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## NUTRITION

KEEP YOUR BODY FUELED

### NUTRITION TIPS TO KEEP YOU HEALTHY

#### FACT NUMBER 1

For dessert, have baked apples, pears, or a fruit salad.

#### CRUNCHY PEANUT BUTTER AND JELLY

Enjoy this crunchy peanut butter and jelly snack mix recipe, made with Chex® and Cheerios® cereal - ready in just 30 minutes!

<b>Prep Time:</b>	10 min	<b>3</b>	cups Corn Chex® cereal
<b>Start to Finish:</b>	30 min	<b>3</b>	cups Rice Chex® cereal
<b>Makes:</b>	10 cups	<b>3</b>	cups Cheerios® cereal
		<b>1</b>	cup pretzel sticks or twists
		<b>1/2</b>	cup peanut butter
		<b>1</b>	tablespoon butter or margarine (do not use spread or tub products)
		<b>1/3</b>	cup grape jelly
		<b>1</b>	cup raisins

1. Heat oven to 350° F. In large bowl, mix cereals and pretzels. Set aside.
2. In 1-quart saucepan, heat peanut butter and butter to boiling, stirring constantly until melted and smooth. Pour over cereal mixture, stirring until evenly coated. Spread in ungreased 13" x 9" pan. Bake 5 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, in small microwavable bowl, microwave jelly uncovered on

#### CRUNCHY CANDY AND CRACKER SNACK

Enjoy this crunchy candy and cracker snack mix recipe, made with Chex® cereal - in just 40 minutes!

<b>Prep Time:</b>	15 min	<b>4</b>	cups Rice Chex® cereal
<b>Start to Finish:</b>	40 min	<b>4</b>	cups Corn Chex® cereal
<b>Makes:</b>	10 cups	<b>3</b>	cups pretzel twists
		<b>1</b>	jar (7 oz) marshmallow crème
		<b>1</b>	cup original flavored tiny fish-shaped crackers
		<b>1</b>	cup teddy bear-shaped chocolate graham snacks

1. Heat oven to 350°F. Spray cookie sheet with cooking spray, or lightly grease. In large bowl, mix cereal, pretzels, crackers, and snacks. Set aside.
2. In medium microwavable bowl, microwave marshmallow cr  me uncovered on High about 2 minutes, stirring after 1 minute, until melted. Pour over cereal mixture, stirring until evenly coated. Spread on cookie

High about 30 seconds or until melted. Drizzle jelly over cereal mixture.  
Bake 5 minutes longer. Stir in raisins. Spread on waxed paper until cooled. Store in airtight container.

sheet; sprinkle with candies.

3. Bake about 10 minutes, stirring after 5 minutes, until coating just begins to turn very light golden brown. Spread on waxed paper until cooled. Store loosely covered.

High Altitude (3500-6500 ft) Increase both bake times to 6 minutes.

From [eatbetteramerica.com](http://eatbetteramerica.com).

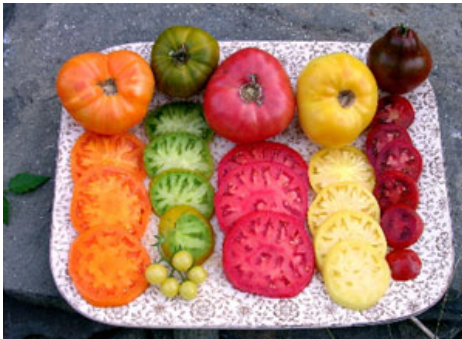
From [eatbetteramerica.com](http://eatbetteramerica.com).

## LYNX LINKS TO THE FARM - TOMATO TIME

By Haruko Ruggiero, Midwest Food Connection

Banana Legs. Cherokee Purple. Camp Joy. Gold Currant. Aunt Ruby's Yellow Cherry. Pink Ping Pong. Snow White.

What are these wacky names? Are they nicknames for a pet? Are they what you might call your little brother or sister? Actually, these are names people have come up with for different types of tomatoes! For hundreds and hundreds of years, since before the tomato began traveling around the world with explorers - going from South America to Europe, to Asia, to the Caribbean, and around again to North America - the tomato has been a food treasured by millions of people. These nicknames are used with tomatoes the way people often use nick-names for each other: They are used because they are well-liked.



You probably know that tomatoes are in all kinds of foods, some quite healthy, some not-so-healthy. Let's see....pizza of course, in the sauce; spaghetti, in the sauce as well; catsup has tomatoes in it (but it also has lots of sugar in it, so watch out for that). Filled with lycopene (which scientists say reduces the risk for diseases like heart disease and asthma), tomatoes are in many dishes, and below you will find some recipes that really allow the flavor of tomatoes to work its magic.

Speaking of flavor, have you noticed that tomatoes can really vary in their taste? In the winter, when you buy a tomato from the grocery store, you take it home and you might use it in a salad or put it in a sauce. But if you eat it just plain you are probably going to find that the flavor and texture is really not so good. This is because when you buy tomatoes in the middle of winter, they are shipped from a faraway warm place to cold Minnesota and they typically don't have much going for them in the flavor department. They are picked while they are still green and are not able to develop a good flavor by ripening naturally. A certain gas called ethylene is sometimes used to make them ripe. If they are shipped to us in Minnesota while they are ripe, they would probably get damaged because when they are ripe, they are soft and easily bruised.

Most of the tomatoes grown for shipping around the world are called hybrids. Hybrids are plants grown from seeds that have been changed by scientists who know techniques that can control how a plant grows and what it produces. There are many advantages to growing hybrid tomato plants such as being sure that the tomato will last long and will have a certain shape that people like to see and have come to expect. But sometimes the hybrid seeds can grow into plants that do a great job of making nice round tomatoes that can last a long time, but they miss out on the delicious flavor of other types of tomatoes.

Like night and day, summer tomatoes are very different from winter tomatoes. Summer tomatoes can be local in Minnesota! And there is absolutely nothing like the flavor of a ripe, local tomato from farms and gardens in our own state. They are often so juicy, delicious and the flavor is incomparable. All you have to do is cut them up into slices or chunks and add maybe a teeny bit of fresh herbs and salt and you are set! The flavor of the local tomatoes is what inspires people to come up with cute nick-names for them. The names usually come from the amazing variety of colors and shapes that the tomatoes can be (there are even yellow, pink, brown, purple and striped tomatoes). What would you name a tomato?



The tomatoes people in Minnesota grow can be tasty hybrids, but they can also be heirlooms. Heirlooms are the tomatoes that are grown from seeds that have not been changed by scientists.

Seeds from heirloom tomatoes are seeds that you can save from summer to summer and you can expect the same flavor to return in the tomato from the new plant (if you save the seeds from hybrid tomato plants, the new plant that you grow will not produce the same type of tomato as the plant you saved the seeds from ....this is a complicated subject, and hopefully you will learn about it as you move ahead in school when you study botany and a type of science called genetics).

Saving seeds is a wonderful hobby to start. One tomato can have many, many seeds. Not every seed will start a new plant (some are "duds") but if you save the seeds correctly, and it isn't hard to do, most of the seeds will make a brand new plant! And remember, each plant can grow many new tomatoes for you to pick in the summer.

If you save seeds from an heirloom tomato plant that gave you tomatoes you absolutely loved, you will be able to keep those tomato seeds for years to come and you won't have to buy seeds for that type of tomato again (the same is true for other heirloom seeds like cucumbers, green beans and melons). The labels on the first plant or seed packet that you buy should clearly say "heirloom" on the front.

With a handful of saved seeds, you can start several of your own tomato plants inside in the early spring. Once it gets warm out, you can plant them outside and give any left-over plants to family and friends. They will surely appreciate the plant because once they have it, all they will need to do is gather the dirt, water and a sunny place. You don't even need a garden to grow a tomato plant- you just need a big enough pot! There really are few things as enjoyable around meal time as going to your own plant, picking your own food and putting it on a plate for yourself, your friends and your family. If you haven't done this already, you'll see.

How to save tomato seeds:

1. Scoop the seeds out of a ripe, heirloom tomato that you really enjoyed.
2. Place the seeds in a jar of water with a lid on top. Don't worry about getting rid of the gel-like material around the seeds.
3. Gently shake the seeds in the jar of water once or twice a day for just a second or two.





4. Do this for about a week. The seeds are ready to be removed when they have all sunk to the bottom. You can discard any seeds that float to the top.
5. Remove the seeds from the liquid, gently rinse in fresh water
6. Place the seeds on a plate with paper towel or a cloth on it. Space the seeds apart so they aren't all in one clump.
7. Let the seeds dry completely.
8. Once they are dry, store them in a cool place like a dry cupboard or a refrigerator. Storing them in a jar is a good idea. Write the name of the type of tomato on a piece of tape and put that on the jar so you don't forget the type that you have saved. Also write the date. Usually, seeds only last for a few years.



### FRESH TOMATO PASTA SAUCE WITH BASIL

Choose ripe, fresh tomatoes of any kind.

2-3 tablespoons of olive oil

2 garlic cloves, minced

2 pounds ripe tomatoes, cored, peeled, seeded, and cut into 1/2-inch pieces

2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil leaves

1 tablespoon salt

1 pound pasta

Heat the oil and garlic in a hot skillet until the garlic is fragrant but not

### DEEEELICIOUS SUMMER SALSA

(\*This is not spicy, but refreshing and tangy. If you like it spicy you can add minced hot pepper (minced means "chopped up very finely.")

Chopped Tomatoes – use any kind of tomato you like, including cherry tomato and Roma tomato. Chop maybe two tomatoes up to start. If you want to make more salsa, add a little bit more of everything.

Chopped Onions – You do not need to use the whole onion. Maybe ½ or a 1/4th of the onion. A little goes a long way. You can use red onion, white onion, yellow onion or even green onions (scallions). Chop the onions into small pieces.

Chopped Cilantro –This leafy herb adds a great flavor. When you buy a bunch of it, maybe take 1/3rd or 1/4th of the bunch and chop it up into small pieces. You can even use some of the stems because they have great flavor, too. If you buy a bunch of cilantro at the grocery store (it is usually quite affordable) you will have some cilantro left for another batch of salsa the next day.

Juice of a Lime – Squeeze a whole lime into the mixture. If you don't have a lime, a lemon will be nice as well. Just make sure you remove all of the lemon seeds first.

Salt – start with a 1/3rd of a teaspoon. If it needs more salt, add it. OR you could just sprinkle a little bit on your salsa, taste it, and sprinkle little amounts at a time until it seems right.

This salsa is absolutely perfect with corn chips. It also goes great on top of tacos, burritos, tostadas and enchiladas. If you grill any fish or chicken, this is a perfect side dish.

browned. This may take 1-3 minutes. Stir in tomatoes; increase heat to medium-high and cook until the juices released by the tomatoes evaporate and the tomato pieces become mushy and form a lumpy sauce. This takes about 10 minutes. Stir in the basil and salt to taste; cover to keep warm. Serve over cooked pasta.

Optional: Add one onion and/or a red bell pepper, minced



## LYNX LINKS TO THE FARM – THE CUCURBIT FAMILY

By Haruko Ruggiero, Midwest Food Connection

Do you like summertime barbeques? If you were having one next weekend, who would you invite over? You probably would invite friends, family or both, right? Well why don't you get a guest list started, and in the next few paragraphs, you will find some tips about tasty and healthy foods you can offer your guests at your special event. For an added twist, you can joke with your guests, when they ask who else you've invited, that you'll also be having over an exceptional family called, the Cucurbits. People may ask, "Where are they from?" "How many members are in this family?" You can reply that this is an international family you are having over and it has many members. It is a family that only likes to be out in the summertime. In fact, its members basically disappear when the cold weather arrives. You can add that, interestingly, some of the family members hardly look related at all. Your barbeque guests are going to become intrigued. Are you?



So..... Who are the cucurbits? Alas, here is an introduction: The cucurbits are welcomed "guests" at many barbeques around the world not because they are known for being easy-to-please guests that love anything you put on the menu, but because they are on the menu. The cucurbits (or cucurbitaceae for long) is the family of fruits (some of which we call vegetables) that includes melons, squashes, cucumbers and many more.

The cucurbits are vining plants that produce flowers – usually yellow or white, and they need their dust-like pollen to be moved around the flowers in order for a fruit to form. The pollination is usually done by bugs – thanks guys! Because they hold the seeds, the parts of these types of plants that we eat are indeed technically fruits. However, even though most of us wouldn't call a squash or a pumpkin a fruit, it really doesn't matter to us in the end- as the eaters - because the cucurbits taste good whether or not we call them fruits or vegetables! But it is fun to get "technical" once in a while, like a botanist (hmmm...what do botanists study?).

The cucurbits are annual plants that grow and die in one growing season. They don't come back every spring like perennials (a strawberry is an example of a perennial). Cucurbits use their amazing tendrils to climb, curl and wrap themselves around things. As you identify and look closely at plants from this family in the gardens around your community, or perhaps in your own garden, you will notice that they grow impressive amounts literally over night. One day you will see a leaf or two just above the ground, and within the next few days, you will see that there are four, five, perhaps six or more leaves that have appeared and attached themselves to a fence, pole or even other (unlucky) plants!

The cucurbits grow well in Minnesota, but they aren't all ripe and ready to pick at the same time. Right about now, the zucchini and the cucumbers are starting to be picked on farms and gardens across the state. But the hard-skinned melons and winter squashes won't be ready until the end of the summer because they take at least three months of warm weather to mature. So as you look around in the grocery stores for the ingredients to the following cucurbit-family recipes, you will find that some of the cucurbits will be local (the zucchini and cucumbers) and some will come from farms further away (you can read the stickers on the squashes and melons to see which warm places they came from).

With the following recipes at hand, and maybe some meat, seafood or tofu to grill, you will be well on your way to a wonderful and easy summertime barbeque, complete with several quick, delicious and nutritious dishes. Have fun with the Cucurbit Family!\*



### GRILLED ZUCCHINI

1. Slice **zucchini** (green or yellow) into 1/4 inch slices. Place in a large bowl
2. Drizzle on some **olive oil** (not too much)
3. Sprinkle on some **salt and pepper**
4. If you like, mince some **garlic** and put that on the zucchini as well. Mix it around
5. Let the zucchini sit for an hour or more to absorb the flavors
6. Place on a hot grill and grill about 4 to 5 minutes or until nice grill marks appear and the zucchini is slightly limp. Serve and enjoy.



### CHILLED SQUASH SOUP





1. 1 tablespoon **butter**  
1 1/2 cup chopped **onion**  
1 3/4 pound **butternut or acorn squash**, peeled, seeded, and cut into 1-inch pieces  
2 cups chicken or vegetable **broth** 1/4 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg  
1 3/4 cup **buttermilk, half and half, milk or soymilk**  
1 pinch freshly grated **nutmeg**
2. Make this ahead of time so it has time to cool before blending and time to chill before serving.
3. Melt the butter in a large saucepan over medium heat. Sauté the onion until soft, about 5 minutes. Add the squash, broth, and 1 cup water. Cover and simmer until the squash is very tender, about 25 minutes. Turn the soup off, let it cool quite a bit, transfer in batches to a food processor or blender and puree until smooth. Stir in the nutmeg. Chill until cold.

Just before serving, stir in the milk; garnish with freshly grated nutmeg. Add salt and pepper to taste.

### CANTALOUPE AND WATERMELON MEDLEY

1. Find a nice ripe **cantaloupe and watermelon**.
2. Cut them into bite-sized chunks.
3. Mix the fruit chunks together.  
Serve! Fresh, simple, sweet, delicious!
4. You can even cut the watermelon out of the rind and use the half the rind as a kind of bowl to serve the fruit in.



### FRESH CUCUMBER SALAD

1. Cut the **cucumber** into bite-sized pieces.
2. Sprinkle some **salt** on the pieces (not too much, not too little. Taste to be sure)
3. Drizzle some **vinegar** on the pickles (apple cider vinegar, red wine vinegar or white wine vinegar work well)
4. Chill this mixture in a bowl until cold.
5. **Variations:** add some pepper, some thin slices of sweet onion, some thin slices of tomato, some olive oil

\*Be sure to have adult supervision before preparing these recipes



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Through hands-on, interactive lessons that harness the power of storytelling, song, art, games and in-classroom cooking, the Midwest Food Connection empowers and inspires elementary school children to want to make healthy and responsible food choices. Sponsored by several co-ops in the Twin Cities, the program sends educators into K-5 classrooms to teach about nutritious, and often local, foods while highlighting the foods'™ cultural origins. Lessons are also designed to teach about the benefits of sustainable and organic agriculture. Visit <http://www.midwestfoodconnection.org> to learn more about healthy eating for children, and how you could get involved!



Good luck competing in each challenge and collecting all the badges for cool prizes!

## TOP TEN STARS

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## GREAT NUTRITION FACTS

The key to a successful active lifestyle is a healthy intake of good foods as well as balanced sleep. To learn more, check out the nutrition page to get an edge on the competition.

Nutrition

## TIPS ON STAYING HEALTHY

Stay active! Play with your friends, compete in sports and challenge yourself athletically. To see some cool tips on how to be more active check out the staying active page.

Staying Active



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