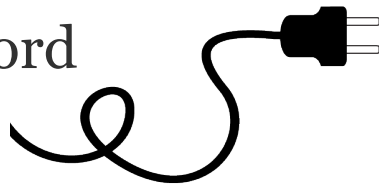


The Extension Cord



Health and Human Sciences

March & April 2023

Hello,

Looking ahead into a March and April calendar always makes me excited that spring is coming soon. Although we've had a few warm days, I'm ready for a little more consistency with warmer temperatures. In my spare time I'll be working to get landscape beds ready for new growth and begin planning this year's garden lineup and layout. Bring on all things green!

Speaking of green, I'll be using Brussel sprouts as my green for the month of March. Read the article below for selection, preparation, and cooking tips for these underrated vegetables!

In the last few weeks, I've shared information about heart health, different types of fats in food and the sources of the fats better for our hearts. Seafood comes up quite often. While shrimp doesn't provide much fat, it is a low calorie, high protein food. You'll find that I've added multiple recipes for ideas on how to incorporate shrimp into your meal routine!

-Jessica Riffle

Brussel Sprouts- bring on the green

If you like cabbage, cauliflower, kale, or spinach then you may also like brussels sprouts. They look very similar to cabbage and are often referred to as "mini cabbages". Their flavor is mostly mild but brussels sprouts contain compounds that can make their taste more sharp and bitter to some. The majority of these bitter compounds are housed toward the center of the sprout.

Cutting the sprout in half prior to cooking them can help reduce the bitterness. The compounds have a quicker exit and are released as the sprouts cook after being cut in half.



Selection and Storage

When shopping at the store or harvesting from the garden, pick sprouts that are free of insects, firm, **compact, and bright green**. They can be stored in a plastic bag, as is from the store, in the refrigerator for up to one week. Trim, and remove the outer leaves of brussels sprouts before preparing them. They should be washed prior to cooking. These small vegetables are ideal for steaming, parboiling, or oven roasting with olive oil and a sprinkle of black pepper. To maintain freshness and nutrition brussels sprouts can also be preserved by pickling or freezing. Freezing requires sprouts to undergo blanching prior to going in the freezer, times vary depending on the size of sprouts.

Brussel Sprouts Nutrition

Brussels sprouts are a good source of Vitamins A, B's, C, K, Iron, and Calcium.

Did you Know?

Vitamin K is a fat-soluble vitamin. It's best absorbed by our bodies when eaten with a small amount of fat (olive and other oils). It comes in two forms- phyloquinone, found in leafy green vegetables and menaquinones, found in some animal foods and fermented foods. Vitamin K is crucial for building bones and blood clotting.

Folate, also known as Vitamin B9, is also found in brussels sprouts. This vitamin is crucial for making DNA and RNA, the foundation of new cells and growth. Because of its role in creating DNA and healthy red blood cells, folate needs are increased for pregnant women. Pregnancy and fetal development is a time of rapid growth in which folate is needed in high amounts.

Give these small, powerhouse vegetables a try. Prepare sprouts a couple different ways before giving up on them. Don't forget to add oils and seasonings to dress them up with flavors you know you like!

Ready to Grow on Your Own?

Brussel Sprouts are considered a hardy plant. It can tolerate hard frost and can be planted 4-6 weeks before the last spring frost. For more information on ideal planting times in Indiana, check out Purdue Extension's Publication- Indiana Vegetable Planting Calendar.

The table below is from this publication showing vegetables that can withstand heavy and lighter frost.

Table 1. Some common vegetables grouped according to their relative requirements for cool and warm weather.

Cool season crops for early-spring planting		
Hardy (tolerates hard frost) plant 4-6 weeks before last spring frost (see Figure 1)		
asparagus ⁴	kale ³	potato ⁴
broccoli ²	kohlrabi	radish ¹
Brussels sprouts ²	leek ²	rhubarb ⁴
cabbage ²	mustard ³	spinach ³
collards ³	onion ^{3, 4}	turnip ¹
horseradish ⁴	peas ¹	
Semi-hardy (tolerates light frost) plant 2-4 weeks before last spring frost		
beet ³	celery ²	lettuce ³
carrot ¹	chard ³	mustard ³
cauliflower ²	chinese cabbage ²	parsnip ¹

Shrimp, Small but Mighty!

Sheet Pan: Shrimp Fajitas	Directions:
<p>1 ¼ pounds large shrimp, peeled 1 red bell pepper, ¼" sliced 1 orange bell pepper, ¼" sliced 1 cup red onion, ¼" sliced 3 Tbsp olive oil 1 Tbsp chili powder 1 tsp cumin 1 tsp garlic powder 1 Tbsp fresh cilantro, finely chopped 1 Tbsp fresh lime juice</p>	<p>Preheat oven to 400°F. Line baking sheet with aluminum foil. Toss shrimp, bell peppers, onion, olive oil, chili powder, cumin, and garlic powder. Spread over baking sheet and cook in oven for 10 minutes. Remove from oven and transfer shrimp to separate plate. Cover plate with sheet of foil to keep warm. Return vegetables to the oven and turn broiler on high. Broil for 3-4 minutes until vegetables are turning golden and somewhat charred. Remove vegetables from oven and add shrimp back to sheet pan. Stir shrimp and vegetables together. Top mixture with cilantro and fresh lime juice. Serve over tortillas or over rice.</p>

Shrimp Scampi	Directions:
<p>3 Tbsp. butter 2 Tbsp. olive oil 4 garlic cloves, minced ½ cup chicken or veg. broth ¼ tsp. crushed red pepper flakes Black pepper to taste 1¾ lbs. extra-large shrimp, peeled ¼ cup chopped parsley Freshly squeezed juice from half a lemon or 2 Tbsp. lemon juice</p>	<p>Melt butter with olive oil in a large skillet over medium-low heat. Add minced garlic and sauté until fragrant or about 1 minute. Add broth, red pepper flakes, black pepper to taste and bring to a simmer. Let simmer for 2 minutes. Add shrimp and sauté until shrimp flesh becomes opaque white with pink & red accents, about 3-6 minutes depending on their size. Stir in the parsley and lemon juice. Shrimp can be served on its own, over pasta, over rice, steamed vegetables, or on a skewer.</p>

Shrimp & Ravioli for Two	Directions:
3 oz. refrigerated fresh Ravioli 1¼ c. water 1 tsp. dried oregano, crushed ½ tsp. minced garlic ½ tsp. olive oil or cooking oil ¼ tsp. ground cumin ⅙ tsp. pepper Dash of paprika 6 oz. peeled and deveined medium shrimp 1 c. broccoli and /or cauliflower flowerets 1 T. shredded Parmesan cheese	In a microwave safe dish, combine the first 5 ingredients. Cook on Hi for 2 min. Combine cumin, pepper and paprika. Toss with shrimp in a sealed bag. Place shrimp and broccoli in microwave safe colander. Place colander in the dish. Cover and cook on Hi for 6 - 8 minutes or until shrimp are pink. Stir shrimp mixture every 3 minutes. Drain pasta. Transfer pasta to serving plates. Spoon shrimp mixture on top. Sprinkle with cheese. Note: A microwave steamer with a bottom dish /colander was used in the directions above. However, you can prepare this meal in a regular steamer on your cooktop.

Shrimp Stir Fry	Directions:
4 tsp. vegetable oil 4 cups mixed vegetables (recommend sliced bell peppers, broccoli, pea pods) ¾ lb. raw, peeled shrimp 1 tsp. garlic powder Sauce: ½ cup chicken broth 1 Tbsp soy sauce 1 tsp. sesame oil 1 Tbsp. cornstarch	Whisk together sauce ingredients and set aside. Heat 2 tsp oil over medium heat. Add shrimp and cook until shrimp is pink, about 3 minutes. Remove shrimp from pan and set aside. Heat remaining 2 tsp of oil in same pan used for shrimp. Add your choice of vegetables and cook until tender. Edges should begin to char or crisp. Add garlic powder and cook 2-3 minutes. Add shrimp and prepared sauce to vegetables. Cook over medium heat for 1-2 minutes until sauce has thickened. Serve over your favorite rice or noodles!

Low Country Boil	Directions:
¼ cup Old Bay® Seafood Seasoning 2 red potatoes, 1” cubed 1 sweet onion, ½” wedges 1 sweet peppers, ½” strips 1 smoked sausage, ½” slices 2 ears of corn, broken into thirds 2 T. lemon juice 1 lb. shrimp, raw peeled	Fill 3 qt. pot with 1½ qt. water. Turn to a med-high heat. Add Old Bay Seasoning and mix into water. Bring to a boil. Gently place potatoes into pot – cook 8 minutes. Add onion, pepper, sausage and corn. Cook for 5 minutes. Add lemon juice and shrimp. Cook for 3 to 4 minutes until shrimp is done. Drain liquid and serve with melted butter and cocktail sauce. Serve immediately.

Upcoming Public HHS Programming

Date	When	Where	What
March 15	11:00 am	Kewanna Public Library	Train Your Brain
April 7	12:00 pm	Fulton County Public Library	Train Your Brain
April 19	11:00 am	Kewanna Public Library	“Super Foods”

“Train Your Brain”

Join me in Kewanna or Rochester to participate in “Train Your Brain.” This program shares information about dementia and the different types, why early detection and diagnosis are so important, the warning signs of dementia, and steps you can take to better your own brain health.

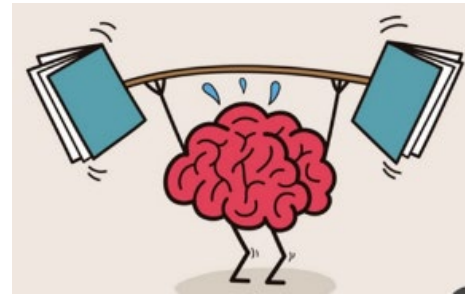
According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Alzheimer’s and dementia is a public health epidemic with a large and rapidly growing burden that bears significant impact on the nation. The impact of Alzheimer’s disease is felt at a national, state, and local level – as well as on a family and personal level – through financial burdens, resource needs, and professional requirements.

The prevalence of dementia, including Alzheimer’s, across the United States is staggering – one in every nine people age 65 and older has Alzheimer’s, the leading form of dementia. As the size of the older adult population continues to grow, the number of Americans with Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias will continue to increase. More than 6.2 million Americans of all ages have Alzheimer’s dementia, and this number is expected to reach nearly 14 million by 2050, barring a medical breakthrough.

Alzheimer’s is the sixth leading cause of death in the United States and Indiana, killing more people than breast cancer and prostate cancer combined. Despite the severity of the brain health crisis, there are steps which can be taken to better the lives of those who are currently facing, or will potentially face in their future, a dementia diagnosis. Education and awareness of the disease is key.

According to the Alzheimer's Association, there are 10 warning signs.

1. Memory Loss that disrupts your daily life.
2. Difficulty in planning or solving problems.
3. Completing everyday tasks becomes challenging.
4. Confusing time and place.
5. Difficulty understanding visual images and changes.
6. New problems with speaking or getting words out.
7. Not being able to find things or able to retrace steps to find things.
8. Decreased or poor judgement.
9. Withdrawal from work or social activities.
10. Changes in mood or personality.



If you or someone you know is experiencing any of these signs, go see and talk with a physician. Come to the "Train Your Brain" program to learn more about warning signs and ways to exercise you brain!

Stay Active through the last of the cold weather!

When the temperature drops, we have less daylight, and schedules are busy; the first thing to go might be time for physical activity. The common key barriers to physical activity are motivation, time, and facilities or space.

What are the costs of inactivity? Decreased overall physical health and loss of physical strength that can lead to a lower quality of life. Increased risk for developing or worsening disease resulting in increased dollars spent on health care costs.

We could all spend less time sitting or immobile and more time moving. What might motivate you to be more physically active? Focusing on the benefits of physical activity? Improved physical health, increased energy, improved mood, increased strength, and reduced stress are each possible benefits of physical activity.

What can we do to stay fit and reduce stress through the winter months? Focus on the benefits to motivate you and start small. Every little bit really does help. Doing something is better than nothing. While adults should aim for 150 minutes of physical activity each week, we can benefit from even 10 minutes a day. Find a friend to do activity with and use one another for encouragement. Think about seasonal chores differently, shoveling and house cleaning as an opportunity for active minutes. Be a kid again, use the outdoors for recreational activities. Find indoor space to walk; your home, stores, schools, churches, or community center. Set a goal, write it down, and chart your progress on a calendar. You will be more likely to meet your goal if you tell someone your goal and visualize the goal happening.

The important thing is to do something! Even if it's getting up and walking around the living room during commercials, if you even still have those. You got this!