

Blue and Purple Fruits and Vegetables

March is National Nutrition Month and here at the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts we are focusing on the importance of having a variety of fruits and vegetables in our diets. Based on the results from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Surveys in 2010, 8 out of 10 people in the US are not getting enough servings of every color category of fruits and vegetables. By making sure we have a colorful variety of fruits and vegetables on our plate we can assure that we are getting all the nutrients our bodies need.

It is recommended that adults get 4 cups of blue and purple fruits and vegetables per week.

Source: gardeningdirect.co

YOUR BLUES AND PURPLES

You would certainly want to have these pretty blues and purples right on your plate. But make no mistake, these eye-catching treats also provide us with a great deal of nourishments.

WHAT DO BLUES & PURPLES DO TO THE BODY?



Help keep the body protected from inflammations



Help reduce body inflammation



Good for the immune system



Keep the eyes healthy, particularly the retina.



Help keep the gastrointestinal tract healthy

Blueberry Zucchini Muffins

Serves 12

Source: allrecipes.com

Ingredients:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -1 1/2 cups whole wheat pastry flour -1 teaspoon cinnamon -1 cup shredded zucchini (about 1 medium zucchini) -1 teaspoon vanilla extract -1/3 cup unsweetened applesauce -1/4 cup milk | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -1 teaspoon baking soda -1/4 teaspoon salt -1/2 cup pure maple syrup -2 tablespoons olive oil -1 egg -3/4 cup fresh or frozen blueberries |
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Directions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Line a 12 cup muffin pan with nonstick cooking spray or line with muffin liners. In a large bowl combine the dry ingredients: flour, baking soda, cinnamon and salt; set aside. In a separate medium bowl, combine the following wet ingredients: zucchini, maple syrup, vanilla and almond extract, olive oil, applesauce, egg and milk until well combined. Add to dry ingredients and stir until just combined. Gently fold in blueberries. Evenly distribute batter among muffin tins, filling about 3/4 of the way full. Bake for 19-22 minutes or until toothpick inserted into the middle of the muffin comes out clean. Cool on wire rack for 10 minutes then remove muffins and transfer to wire rack to finish cooling.

Nutrition: 1 Muffin: Calories 113, Fat 3g, Saturated Fat 0.5g, Sodium 165mg, Carbs 20g, Fiber 1.5g, Sugar 10g, Protein 2g.

Fig Smoothie

Serves 3

Source: myrecipes.com

Ingredients

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -1 cup ice cubes -1/2 cup almond milk -1 tablespoon fresh orange juice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -3/4 cup plain fat-free Greek yogurt -1 1/2 tablespoons honey -6 large ripe fresh figs (any variety), stemmed and halved |
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Directions:

Place all ingredients in a blender; process 1 minute or until completely smooth. Divide mixture evenly among 3 glasses.

Nutrition: 1 cup: Calories 249, Total Fat 2g, Saturated Fat 0.2g, Sodium 79mg, Carbs 55g, Fiber 6g, Protein 9g.

Recipes

Purple Cauliflower Rice

Serves 4

Source: [allrecipes.com](https://www.allrecipes.com)

Ingredients:

- 1 large head of purple cauliflower, separated into 1-inch florets
- 3 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 medium onion, diced
- Salt to taste
- 2 Tbsp fresh parsley leaves, finely chopped
- 1 tsp lemon juice

Directions:

Trim the cauliflower florets, cutting away as much stem as possible. In 3 batches, break up the florets into a food processor or blender and pulse until the mixture resembles rice. Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. At the first wisp of smoke from the oil, add the onions, and stir to coat. Continue cooking, stirring frequently, until the onions are golden brown at the edges and have softened, about 8 minutes. Add the cauliflower, and stir to combine. Add 1 teaspoon salt, and continue to cook, stirring frequently, until the cauliflower has softened, 3 to 5 minutes. Remove from the heat. Spoon the cauliflower into a large serving bowl, garnish with the parsley, sprinkle with the lemon juice and season to taste with salt. Serve warm.

Nutrition: 1 Cup: Calories 108, Fat 11g, Saturated Fat 1.5g, Sodium 49mg, Carbohydrate 4g, Fiber 1.2g, Sugars 2g, Protein 1g

Baked Eggplant

Serves 6

Source: [allrecipes.com](https://www.allrecipes.com)

Ingredients

- cooking spray
- 1 eggplant, sliced into 1/2-inch-thick rounds
- 3 tomatoes, sliced
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 1 teaspoon oregano
- 1/3 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- salt and ground black pepper to taste

Directions:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Prepare a baking dish with non-stick play. Arrange eggplant and tomato slices into the bottom of the prepared baking dish. Drizzle olive oil over the vegetables; season with oregano, salt, and pepper. Sprinkle Parmesan cheese over the entire mixture. Bake in preheated oven until the cheese is beginning to brown, about 30 minutes. Switch oven broiler to high; continue baking until completely browned, about 5 minutes.

Nutrition: 1 Serving: 1/2C: Calories 54, Fat 4g, Saturated Fat 1g, Sodium 72mg, Carbohydrates 4, Fiber 1g, Sugar 2g, Protein 3g.

Roasted Purple Asparagus

Serves 4

Source: [allrecipes.com](https://www.allrecipes.com)

Ingredients

- 1 bunch thin purple asparagus spears, trimmed
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 1/2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese (optional)
- 1 clove garlic, minced (optional)
- 1 teaspoon sea salt
- 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice (optional)

Directions:

Preheat an oven to 425 degrees F. Place the asparagus into a mixing bowl, and drizzle with the olive oil. Toss to coat the spears, then sprinkle with Parmesan cheese, garlic, salt, and pepper. Arrange the asparagus onto a baking sheet in a single layer.

Bake in the preheated oven until just tender, 12 to 15 minutes depending on thickness. Sprinkle with lemon juice just before serving.

Nutrition: Calories 123, Fat 11g, Saturated Fat 2g, Sodium 471mg, Carbs 5g, Fiber 3g, Sugar 2g, Protein 3g.

Blackberry Lemon Homemade "Soda"

Serves 8

Source: [Savory by Stop and Shop](https://www.savorybystopandshop.com)

Ingredients

- 1 pint of blackberries
- 3 Tbsp lemon juice
- 1 Tbsp sugar
- 1 liter lemon-lime seltzer
- 1/2 cup pomegranate juice

Directions:

In a medium saucepan, combine the blackberries, sugar, and pomegranate juice. Heat to a simmer on high then reduce heat to medium and cook for 5 minutes until the berries are tender. Then let cool. In a blender puree the blackberry mixture until smooth. Strain into a small pitcher and stir in the lemon juice. Refrigerate. For each drink pour 2 Tbsp of blackberry syrup mixture into a tall glass with ice and stir in about 1/2 cup of seltzer.

Nutrition: 1 Serving Calories 40, Fat 0g, Saturated Fat 0g, Carbs 9g, Fiber 3g, Sodium 29mg, Sugar 6g, Protein 1g.