

tasty times

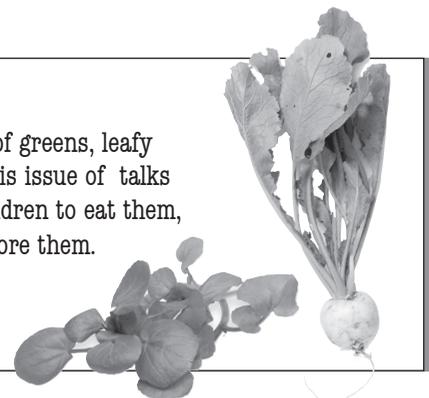
important updates for success and more resources from the child care healthy food program



Dear Child Care Provider,

From green smoothies to pasta with a side dish of greens, leafy green vegetables are increasing in popularity. This issue of talks about the benefits of leafy greens, tips to get children to eat them, recipes with leafy greens, and the best way to store them.

—Jasmine Johnson, Dietetic Intern
(for John R. Gadiant, RD/LDN, Supervisor)



What are leafy greens?

Spinach, arugula, bok choy, collard greens, mustard greens, turnip greens, kale, romaine, watercress, Swiss chard, endive, and escarole are all examples of leafy greens. Leafy greens can be eaten raw, in a salad, slaw, or dip; or cooked, roasted and stir-fried.

Benefits of leafy greens

Leafy green vegetables have many nutrients such as Vitamin A, Vitamin B6, Vitamin C, Vitamin E, Vitamin K, fiber, folate, iron, magnesium, and potassium. These nutrients help our bodies in the following ways:

- Vitamin A helps with eye health and fighting off infections.
- Vitamin B6 helps with making red blood cells and produces the fat needed for the immune and nervous systems.
- Vitamin C keeps blood vessels and cartilage strong (cartilage is found in your ears and bones), wound healing, and fighting off infections.
- Vitamin E helps prevent damage to cells, tissues, and red blood cells.
- Vitamin K helps blood clot.
- Fiber reduces constipation, aids in maintaining or losing weight, and helps you feel full with fewer calories.
- Folate helps with making red blood cells.

- Iron carries oxygen in red blood cells so that it can be delivered throughout the body.
- Magnesium aids with building bones and releases energy from muscles.
- Potassium activates muscles and nerves so they can work properly and keeps water and fluids in the body balanced.

Tips to help children eat leafy greens

- Have the children help shop for, clean, peel or cut vegetables.



- If you have a garden:
 - Teach the children how to plant leafy greens.
 - Take them to buy the seeds.
 - Have them compare the differences in the leafy green seeds.
- Use leafy greens to make creative food shapes and artwork. Have the children compare their food art with each other.
- Add fresh herbs or give the children leafy greens to eat with dip.

- Add leafy greens to pizza and pasta dishes.
- Try putting leafy greens in soups and smoothies
- Make a fun activity, show the children different types of leafy greens and have them match the green with its name.
- Have the children taste different types of leafy greens.
- Read a short story about Popeye The Sailor Man, and have children eat spinach afterwards to imitate Popeye: "I'm strong to the finish, 'cause I eats me spinach. I'm Popeye the Sailor Man!"

Storing leafy greens

Have you ever noticed leafy greens seem to spoil quickly after purchasing them? This is because fruits and vegetables release an odorless, colorless gas called ethylene. When fruits and vegetables detect ethylene, they start to ripen and then produce more ethylene. This can cause them to spoil over time.

Follow these directions for cleaning and storing leafy greens to prevent them from spoiling too quickly:

1. Get rid of any bad leaves to prevent them from causing the other greens to spoil quickly.

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Storing leafy greens

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2. Wash leaves in a salad spinner or a strainer with a large bowl underneath.
3. Fill salad spinner or strainer with water above the level of greens.
4. Move the greens around in the water.
5. Lift strainer out of bowl and dump the dirty water.
6. Repeat process until the water in the bowl is no longer dirty.
7. Completely dry greens with salad spinner or paper towels.
8. Line a large storage container or bag with a paper towel.
9. Put dried greens into storage container or bag.
10. Place another paper towel on top of greens.
11. Cover container or close bag and refrigerate. You can also store greens in glass (mason) jars in the refrigerator!

Use the greens within 4-7 days: use them in raw dishes earlier in the week and then in cooked dishes later in the week to maximize their freshness in meals.

Hopefully now, like Popeye, you and the children are convinced to get into the routine of eating leafy greens!

Important Healthy Food Program Numbers

Out-of-home voice mail phone number: **(773) 564-8862**

If you are closed, going to be out of your home during a scheduled meal service or the children are not present—state regulations require you to inform us.



Payment release dates call: **(773) 564-8860**

To speak to a customer service representative call: **(773) 564-8861**

Here is a recipe using kale that children will love—kale chips!

Kale Chips

(6 servings)

INGREDIENTS

- 1 bunch kale
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 teaspoon salt



DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F
2. Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper
3. With a knife carefully remove the leaves from the thick stems and tear into bite size pieces
4. Wash and dry kale thoroughly
5. Drizzle kale pieces with olive oil and sprinkle with salt
6. Bake until the edges brown but are not burnt—10 to 15 minutes

Watch these carefully in the oven because they can burn easily.

October claims are due in our office by **November 5th!**
Warning! Late claims WILL result in late payment!

Welcome New Providers

Meghan Agredano
Telka Castellares
Caroline T. Fernandez
Rosa Patino
Antonio Rodriguez
Guadalupe Suarez

This is a delicious and colorful salad that is appealing to children's eyes and stomachs!



Spinach salad

(4 servings)

INGREDIENTS

- 6 cups fresh spinach
- ½ cup mandarin oranges
- ½ cup blueberries
- 1 cup strawberries
- 4 oz. blue cheese crumbles (optional)
- ¼ cup cashews
- Favorite low-fat salad dressing

DIRECTIONS

1. Wash and dry spinach and fruit
2. Tear spinach into bite size pieces
3. Slice strawberries
4. Mix fruit and spinach together
5. Sprinkle cashews, blue cheese, and dressing over salad
6. Divide into 4 portions and serve



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