

W.N.M. Monthly

Written for Women's Nutrition Matters, LLC by Diane L Lassen, RN, HHC

This month in WNM Monthly:

- Local markets in full swing as summer arrives at long last!
- What to do with all that gorgeous produce!
- Simple recipes to wow your friends and family!

At a Glance:

Summer at Last!	1
Zukes, Cukes and peaches, oh my!	1
An abundance of summer squash	2
Peach heaven	2
Cool as a Cucumber	3
Farmer's Markets in our area	3
Recipes	4

Summer...at last!!

Despite a full month of rain and cool temperatures, I think it is safe to say that summer has arrived at last. And what a beautiful start! Overnight temperatures in the 50's giving way to daytime highs in the low 80's—this is my kind of weather!

This unusual weather has given us a late but great berry season—the strawberries were sweet, the mulberries abundant,

and the raspberries are just starting to make their appearance.

Already we are seeing the local stands and markets bursting with squash, blueberries, cucumbers and greens. Peaches are soon to follow. What a great time to live in New Jersey, the garden state!

There's no time like early summer to ramp up your diet plan, no time like now to add in more nutrient-

dense fruits and vegetables.

I challenge you to see how many new fruits and veggies you can try, and how many new recipes you can find for your old stand-bys. I hope that the following articles will whet your appetite for healthy eating and will spark an interest to learn more!

Enjoy, and then get thee to the farmer's market!

Zukes, Cukes, and Peaches, oh my!!

The markets here in Jersey are alive and well! The [High Bridge market](#) is boasting local blueberries and lots of yellow and green squash and cucumbers. At the [Asbury Village Farm](#) where I work, we are picking rainbow chard, zucchini, kale and beets. Bouquets of herbs are cropping up and tomatoes will be here soon.

As we move through July and into August, sweet corn will appear and peppers and eggplants will grace us with their

colorful presence. And we will be faced with the conundrum of too many zucchini, an overflow of cucumbers, and what to do with all the luscious peaches!! Oh, to have such problems!!

I have a few solutions for you here and in the next few pages, so fear no more. Read on to learn the origins of these great edibles, how nutritious they are, and how to prepare them in a variety of easy and delicious ways!

An abundance of Summer Squash



As summer progresses, summer squash run rampant. Everyone has a surplus of these delectable veggies, and it won't be long before we resort to leaving bags of them on our neighbor's porches! But after reading this, I hope you befriend this versatile, abundant and virtually calorie free vegetable.

Summer squash are native to the Americas, dating back to Mexico, 7000 BC. They found their way to Italy where they are known as

zucchini or cocozelle, and to France as courgettes. We adapted the name "squash" from a combination of Native American words that mean "something eaten raw".

Today, many heirloom and hybrid varieties of squash are available ranging from round to oblong to yellow, green and even black! Their high water content makes them a dieter's friend at only 13 calories for a ½ cup raw! Summer squash are loaded with antioxidants including beta carotene

and small amounts of B vitamins, C and folate. Did someone say versatile? You can:

1. Serve them raw as crudités with bean dip
2. Grill them with basil
3. Bake them a la Parmesan
4. Roast them with EVOO
5. Stuff them with onions, mushrooms and bread crumbs
6. Sauté` them with onions and garlic

Check out the recipes later in this letter!

"Eat food. Not too much. Mostly plants."

Michael Pollan

Peach heaven!



Who doesn't love peaches? I don't know about you, but I can't wait till the peaches come to market, and here in New Jersey, we are known for our peaches! Peaches belong to the category of stone fruits which also includes nectarines, apricots and plums. Note that in most recipes, these fruits can be used interchangeably—a real plus!

Peaches were first cultivated in China as early as 2000 BC. They were thought to be a symbol for the vagina. A Chinese bride was known as a Peach. Peaches spread throughout Europe via the Persians, Greeks and Romans. Thankfully the early settlers made them so plentiful along our eastern coast

that they originally were thought to be a native crop!

The key to buying good peaches is to buy them local, where they are picked at the peak of sweetness. Peaches might soften on your counter, but their sweetness doesn't increase from when it was picked from the tree. Peaches should not have any green on them and they should smell---well, peachy! Buy organic peaches or at least minimally sprayed peaches. Ask your farmer! Peaches are on the [EWG's Dirty Dozen](#) list of the 12 most contaminated crops. If in doubt, peel them at the very least!

Peaches are loaded with beta carotene—465 IU of vitamin A—some B vitamins, C, and zinc. These are great for building a strong immune system, preventing free radical damage and averting many skin diseases including sun damage. You can:

1. Grill them
2. Bake them into crisps and pies
3. Eat fresh in cereals both hot and cold
4. Toss them into smoothies
5. Cook them into jams and spreads

Recipes to follow below!

.....

.....

Cool as a Cucumber!!

The other vegetable that seems to get secretly dropped off onto people's porches is the cucumber. You have to love planting them—one little seed, and a month later you have a vine that overtakes the garden, bearing an unimaginable quantity of fruits.

Cucumbers originated in southern Asia around 10,000 years ago. They were also popular in Greece, Egypt and Rome where they were used not only as a food but also for their skin healing properties. Cucumbers are in the squash family, and so are related to the

zucchini and the watermelon. Like their cousins, they are high in water content which makes them really low in calories. In fact, cucumbers have the highest water content of any vegetable! They also sport a hefty dose of fiber, silica, potassium and magnesium. Cucumber is cooling and refreshing added simply to a glass of cold water much like you would add a lemon wedge. You can also blend it with water and some mint leaves in the Vitamix for a refreshing summer pick-me-up.

Got tired eyes? Slice a

cold cucumber and place it over your eyes for 15 minutes. Mmmmm...nice!

Cucumbers are obviously great in salad either sliced or diced, but you can also:

1. Pickle them with vinegar and dill
2. Layer them in sandwiches for added crunch!
3. Add them to lemonade
4. Fry them a la fried green tomatoes
5. Use them in relish
6. Use them in a facial!



Farmer's Markets in the Hunterdon County Area

Hunterdon Land Trust

Sundays 9am-1pm

Dvoor Farm, Rt.12 Circle & Rt. 523,

West Flemington, NJ

908-625-8241

Peaceful Valley Orchards

Open daily till 6

150 Pittstown Road

Pittstown, NJ

908-730-7748

High Bridge Market

Saturdays 8:30-12:30pm

Main Street,

High Bridge, NJ

908-892-7022

Somerville Market

Thursdays 12-6pm

Somerset Court House Green

Somerville, NJ

908-541-1600

*"Let food be thy
medicine and medicine
be thy food."
Hippocrates*

Recipes!

Cold Peach Dessert Soup

4 peaches or nectarines
 ½ C cold white grape juice
 1 T agave or honey
 ½ lemon, peeled
 Dash of cinnamon
 Organic vanilla yogurt (opt)

Place all ingredients in Vitamix or other high-speed blender in order listed. Turn on 1 variable then quickly to 10, then on High. Blend 1 minute or until smooth. Swirl a dab of organic vanilla yogurt in each serving, topping with a sprig of fresh mint.

Zucchini Rounds

1/3 C baking mix like Hodgson's Mill Organic
 ¼ C grated Parmesan
 1/8 tsp pepper
 2 organic eggs, beaten slightly
 2 C shredded zucchini, unpeeled
 2T organic butter

In a mixing bowl, stir together baking mix, cheese and pepper. Stir in beaten eggs until mixture is moistened. Fold in zucchini. Melt butter in skillet over medium heat. Using a heaping tablespoon for each round, drop by spoonfuls into skillet and cook 4 at a time. Cook 2 to 3 minutes on each side or until browned. These are delicious!!!

Chilled Zucchini Soup

1 head roasted garlic
 4 medium zucchini, sliced ¼" thick
 1 lg onion, coarsely chopped
 3 C water
 Salt and pepper
 4-5T fresh lemon juice
 ½ T Worcestershire sauce
 ¼ of a ripe avocado, diced
 1-2T chopped parsley or cilantro

To roast the garlic: peel off outer layers of bulb, leaving the head intact. Slice off a bit of the tip, so the cloves are exposed a bit. Drizzle with a ½ tsp olive oil, wrap in foil and bake in a 375 degree oven for 1 hour.

Meanwhile, put zucchini, onion, a tsp salt and water in a pot and cover. Bring to a boil then reduce heat and simmer until tender, 7-8 minutes. Cool slightly, then blend in a Vitamix or other high-speed blender until smooth. Add a grating of pepper, lemon juice and Worcestershire sauce to blender. Squeeze cooled roasted garlic from the skins into the blender, toss out skins. Blend until smooth. Before serving, garnish with diced avocado and a pinch of the herbs.

You don't have to wait until you are sick to get well."

Dr. Mark Hyman, MD

"The doctor of the future will give no medicine but will interest his patients in the care of the human frame, in diet, and in the cause and prevention of disease."

Thomas Edison

And some more...

Cucumber Salad

Other than right off the vine, this is the main way I eat cucumbers. Only fresh, organic, thinned-skinned varieties will do!

Using a Mandolin, thinly slice unpeeled cucumbers into a bowl. In a small bowl, combine a favorite vinegar—I like white wine vinegar—for this—with a sprinkling of organic sugar. The amount depends on the size of the bowl of cucumbers—but never more than a pinch.

Mix till the sugar dissolves and then pour over the slices. This is superb with a grilled dish!

Juice Cleansing

Some of you know that this week I am doing the Master Cleanse with my coworkers—at least I hope they are still doing it!! This cleanse consists of drinking only “lemonade” for several days to allow the body to cleanse itself from all the not-so-nice things we have eaten in the past. Not only does it give digestion a break, it allows the body to focus on healing other areas of the body that need attention and energy. It should leave us feeling lighter, more focused, more energetic and healthier all around!

Juice fasting has been

used to promote health for literally centuries. It is completely safe when done properly, preferably under the guidance of someone experienced- like me!

Many juices like beet, cabbage, parsley and lemon have cleansing and purifying effects on the body. As juice, these vegetables are quickly utilized by the body—almost immediately! Participating in a juice fast is a wonderful way to jump start your healthy eating program because it helps to eliminate all food additions both physical and emotional. It also

clears the mind and takes the emphasis off of eating. By making fresh juices throughout the day, it says to your body that you are worth the attention and effort to promote wellness.

Consider doing a juice fast with me. I will be glad to coach you through it! Have a group of people who might be interested in doing it together? Let me know! I am there to support and guide you!

herbalgem@gmail.com



“By making fresh juices throughout the day, it says to your body that you are worth the attention and effort. . .”

Women's Nutrition Matters, LLC

Diane L Lassen, RN, HHC

908-377-0773

E-MAIL:

herbalgem@gmail.com

As always, it is a pleasure to bring you this newsletter each month. I hope to positively impact as many people as I can with encouragement and enlightenment regarding the foods we eat and the impact we have on the world in which we live.

I hope you enjoy my writings, and if you have't done so already, check out my blog and articles at www.womensnutritionmatters.com.

I look forward to inspiring you!

Diane

I'm on the Web!

Read my blog at:

www.womensnutritionmatters.com

About what I do...

As a registered nurse and a health counselor, I can work with you individually or in a group setting. We can meet one time, once a month, or in a structured 3 or 6 month program. I can help you have more energy, a better quality of life, a more positive outlook. I can work with you as you learn better eating and cooking habits. I can support you while you lose weight and deconstruct your food cravings. I can help you detoxify your body and your home. Allow me to be your motivation! Contact me at herbalgem@gmail.com or 908-377-0773. Call me today!

