

FALL VEGGIES: Autumn is a delicious time of year in Sisters

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also contain an antioxidant called quercetin, which can improve oxygen flow to your lungs and boost your immune system. And finally, apples contain almost zero fat, only natural sugars, and are high in vitamin C, vitamin A, calcium, iron, sodium and potassium.

Cranberries, another autumn harvest, have vitamin C and fiber and are only 45 calories per cup. In disease-fighting antioxidants, cranberries outrank nearly every fruit and vegetable — including strawberries, spinach, broccoli, red grapes, apples, raspberries and cherries.

Late September also kicks off pumpkin season and pumpkin-flavored things are everywhere.

Pumpkins are a natural no-guilt food, and packed with nutrients — especially beta-carotene and fiber. Half a cup of pumpkin provides 200 percent of the current recommendation for vitamin A, along with lutein and zeaxanthin, which are pigments that promote eye health. Pumpkins are rich in potassium, which helps your muscles contract and nerves fire. Even pumpkin seeds are nutritious.

Preparing fresh pumpkin at home will deliver the most benefits for your health, but canned pumpkin is also a great choice.

Think roasted butternut squash or stuffed acorn squash — all fresh from the farmers market.

Although sometimes called winter squash because they keep so well when weather turns cold, butternut, spaghetti, turban squash and other varieties are actually harvested in the fall.

Squash is a traditional vegetable mainstay for many cultures worldwide. Members of the squash family are high in dietary fiber

and beta carotene, which helps your body make vitamin A and contributes to the health of your skin, eyes, and immune system.

Cut squash into halves or cubes, sprinkle with oil, season with herbs and roast for a flavorful entree, side dish, or snack.

Fall root veggies — from turnips and potatoes to sweet potatoes and carrots — are a good source of dietary fiber and minerals, including potassium and zinc.

Most people know that the carrot is a root vegetable that is usually orange in most grocery stores. But carrots can really dazzle you with many other colors as well. They can be white, yellow, red, magenta and purple.

Another interesting fact about carrots is that, although most people eat the root and throw away the stems and leaves, these discarded greens are also edible. At one time, carrots were grown for their leaves and seeds rather than for their roots. Thousands of years later people began to eat the root and discard the leaves.

Carrots also contain a large amount of vitamin K, vitamin B-6, carbohydrates, protein, fiber and fat.

Root vegetables are nutrition powerhouses full of fiber and antioxidants and jam packed with key nutrients including potassium and vitamin C. They're extremely low in calories too.

Plus, root vegetables go great with any roast, making

any main dish sweeter without adding sugar. There's no wrong way to serve them. You can roast, puree or mash root veggies and then add your favorite seasonings for a comforting and warming side dish.

Among root veggies, sweet potatoes stand out for their nutrition. They also contain beta carotene, the antioxidant that the body converts into vitamin A to support healthy eyes and skin. Sweet potatoes are good sources of vitamin C and vitamin B6, which may have brain-health benefits. Sweet potatoes are rich in potassium, a vital mineral for your nerves, muscles, and for your heart's electrical system. You can mash, roast, or char sweet potatoes and work them into dishes from soup to hummus.

Brussels sprouts are popular now, although they used to be everybody's favorite vegetable to hate. But if you try roasting them in a sheet pan with a little olive oil, garlic, salt and pepper, you will avoid that cooked-cabbage smell and flavor. When oven-roasted, the vegetable caramelizes and takes on a slightly sweet flavor.

Brussels sprouts are low in calories but high in fiber, vitamins, and minerals. Brussels sprouts are especially rich in vitamin K, which is necessary for blood clotting and bone health. They're also high in vitamin C, an antioxidant that helps promote iron absorption and

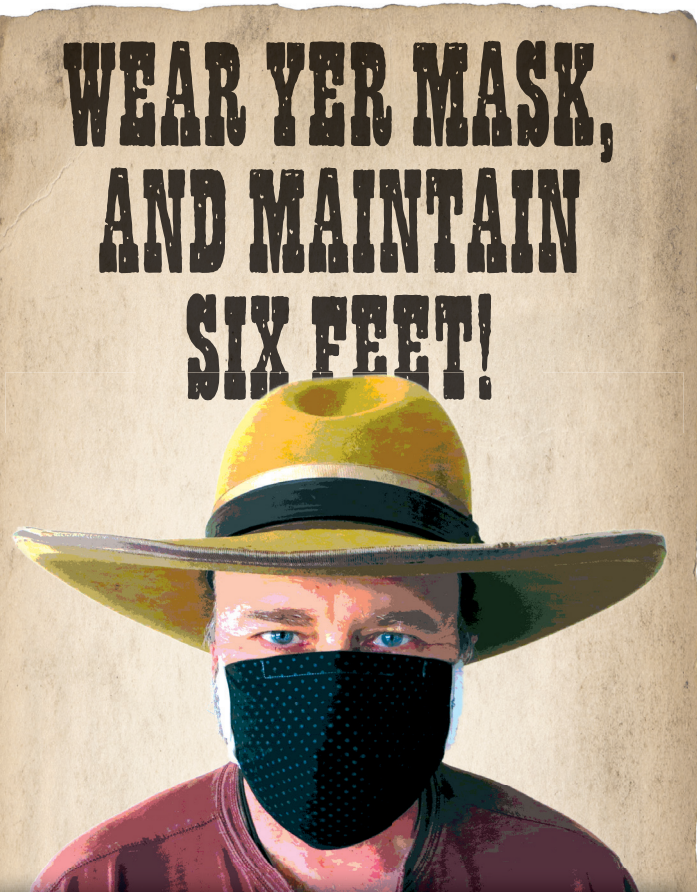


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Stuffed squash is rich in flavor and nutrients.

is involved in tissue repair and immune function.

autumnal fresh fruits and veggies in your meals while they're in season!



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