

Nutrition Tidbits Garden Edition, gives gardening inspiration and recommendations, provides botanical facts and nutrition values of Arkansas Grown produce, as well as shares delicious recipes.



SPOTLIGHT Central Baptist Church Food Pantry, Sherwood



Fresh organic produce is being served to those in need at the Central Baptist Church Food Pantry in Sherwood. With Dale and his passion to serve, the pantry has a productive garden that produces between 400-500lbs of fresh produce starting in June and continuing through the summer months. Dale believes in the health benefits and importance of fresh organic produce. Dale says, "An organic garden, can't be beat."

The gleaning garden has been in production for over a decade. Dale started the garden when he saw the need for fresh produce and a desire especially among the older being served. Dale says, "Older individuals really enjoy the fresh produce because it is largely what they grew up eating." Dale discussed how the younger people today do not know how to cook. Dale says, "They often cannot tell a mustard green from a collard green." When asked about what he had to say for other food pantries interested in doing something similar Dale says, "They would not believe the impact, especially with grandmothers fresh produce can have."

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What's Growing?



Nutrition facts:

A ½ cup of strawberries provides 81% of the daily recommendation for vitamin C. Vitamin C helps reduce damage to cells that could lead to diseases like cancer and heart disease. Some studies suggest strawberries can lower the risk of hypertension and LDL-cholesterol. Vitamin C also helps the body absorb iron in foods.

Storage Tip:

Store strawberries unwashed in a moisture proof container for 1-3 days in the refrigerator. Nutrients are lost when the berries are washed too far ahead before eating.

STRAWBERRIES

Plant Facts:

Strawberries are perennials meaning they will come back each year up to 5 years. They are part of the rose family. The Berries are called “accessory fruit” because they do not develop from the plant ovaries. Most strawberries produce stolons or runners that come from the plant base and take root to make a new strawberry plant. Strawberries prefer well-drained sandy soil to grow. They can have white or pink flowers that need to be pollinated by bees or other insects. A flower can produce a strawberry in about 30 days. There are 12 different strawberry species that can produce fruit in three different ways. Some species produce just one crop per year, some throughout the year and others twice per year. Strawberries are hand picked when ripe. They do not ripen off the vine.

Buying Tip:

Look for bright red berries with a natural shine, sweet smell and fresh green caps.

Fun Facts

- California produces 90% of the strawberries grown in the United States.
- Strawberries are the only fruit with seeds on the outside. The average strawberry has 300 seeds.



Strawberry Smoothie

Ingredients

Serves: 3

- 1 ½ cups milk
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon honey (can substitute 1tb. sugar)
- ¼ cup old-fashioned rolled oats
- 2 cups frozen strawberries

How to prepare

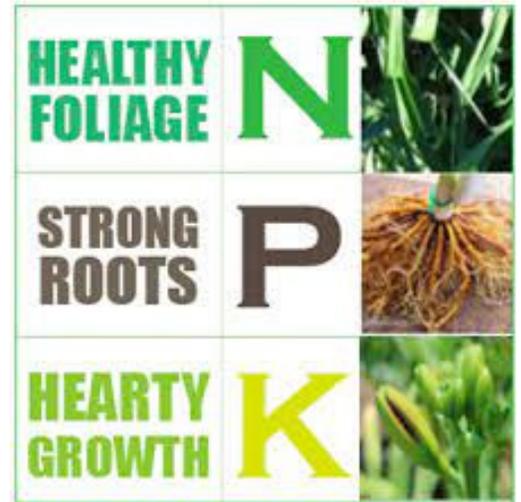
1. Pour milk, lemon juice, and honey into the blender.
2. Add rolled oats.
3. Blend starting on low speed and increase to high speed for 30 seconds or until the oats are blended smoothly.
4. Add frozen strawberries.
5. Blend starting on low speed and increasing to high speed until smoothie is the right consistency (about 30 seconds).
6. Serve immediately

Nutrients per 1 serving: 231 Calories, 5 grams Total Fat, 75mg Sodium, 33g Carbohydrates, 5g Dietary Fiber, 9g Protein



BUILDING HEALTHY SOIL

The best soil for gardening is a mix of sand, silt, clay and organic matter. This soil mix will provide plants with enough nutrients and encourage the growth of beneficial bacteria. Organic matter is anything that was once living but has been broken down by worms or micro organisms. Organic matter makes up a small percentage of the soil. Soil is mostly made up of water, air and broken rock. Good drainage and water retention is important. Soil can be tested with at home kits or through the Arkansas Extension Service for free. Soil tests tell you the amount of Nitrogen(N), phosphorus(P), potassium(K) and acidity of the soil. The acidity will affect how well the plant can absorb the nutrients in the soil. Before planting add 2-6 inches of compost to the garden. Compost should be added once a year at the beginning of the growing season.



FERTILIZER



Fertilizer will add the 3 key nutrients and often a mix of the 13 micro-nutrients. A sign that your plants may need fertilizer is pale green/yellow leaves and slow growth. All-purpose fertilizer can be used at planting, leaf development, flower development or fruit development. Container plants will need to be fertilized about every two weeks. When using containers to grow plants the nutrients can easily be washed out of the soil.

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