

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

Christ Corner Food Pantry

Annette, with Christ Corner Food Pantry spoke with us about the growth of the pantry and how the generosity of the community and local farmers have given them the opportunity to provide fresh food to their 525 clients.



For the eight years Annette has been running Christ Corner Food Pantry she has seen an uptick in farmers donating fresh, local produce like sweet corn and green beans. Annette described how when she first started they mostly distributed non-perishables, but over the years they have been able to provide increasingly more fresh produce, frozen meats and milk.

They have an ongoing relationship with Curb Market that provides the pantry with fresh produce during the summer harvesting months along with local farmers and Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance. About 500 pounds of fresh produce on average is donated. When asked about the impact of fresh produce for their clients, Annette said, “for some people it’s exciting, does the heart good.”

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Please feel free to contact us at 501-565-8121 if you have questions.

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What's Growing?



Nutrition facts:

Eating just a half cup of cooked asparagus will give you 33% of your daily value of folate. Folate is especially important for pregnant women and healthy baby brain development. It is also an excellent source of vitamin K that can help support strong bones. Vitamin E in asparagus supports healthy skin and hair.

Storage Tip:

Asparagus ends can be wrapped in a damp paper towel and placed in a plastic bag. Store in the fridge for up to 4 days.

ASPARAGUS

Plant Facts:

Asparagus is a long-lasting perennial and part of the Lilly family. It takes two-three years before asparagus are fully mature. The plant has to go through a dormancy period and establish its root system during the first year. The roots grow horizontally rather than vertically like most vegetables. There are both male and female plants. The male plants have more spears but are smaller in diameter than the females. Asparagus can come in three different colors: green, white and purple. In order to produce white asparagus farmers burying the asparagus crowns under one foot of soil to prevent photosynthesis.

Buying Tip:

Choose dry odorless spears with firm tight bulbs.

Fun Fact

According to the National Cancer Institute, asparagus contains glutathione. This antioxidant plays an important role in the prevention of certain cancers and diseases, nutrient metabolism and regulating DNA and protein synthesis.



Oven Roasted Asparagus

Ingredients

Serves: 4

- 1 bunch thin asparagus spears
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1½ tablespoons grated parmesan cheese (optional)
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1 teaspoon sea salt
- ½ teaspoon ground black pepper

How to prepare

1. Preheat the oven to 425 degrees Fahrenheit.
2. Wash and trim the pale ends off each stalk.
3. Place the asparagus into a mixing bowl, and drizzle with olive oil. Toss to coat the spears, then sprinkle with Parmesan cheese, garlic, salt and pepper.
4. Arrange the asparagus on a baking sheet in a single layer
5. Bake in the preheated oven until tender, 12 to 15 minutes depending on thickness.
6. Sprinkle with lemon juice just before serving. Serve hot.

Nutrients per 1 serving: 123 Calories, 10.8g Total Fat, 471.4mg Sodium, 5.2g Carbohydrates, 2.4g Dietary Fiber, 3.3g Protein



CONTAINER GARDENING

Choose a pot or container that has enough room for the plant to reach full maturity. Use potting soil to prevent diseases and help retain water. Choose plants that will produce the most in a small space. Tomatoes, pole beans, peas, arugula, lettuce and hot peppers, are some examples. Herbs are a great choice because they give you the most bang for your buck. Water container-plants until water comes out of the bottom drainage holes. Smaller pots will require more watering than larger pots. A container garden will need additional fertilizing to support the plant growth. The need for potting soil and fertilizer can make container gardening more expensive than in ground gardening.

SUCCESSION PLANTING

Succession planting is a way to increase production and variety of plants during a growing season. Succession planting is timing crops so that when one crop is finished producing a different crop is being grown to replace the first crop. The seeds can be started in the ground or in seed trays. This second crop can



be the same or different from the first crop. The second crop will be planted on a later date. Planting this way will provide a steady supply of produce. Planting plants that mature at different rates is another type of succession planting.

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