

GROW YOUR OWN: JUST EAT IT!

WE EAT DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE PLANT

Which part of the plant do you eat from each of these crops?

Draw a line connecting the word with the matching plant part:

seed

stem

root

leaf

flower

fruit



Green onions

Basil

Cherry tomato

Bok Choy/Choi sum

Eggplant

Chili Pepper

Kale/collard

Green Beans

Lettuce

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
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VEGETABLES give us vitamins, minerals and fiber. Most foods in the vegetable group are low in fat and calories. Vegetables add nutrients, flavor and color to our diets. Include dark green and deep yellow-orange vegetables in your family's meals.



FRUITS add nutrients, flavor and color to meals. Most fruits are low in fat and high in carbohydrates and naturally sweet. They make great snacks and desserts.



Fruits & Veggies—More Matters™

Every step you take towards eating more fruits and veggies helps you and your family be at their best. Because eating fruits and vegetables may reduce your family's risk of many diseases, the recommendation is to eat more fruits and vegetables than any other food group. Eating fruits and veggies in a variety of colors not only provides eye candy for you, but mixing things up also gives you a broad range of nutrients. Use your garden to increase the amount of fruits and veggies your family eats.

"THINK VARIETY, THINK COLOR" and everybody wins!

<http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/>

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HARVESTING

There are no exact guidelines as to when to harvest your vegetables, but here are some rules to guide you:

Beans: Pick before you can see the seeds bulging. They should snap easily into two. Check every day. It doesn't take long for beans to go from tender to tough.



Chinese Cabbage: (E.g. bok choy) either harvest single leaves (outer leaves first) or the complete plant.



Green onions: Should be pulled whenever they get big enough to be worth eating. They should be eaten immediately or quickly refrigerated.

Eggplant: Harvest the fruits when they are 6 to 8 inches long and still glossy. Use a knife or pruning shears to cut the stem rather than breaking or twisting it.



Kale: Harvest single, outer or lower leaves. They should be a deep green with a firm, sturdy texture. Harvest kale leaves throughout the year.

Lettuce (Head): Harvest once the head feels full and firm.

Leaf Lettuce, Swiss Chard: Harvest the outer leaves once the plant has reached about 4 inches in height and allow the younger, inner leaves in the center to continue growing.

Peppers (chili): Fresh fruit should be full size, shiny green to slightly red, firm and crisp in texture. Red fruit should be allowed to turn completely red and dry on the plant.



Tomatoes: Harvest tomatoes when they are fully colored and slightly soft to the touch. Gently twist and pull from the vine.



**Fresh vegetables lose vitamins when they are stored.
Harvest only what you will use that day.**

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HOME GROWN FOOD AND FOOD SAFETY

Homegrown produce is not necessarily any cleaner or safer to eat than conventionally grown produce - all produce should be washed before eating.

Do not use soaps, detergents, or household bleach on produce, because these products are not approved for use on foods to be eaten, and their residues may be harmful.



Before washing, look at the produce carefully and remove any dirt, debris, and insects, and throw away anything that seems to be damaged or contaminated with snails or slugs. Clean the raw fruits and vegetables well before you peel, cut, eat, or cook them by rubbing the produce with clean hands under running water.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Best Food Safety Practices for Hawai'i Gardeners FST-41
<http://www.ctahr.hawaii.edu/Site/Info.aspx>

EGGPLANT WITH GARLIC SAUCE

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 medium carrot | <u>Sauce:</u> |
| 1 medium bell pepper | 1 tablespoon sugar |
| 2 medium eggplants | 1 tablespoon cornstarch |
| 1 thumb size piece ginger | ¼ cup soy sauce |
| 1 clove garlic | 1 tablespoon vinegar |
| 1 pound lean ground meat | Optional: chili pepper |

Directions:

1. SLICE carrot, bell pepper, and eggplants. SET aside.
2. MINCE ginger and garlic. SET aside.
3. In a small bowl, COMBINE sauce ingredients: sugar, cornstarch, soy sauce, vinegar, and optional chili pepper.
4. In a large pot, FRY meat with ginger and garlic.
5. ADD carrot, bell pepper, and eggplants. STIR FRY until almost done.
6. ADD sauce to mixture and STIR.



LEAFY TOFU

- 1 (20-ounce) container tofu
- 2 bunches leafy greens
- 1-2 tablespoons oil
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- 1 teaspoon toasted sesame seeds

Directions:

1. DRAIN tofu and DICE tofu into 1-inch cubes.
3. TEAR leafy greens into bite-sized pieces.
4. In a large pan, HEAT oil and SAUTÉ tofu cubes for a few minutes. MOVE tofu to the center of the pan.
5. ADD spinach, and soy sauce. MIX.
6. COVER pan and COOK until spinach is wilted.
7. SPRINKLE toasted sesame seeds.

ANSWERS (from page 1): green onions - leaf and stem, basil -leaf, tomato - fruit, bok choy/choy sum - leaf, eggplant - fruit, chili pepper - fruit, kale/collard - leaf, beans - seed, lettuce - leaf

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HERBS

- * Fresh herbs are used in cooking to season the foods to make them tastier.
- * Fresh herbs may be kept up to one week in the refrigerator.
- * Gently wash herbs in cool water, shake off extra water, and place in airtight bags or containers and put in fridge.

If you have extra herbs, you can preserve them for later use by:

Freezing: Wash. Drain and dry on paper towel. Freeze whole or snip and pack in small amounts in plastic bags.

Drying: Wash, and dry on paper towels. Dry slowly in sun or warm oven. (up to 180° F) oven for 3 to 4 hours. Package in small, clean, dry bottles and store in a cool dark place.




USING HERBS

HERB	USE
Basil – various types	Can be used raw or cooked; add leaves to food whole, crushed, or chopped; traditionally used in Thai and Mediterranean dishes; can be used to make pesto – serve with pasta
Chili pepper	Different varieties are used fresh and dried by many cultures for spicy hot flavors; commonly used in uncooked sauces (salsas), main dishes, and stir fry; use as condiment (chili pepper water)

SAVING AND SERVING SUGGESTIONS

GREEN ONIONS

Wash well in fresh water to remove dirt. Trim and slice into small pieces. Bag and freeze. Use small snack or sandwich size bags to freeze enough to add to your next bowl of saimin.



When using fresh herbs, chop the leaves very fine. The more cut surface is exposed, the more flavor will be released.

BASIL

Wash well. Chop up leaves into small pieces and place in compartments of ice cube tray. Fill up with a little water. Store in freezer. Add some of the basil ice cubes to spaghetti sauce.

FOR MORE IDEAS AND RECIPES FOR USING HERBS:
<http://www.ctahr.hawaii.edu/NEW/resources/Herbs.pdf>

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