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## Healthy Eating During the Winter

Brrrr it's cold! Nebraska has been experiencing some very cold weather and snow these last couple of weeks, and healthy eating can be a big challenge during these cold winter days. Winter is a wonderful season for spending time with friends and family and enjoying many delicious meals and foods, but how can you add more fruits and vegetables to your next meal? The recommended amount of fruits and vegetables to consume for adults is 1.5-2 cups of fruit and 2-3 cups of vegetables each day. It is easy to forget about the importance of including fruits and vegetables in our daily eating habits, so I will share a couple nutrient dense recipes that can add more fruits and vegetables into your winter meals!

### **Acorn Squash, Cranberry, & Kale Salad**

Yield: 8 Servings

#### **Ingredients:**

- 1 Cup brown rice, uncooked
- 2 Cups no salt added vegetable broth
- 1 acorn squash, scrubbed with clean vegetable brush under running water, cubed.
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- 1 tablespoon maple syrup
- 1 teaspoon mustard (Dijon or other)
- 4 cups kale leaves, gently rubbed under cold running water, chopped.
- ½ cup dried cranberries
- ¼ cup pumpkin seeds
- ½ cup crumbled feta cheese (optional)

#### **Directions:**

1. Wash hands with soap and water and wash and prepare vegetables.
2. Preheat the oven to 375 °F.
3. Cook rice in broth according to package directions.
4. Mix cubed squash with vegetable oil, salt and pepper. Place squash in a baking dish. Roast squash for 20 minutes or until fork tender.

5. Combine vinegar, vegetable oil, maple syrup and mustard in a small bowl until well combined.
6. Place kale in a large bowl and pour half the dressing over the top. Massage leaves for about 2-3 minutes until softened. Add cooked rice, squash, dried cranberries, pumpkin seeds and feta cheese if using. Mix until combined.
7. Pour desired amount of remaining dressing and mix.
8. Store leftovers in a sealed container in the refrigerator for up to four days.

### **Roasted Sweet Potatoes and Apples**

Yield: 4 Servings

#### Ingredients:

- 2 medium sweet potatoes, scrubbed with clean vegetable brush under running water
- 1 fuji apple or other baking apple, scrubbed with clean vegetable brush under running water
- ½ tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 tablespoon maple syrup

#### Directions:

- 1) Wash hands with soap and water
- 2) Preheat oven to 450 °F.
- 3) Peel sweet potatoes. Cut the sweet potatoes in half lengthwise. Slice into ½ inch thick pieces
- 4) Core the apples. Cut into bite-sized chunks.
- 5) In a 2-quart baking dish, add the sweet potatoes and apple. Drizzle vegetable oil over the mixture, stirring to coat. Bake for 10 minutes.
- 6) Remove from oven and stir. Bake for 10 minutes, or until tender. Potatoes are tender when they can be pierced with a fork. If they are still hard, stir and return to oven. Check every 5 minutes until tender.
- 7) When the potatoes are tender, drizzle with maple syrup and stir.
- 8) Store leftovers in a sealed container in the refrigerator for up to four days.

While these recipes may be catered towards eating during the wintertime, they can be followed all year round! Ensuring that you prioritize consuming fruits and vegetables throughout the entire year is a great habit that provides your body with the necessary vitamins and minerals for it to thrive!

This information was adapted from the UNL Food Website. To find out more information or want to learn more visit <https://food.unl.edu> or call Buffalo County Extension at 308-236-1235.

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