

## Fun Veggie Facts:

- A horn worm can eat an entire tomato plant by itself in one day!
- In the US, more tomatoes are consumed than any other single fruit or vegetable.
- Yams and sweet potatoes are not the same thing!
- Actually a fruit, it took a ruling by the Supreme Court to make the tomato a vegetable.

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## All About Melons

Many melons originated in the Middle East and gradually spread its popularity across Europe. Ancient Egyptians and Romans enjoyed cantaloupes or muskmelons. Melon seeds were transported to the United States by Columbus and eventually cultivated by Spanish explorers in California.

Most people don't know that melons are in the same gourd family as squashes and cucumbers. Most melons have similar structure to winter squash with thick flesh and inner seed-filled midsection. So what's the difference between melons and squashes? It's the way that they're used. Squashes are considered vegetables, while melons are known as fruits with sweet and juicy flavor.

Melons are a good source of vitamin C and potassium. They have high water content are relatively low in calories, and also fat and cholesterol free.

### Varieties

Melon varieties are now endless!

## Top 5 things to do with your melon

1. Melons make a great addition to fruit salads
2. Stir in melon in your cold fruit soups.
3. Sliced melons make an attractive edible garnish.
4. Make melon boats-scoop out melon balls then refill shell.
5. For appetizers, wrap melon wedges or cubes with thinly sliced prosciutto ham.

Cantaloupe, honeydew, and watermelon are the most well known varieties. Lookout for more unusual melons at the farmer's market for a different and tasty sweet treat!

In your bag this week you have the cantaloupe. Actually called a muskmelon, this familiar fruit with orange flesh and khaki netted colored skin provides the most beta-carotene in the entire melon family. Select melons that are slightly golden with a light fragrant smell (an indication of its ripeness). Cantaloupe is typically available year-round, with a June through August peak season around Nebraska.

### Selection

In general, melons should be shaped according to their variety. For example, cantaloupes should be round. In addition, melons should not have cracks, soft spots, or dark bruises. You should look for a clean and smooth break at the stem and for most mature melons have a fruity fragrance (if not chilled).

### Storage

Keep uncut melons at room temperature for two to four days or until fully ripe, then refrigerate for up to 5 days. Refrigerate cut up melon in a covered container up to 3 days. Remember that cut melons are aromatic and their smell will penetrate other foods.

### Preparation

Melon preparation is easy! Always wash melons in warm soapy water before cutting to get rid of any impurity on the rind that might be carried from the knife blade to the flesh. Simply cut the melon in half and scoop out the seeds and strings. Melons can be cut into halves, quarters, wedges, cubes or scooped into balls with a melon baller. Most melons will benefit from a squeeze of lemon or lime juice to enhance the flavor and served at room temperature.



hot autumn day!

They are also a great addition to lunch.

On a personal note, I always cut them up and freeze them. They make a great snack for the kids on a

## Corn and Bacon Quiche

### Ingredients:

- 1 unbaked pie shell for 10-inch pie plate
- 6 slices bacon, cooked and crumbled, OR 1/2 cup diced ham
- 1 cup grated Swiss or Monterey Jack Cheese
- 1/2 cup minced onions
- 1/4 cup diced red or yellow pepper (optional)
- 4 eggs
- 1-2 cups corn kernels
- 1 cup light cream
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- Sliced tomatoes and basil (optional)



### Directions:

Preheat oven to 400° F. Toss together bacon, corn, cheese, and onion; sprinkle on pie shell. With a wire whisk, beat in remaining ingredients. Pour over corn mixture. Sprinkle with salt, pepper, if desired. Bake at 400° for 25 minutes then reduce heat to 325° and back 20 more minutes or until knife inserted in the center comes out clean. Let stand 10 minutes before cutting. Top with sliced tomatoes and chopped basil, if desired.

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*Worries go down better with soup.*

~Jewish Proverb

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## Gazpacho

### Ingredients:

- 8 flavorino tomatoes, peeled
- 1/2 of a medium cucumber, chopped
- 1 small green sweet pepper
- 1/4 cup sliced green onion
- 1 small clove garlic, minced
- 1 12-ounce can reduced-sodium vegetable juice cocktail
- 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 1 tablespoon olive oil

- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper
- Thin slices of cucumber
- Bottled hot pepper sauce

### Directions:

Stir together the tomato, cucumber, sweet pepper, green onion, garlic, vegetable juice cocktail, vinegar, oil, salt and pepper in a large mixing bowl. Cover and chill up to 6 hours.

To serve, float thin slices of cucumber atop each serving of chilled soup.

Pass out pepper sauce. Makes 4 to 6 servings.



## Melon Drinks



Ripe cantaloupe provides natural sweetness to these drinks so you only need a little added sugar.

### Ingredients:

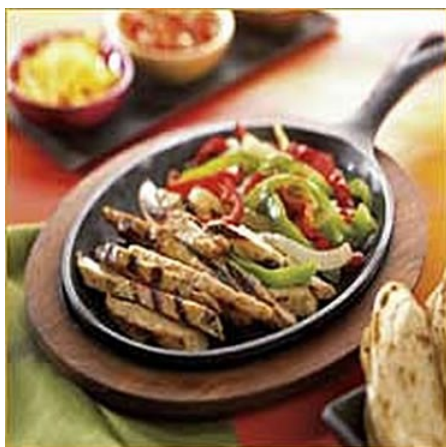
- 1 cantaloupe (4lbs.), halved and seeded, with the flesh cut into 1-inch chunks and peel discarded
- 2-1/2 cups ice water
- 1/4 cup superfine sugar
- 4 tablespoons fresh lime juice, pulse lime wedges for garnish

### Directions:

Puree all ingredients in 2 batches in a blender until smooth. Pour mixture as blended through a fine-mesh sieve into a pitcher, discarding solids, and chill, covered, until cold.

Serve over ice in four tall glasses. Garnish with lime wedges. Makes 4 servings.

## Chicken Fajitas with Peppers



**Ingredients:**

- 1 lb. boneless chicken breast
- 1 T oil
- 1 green pepper (or other) in 1/4 in. strips
- 1 medium onion, thinly sliced
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 2/3 cup chunky salsa
- 1 1/2 tsp. chili powder
- 8 8-in. flour tortillas
- Desired toppings (cheese, sour cream, lettuce, etc)

**Directions:**

Cut chicken into thin strips. Heat oil in large skillet. When hot, add chicken, pepper, and onion. Stir fry 4 minutes or until chicken is lightly browned. Drain. Sprinkle lightly with salt and pepper. Combine salsa and chili powder and add to chicken; cook and stir until thoroughly heated.

To serve, warm tortillas. Place about 1/2 C. of the mixture on each tortilla. Fold up bottom, sides and secure with a toothpick, leaving top open. Serve warm with sour cream, cheese, etc if desired.

## Baked Peaches

Perfect treat for warm summer evenings!

**Ingredients:**

- 1 dozen peaches
- Brown sugar
- Butter
- Vanilla ice cream

**Directions:**

Cut open peaches, remove pit. Leave the skin on (so the peaches keep their shape while baking) and

prink all over with a fork. Place a spoonful of the brown sugar inside each peach half and dot with butter.

Bake at 350° for 12 minutes, serve warm with vanilla ice cream.




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It's difficult to think anything but pleasant thoughts while eating a homegrown tomato.

- Lewis Grizzard

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## Green Bean and Tomato Salad



**Ingredients:**

- 2 lb. green beans
- 2 lb. ripe tomatoes
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 5 T. olive oil
- 1 T. wine vinegar
- 1 T. Worcestershire sauce

**Directions:**

water 1 minute. Cut them into sections. Put the oil, vinegar, and Worcestershire sauce in a salad bowl. Mix well and add salt and pepper to taste. Add the beans and tomatoes and mix again.

Refrigerate for 1 hour and serve.

Exact measurements not needed, feel free to improvise!

Cook the beans in salted water until tender but still crisp, leaving them whole if they are young and slim. Chill. Scald the tomatoes in boiling



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Omaha's indoor farmers market

We plan, we toil, we suffer - in the hope of what? A camel-load of idol's eyes? The title deeds of Radio City? The empire of Asia? A trip to the moon? No, no, no, no. Simply to wake just in time to smell coffee and bacon and eggs.

*~J.B. Priestly*

There is no love sincerer than the love of food.

*~George Bernard Shaw*

Recipe: A series of step-by-step instructions for preparing ingredients you forgot to buy, in utensils you don't own, to make a dish the dog wouldn't eat.

*~Author Unknown*

## Garden Fresh Vegetables—Thinking outside the soil

The true definition of Hydroponics is "to grow without soil". This means that plants can send their roots into any number of mediums, except soil.

Hydroponics is often times misunderstood to mean "plants grown in water". While this can be true, that type of irrigation is actually quite inefficient. The most widely accepted method involves drip irrigation into a medium called "Rockwool".

Rockwool is produced by a process similar to making cotton candy. A particular mixture of sand and rock is melted at 1600 degrees Celsius and then turned into fibers by spinning the mixture to form a woven mat or cube. The tomato plants are planted directly into this growing medium.

As the irrigation water passes through the fibers of the Rockwool, nutrients are absorbed more efficiently than if they were simply allowed to stand in water or have water pass over the roots. This type of spoon feeding into this medium does several things that cannot be replicated in the soil by nature as Rockwool is very water absorbent, yet airy, not dusty and

easy to use.

### Why Hydroponics?

First, it is a completely sterile environment. There is almost no chance that soil borne disease can attack the plant or transfer themselves to the fruit or the person consuming it. Any food product that is grown with animal waste as its food source can easily be contaminated with deadly e-coli bacteria among other things. Tomatoes grown in hydroponic environments have no need for herbicide application because of the complete absence of any foreign seeds in the planting medium. There is low pest pressure in the greenhouse environment as well.

Second, the taste of tomatoes is totally determined by the PH of the environment they are grown in. When you grow tomatoes in your garden, the same tomato variety will vary in taste depending upon the PH of the soil, the irrigation practices, rainfall, humidity, sunshine, temperature, and many other factors; almost none of which the gardener has control over.

In the Greenhouse, the Grower can control many of these variables so that the fruit will

taste the same from one part of the house to the other and from one week or month to the next.

If a hydroponic tomato does not taste as good as a garden tomato, it is because the Grower lacks either the equipment or the experience to balance the PH to make that happen.

Hydroponics allows the Grower to use a natural pesticide program: Good bugs are used to kill the larva of the pests that damage the plants and fruit. This prevents the bugs from building immunity to pesticides and causing greater damage in the succeeding generations. Bumble bees are used to pollinate as a further example of using nature to produce the desired end products.

