. He can add rich matter he has composted from waste materials. So, in essence, nothing is wasted!

Like all organic gardeners, John never uses chemical pesticides. Rather, he plants a variety of things with strong scents which confuse the bugs so they stay away from his prized vegetables. Marigolds are only one of the strong-smelling pest deterrents he plants. Some of the other aromatic herbs found in his garden include bee balm, basil, oregano, sage, thyme, and, of course—rosemary. He and his family then use the herbs in vinegars, pickles and other recipes.