

# Stir frying for variety, economy

For economy and a change of pace in menus, consider stir frying. A stir-fried dish of vegetables with meat can be cooked in minutes. Stir fried meat or chicken is tender and the vegetables are tender-crisp.

"The closest style to stir frying in western cooking is sauteing," notes Marilyn Lunner, Clackamas County Extension agent. "Yet, it is not the same."

In stir frying, the food is kept in constant motion so that all parts of it come in contact with the hottest part of the pan and cook quickly and evenly. This is done by quickly and continually sliding a spoon, spatula or shop stic, down between the food and the pan and turning the food over on itself with a digging-tossing and scrambling motion.

A wok is an excellent vessel for stir frying because the sloping sides and rounded bottom help keep the food in motion.

"Not to worry of you don't have a wok, stir frying can be done in a skillet," says Velma Seat, Oregon State University Extension food marketing specialist. Some cooks even feel that skillets are preferable to woks when cooking over electric units because the heat is generated more evenly over the entire bottom of the skillet.

The hotter the wok or skillet, the better. It is almost impossible to burn the food if you work fast enough and stir-toss repeatedly.

In stir frying, a sauce is used consisting of oil; seasoning such as garlic and fresh ginger; liquid such as

water, broth, wine or soy sauce (or combinations); and sometimes cornstarch for thickening.

"Stir fry dishes may consist of meat, chicken or seafood cut in small pieces and vegetables cut in similar size pieces," Seat explains. "The uniformity of pieces gives a nice appearance and lets the mixture cook evenly and quickly."

A key role in preparing food for stir frying is in the cutting. For thin and even slicing, use meat that is partially frozen and cut across the grain so that it will be tender.

Cutting vegetables diagonally (oblique cutting) exposes the surface area of firm vegetables like carrots or zucchini. This means that the larger surface can be exposed to heating and flavoring.

For the energy conscious, stir frying may be just the cooking method, says Seat.

In preparing meat and vegetable dishes on top of a gas or electric range, you may end up using two or three burners for about 30 to 40 minutes. Stir frying uses high heat and initially requires more energy, but the cooking time averages about 6 minutes.

"By stir frying the same meat and vegetable dishes you can save about 50 per cent of energy when compared with conventional range top cooking," Seat notes.

Another economical aspect of stir fry cooking is that you can use relatively small amounts of meat, chicken or fish. Stir fried food is truly a meat extender—one that most people enjoy.



Stir fried vegetables add nutrition to an easy meal.

### DO-AHEAD TIPS FOR SALAD IN SECONDS.

- Break up washed and dried salad greens the day before. Store in plastic bag in refrigerator up to 24 hours. Add tomato and hard-cooked egg at last minute.
- Add 1/4 teaspoon dried oregano leaves, crushed, to bottled oil and vinegar dressing for home-made touch.

"'Tis not a lip, or eye, we beauty call, but the joint force and full result of all."  
Alexander Pope



Salting vegetables shortly after cooking them can firm their structure and help them retain color and flavor.

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### TLC for Salad Greens... TENDER LEAFY CARE!

Crisp, fresh greens are the secret to a perfect salad. But these fragile bits of leafy lushness need special handling, storage and preparation to keep them at their perky best.

- Select greens that have crisp leaves and relatively few blemishes.
- Wash greens under cool running water and drain or dry with paper towel. Remove any spots and store the clean greens in plastic bags or the refrigerator crisper drawer.
- Handle greens as little as possible. Cut edges tend to discolor more quickly, so gently tear leaves into bite-size pieces for salad.
- Always chill greens several hours before using, to insure crispness, color and garden-fresh flavor.

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Lb.

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### Sliced Beef Liver

Safeway Quality Beef Liver

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Lb.

## Learn French cooking at PCC

Grant High School will be the location of an evening class in French Cookery. Beginning Wednesday, February 3, the four-week class is sponsored by Portland Community College. Hours are from 7-9:30 p.m. weekly and cost is \$19.50. Oahn Le Pham, instructor of the

class, is a former high school administrator from Vietnam. She studied in Paris at the Cordon Bleu, and has taught several cooking classes in the past.

Further information on the class may be obtained by calling PCC's Cascade Campus.

## Fiber control easily added

More and more people are becoming concerned about the fiber content in their diets these days, according to Tod Hamilton, Multnomah County Extension agent. Fortunately, it's not difficult to determine whether your diet is high or low in fiber.

Diets that are low in fiber usually include many refined or highly processed foods that are high in sugar and fat, says Ms. Hamilton. Diets that are high in fiber include whole grain breads and cereals and a variety of fruits and vegetables including some that are raw.

If your diet is low in fiber and you want to increase it, Margaret Bakke, Oregon State University Extension nutrition specialist suggests the fol-

lowing.

Include fruits and vegetables that are high in fiber in the diet. Berries, pineapple, celery, green leafy vegetables and fruits that can be served with the skins are recommended.

Whole grain breads and cereal products are also high in fiber. Whole grain products can be used as extenders in meatloaf and casserole dishes. Some high fiber snacks are popcorn and raw fruits or vegetables.

"Remember that preparing food 'from scratch' gives you more control over the amount of fiber in your diet," Ms. Bakke says. "But, if you decide to use convenience foods or 'fast foods' from restaurants, supplement them with fresh fruits and vegetables."

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| Town House Red Beans    | 2-Lb.  | 99¢    | Bel-air Pie Shells     | Premium Pie Shells, 10 Oz. | 69¢       |
| Long Spaghetti          | Town House, 4-Lb.<br>Or Elbow Macaroni, 4 Lb.  | \$2.39 | Corn On The Cob        | Green Giant 4 Ear Pkg      | \$1.29    |
| Fresh Wheat Bread       | Crushed, 100% Or Sandwich, 24 Oz.  | 79¢    | Bel-air Frozen Waffles | 5 Oz. Pkg                  | 3 for \$1 |
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| Fircrest Chicken Steaks | 12 Oz. Pkg<br>Chicken, Chopped Sirloin, Salisbury Steak or Meat Loaf, 10 to 11.5-oz. | \$2.48 | Yes Laundry Detergent  | 64 Oz.                     | \$2.99    |
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