



### Savoring the Bounty—Eating Locally

If you've ever aspired to improve your diet and your health, this is the time to step up to the plate!!! All around the country, farmer's markets and roadside stands are overflowing with fruits and vegetables. Now is the time to add them *en mass* to your diet!

Without going into details about why you should eat more fruits and vegetables (we've been there before, and I shant go there today) let me just point out the obvious reasons that you all should know:

- You can't get *phytonutrients* from anything but plants! Everywhere you turn, we read about the benefits of phytonutrients.
- Plants provide fiber, something we are sorely missing in our diets. Animal products and processed foods have *none*.

- Fruits and vegetables are low in calories and high in nutrients—Dr. Joel Fuhrman uses the term “nutrient-density”.

Okay, so let's cut to the chase: where do we find good quality fruits and veggies and how do we increase these plants in our diet without lots of preparation and cooking? The first part of the question is a no-brainer: everywhere you look, there is a market or stand selling tomatoes, cucumbers, squash, melons and more. Stop at a different one each time you go out, and talk with the grower and sample their goods. Ask if they spray them. Chances are, the smaller backyard gardeners and small farms do not spray much (if at all). You get the freshest produce, with out pesticides and chemicals. Win-win! Not sure where there are markets and farms near you? Here are two wonderful websites that will find you local produce wherever you live! You can gather up the kids and head out to pick your own produce at many of the farms listed here. Check out the [Jersey Fresh](#) site, and the [Local Harvest](#) site. And don't pass by the small roadside stands with the little girls selling tomatoes!

### What to do with All those Cucumbers...

One of the things I love about local fresh summer veggies is their simplicity. In the winter, I cook lots of soups and casseroles that have the house smelling wonderfully. But in summer, I don't want to heat up the kitchen much, and cool foods just taste better on hot days. I rely

on a few simple recipes that get me by during the hot days of summer—and this one is a HOT one! Taking advantage of these simple recipes and coupling them with something from the grill will satisfy you with a minimum of effort. So here goes:

One staple I rely on in summer is my abundance of basil. It is so easy to grow in pots, everyone should try it. Basil pesto is so easy to make, it keeps well, and is delicious on a variety of foods.

### Easy-peasy Pesto

2 c fresh basil leaves

½ c grated parmesan or romano cheese

½ c good olive oil

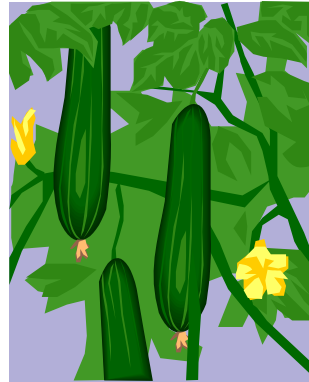
3 or more cloves fresh garlic

(all amounts can be varied according to taste: I always add more garlic, and vary the amount of oil depending on if I want it thinner or thicker.)

Add ingredients, in order, to your food processor, and pulse/run until you get a fairly smooth paste. Adjust oil to your desired consistency. Voila!

Pesto is wonderful spread on grilled bread by itself or with a slice of tomato. You can thin it a bit and toss it with tomato chunks or halved cherry tomatoes for a lovely side dish or lunch. Spread it on grilled squash or eggplant. Mix a big spoonful in mayonnaise for a tasty spread for your tomato and cheese sandwiches. Toss pesto with hot pasta and lightly steamed veggies or chunks

of fresh tomato and you have a quick, light dinner. Pesto is great with everything!



### Cucumber Dressing

Cucumbers are everywhere in the summer, and it is easy to get overrun with them if you grow them yourself. Apart from eating them fresh in hand straight off the vine, this recipe is so tasty, my husband and I eat them almost every night.

1 c white, white wine, or Bragg's Apple cider vinegar

¼ c sugar

Pepper to taste

Whisk sugar into your choice of vinegar until it dissolves completely. Pour over thinly-sliced cucumbers. Dust with pepper. I use a Mandolin to get nice uniformly thin slices. As you eat the cucumbers (which get better after a day of marinating) you can just add more slices to the bowl, tucking them under the ones that have already soaked up the dressing. As always, adjust the amount of sugar to your tastes, but do

add it because it tempers the vinegar very nicely!

### **Zucchini Cakes**

I make this every weekend in summer because they are so good. Even kids who hate veggies will eat these, and if you are a vegetarian, they are actually a complete meal.

2/3 cup whole grain baking mix such as Hodgson's Mill

1/3 cup grated Parmesan cheese

1 beaten egg

2 cups shredded zucchini (use your shredding blade on the food processor)

Pepper and sea salt to taste

Mix the baking mix and cheese together, then stir in the beaten egg just to moisten. Fold in zucchini and a sprinkling of salt and pepper.

Drop mix by heaping tablespoon onto a hot, oiled sauté pan (use organic butter or coconut oil ). When you see the edges drying and bubbles coming to the top, flip them once and lightly brown the other side. These are SO good you must try them!

### **Summertime Fruit Lunch**

On the weekends when I am trying to get yard work accomplished and sweating with each step, my appetite is usually pretty lean. Sandy usually works all day without lunch in this weather. I know it's important to replenish the fluids and electrolytes especially when

we sweat, so a cool fruit salad is just the ticket, and you prepare it in advance so it is ready when you are!

1 canteloupe

1 honeydew or other ripe melon

½ seedless watermelon

Cut up all melons into bite-size pieces and refrigerate. That's it. Dish it out and dive right in! No need for a dressing, although for added protein, you can add some yogurt or cottage cheese.

Traditionally, melons are eaten by themselves, as they are so full of water, they digest very quickly. Hence, they make a great light pick-me-up meal for summer. If you add other foods to the melon meal and experience bloating or other discomfort, next time eat the melons by themselves. This should do the trick!



### **Less Prep, More Enjoyment**

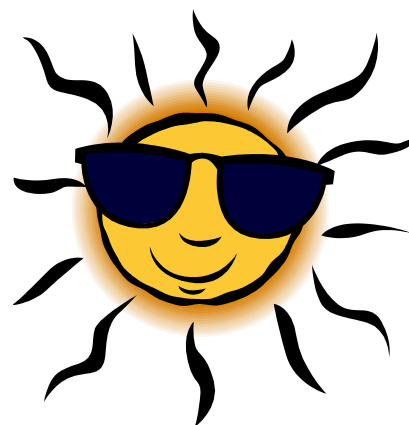
Summer time is all about being outside and enjoying the outdoors whether it be the beach, the woods, the mountains or your backyard. Cooking should be simple, nourishing and fresh. Rely on your grill for quick fish, chicken or free-

range beef, and whip up some cool and fresh sides from the abundance of the farmer's markets.

For more great ideas with what to do with your bounty, see [Eating Well](#). There you will find ideas for all your summer cooking from the utterly simple to the more complex. I use this site often, and find the recipes to be good and straight forward. Enjoy!

Have a great summer, and I'll see you in the fall!!!

Diane



As always, it is a pleasure to provide this newsletter to you. I hope it inspires you to take the next step toward better health. Nutrition is a big part of maintaining our health, along with good relationships, healthy work environments and a healing spiritual practice. I wish you the best in all these areas, and if I can be of any help to you, just let me know!

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