

# FoodWise Nutrition

## April 2021 Newsletter



### Healthy Choices, Healthy Lives

#### WHAT IS FOODWISE?

FoodWise is federally funded statewide by the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education (SNAP-Ed) and the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP). We advance healthy eating habits, active lifestyles and healthy community environments for Wisconsin residents with limited incomes through nutrition education at the individual, community and systems levels.

#### University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension Ashland, Bayfield, Iron County FoodWise Nutrition Team

Stephanie Bakker, FoodWise Nutrition Coordinator  
Extension Ashland, Bayfield, Iron Counties  
Phone: 715-682-7017 (Ashland County office)  
[stephanie.bakker@wisc.edu](mailto:stephanie.bakker@wisc.edu)

Deborah Leonard, FoodWise Nutrition Educator  
Extension Ashland, Bayfield, Iron Counties  
Phone: 715-561-2695 (Iron County office)  
[deborah.leonard@wisc.edu](mailto:deborah.leonard@wisc.edu)



### FOOD RESOURCES

In November 2020, the Red Cliff Community Health Center's Behavioral Health Department teamed up with Food Distribution to start the Jiibaakwedaa "Let's Cook" program. This program was developed to connect the community with each other through fun in the kitchen, while remaining socially distanced and safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. Food was donated from various community businesses to make this program possible. A video featuring the famous Ed Metelica, from "Cooking with Ed" was posted on Facebook, in which the recipe for Butternut Squash Lasagna was made. Then community members were able to come pick up a bag that contained the recipe's ingredients at Food Distribution to make at home with their family. The program was a big success, and all the ingredients ran out.

Due to this success, the program continues to run and provide video instructions as well as an ingredient bag every month since, and now gives out a raffle prize to one lucky winner who sends in a photo of their dish being made. Last month the FoodWise team joined the Jiibaakwedaa program to provide nutritional information for the ingredients in the bags that are handed out. Although the COVID-19 pandemic has kept the community apart physically; community, culture, and even family dinner time can bring the community closer together than ever before. Thank you to all the participants who have made this program a success. If you would like to participate, please pick up your ingredient bags on March 31<sup>st</sup> from 1pm-3pm. First come, first serve.

### IRON COUNTY MOBILE FOOD PANTRY

The next Iron County Mobile Food Pantry takes place on Monday, April 26th from 12:00-1:00 pm.

For more information, contact Extension Iron County office manager, Rebecca Holm at 715-561-2695 or email [rebecca.holm@wisc.edu](mailto:rebecca.holm@wisc.edu).



## RECIPE OF THE MONTH

### EASY STUFFED PASTA SHELLS

Spinach, a mixture of low-fat cheeses, and herbs combine for a delicious filling in these stuffed shells.

Spinach also happens to be the featured Harvest of the Month vegetable! For an additional recipe that includes spinach, be sure to check out page 4!



### INGREDIENTS

- 1 package frozen chopped spinach, thawed (10 ounces)
- 12 ounces cottage cheese, low fat
- 1 1/2 cups mozzarella, part skim shredded (save 1/2 cup for topping)
- 1 1/2 teaspoons dried oregano
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 jar light tomato basil pasta sauce, low-sodium (26 ounces)
- 1 cup water
- 6 ounces pasta shells, uncooked (large)

### DIRECTIONS

1. Wash hands.
2. Preheat oven to 375°. Lightly coat a 13x9x2-inch baking dish with cooking spray. Set aside.
3. Drain spinach by placing in a sieve or colander over the sink, or in a bowl and pressing with a spoon to remove as much liquid as possible, or squeeze out liquid with clean hands. Place spinach in a medium bowl.
4. Add the cottage cheese, 1 cup of the mozzarella cheese, oregano, and pepper to the spinach. Stir to mix thoroughly.
5. Pour half of the spaghetti sauce into prepared baking dish. Add water and stir into the mix.
6. Spoon about 3 tablespoons cheese mixture into each uncooked pasta shell and arrange in a single layer over the top.
7. Sprinkle remaining 1/2 cup mozzarella cheese evenly over sauce.
8. Cover tightly with foil. Bake for 1 hour or until shells are tender. Let stand 10 minutes before serving.

### NOTES

- Try this recipe for a potluck or make-ahead dinner. If desired, refrigerate the ready to bake casserole.
- To lower sodium, use reduced sodium spaghetti sauce.

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

In February, FoodWise Nutrition Educator Deb Leonard celebrated the 2021 Wisconsin Chili Lunch virtually with the Hurley Head Start center.



The Wisconsin Chili Lunch is a yearly event celebrating farm to school, Wisconsin's farmers and local foods by cooking and serving a chili recipe made with local ingredients on National Chili Day, which took place on Thursday, February 25, 2021.

To celebrate, Deb invited local farmer and colleague, Extension Iron County Agriculture Educator, Darrin Kimbler to talk about his farm and what he grows. Deb then did some fun activities related to this topic with the kids and talked to them about the importance of local foods and how they would be trying chili later in the week.

She was able to join them virtually on that day while they sampled some chili!

For more information about Wisconsin Chili Lunch, please visit: [www.cias.wisc.edu/chillunch/](http://www.cias.wisc.edu/chillunch/)

## FOR YOUR INFORMATION

The Hurley Head Start program asked if we would share information on the upcoming Family Forum Early Head Start (EHS) and Head Start (HS) program enrollment.



Family Forum, Inc is an EHS/HS program that is **5** star rated, in a **5** county area, serving prenatal women and families with children birth to **5**!

**5 star** quality rated through the WI Department of Children and Families.

Providing services in the **5 northern counties of WI - Ashland, Bayfield, Douglas, Iron and Price.**

Program options include EHS home-base for prenatal women and families with newborns to 3 years of age. EHS center-based serving children 6 weeks of age to 35 months of age, in two locations—Superior and Hurley. Head Start center-based serving children 3 years of age to 5 years of age in Ashland, Bayfield, Douglas, Iron and Price counties.

Start the application online at: [www.familyforum.org](http://www.familyforum.org).

Call 715-392-9896 with any questions.

# April

CHEQUAMEGON BAY



**HARVEST**  
of the **MONTH**



# SPINACH

### How to Store

When you bring fresh spinach home:

Keep it cold

Store it dry

Wash with cold, clean water before eating

Use it fast –generally within 3-5

Typically, you can keep and use spinach until it shows signs of spoilage include wilting, off odors, yellow and watery leaves.

### Nutritional Benefits

Spinach provides a low calorie, nutrient dense option to add to many different recipes, or to use in a simple salad. Spinach is a good to excellent source of vitamins A, C and folate, as well as minerals such as manganese, magnesium, calcium, zinc, and iron. It is also a good **source of fiber and even contributes a small amount of protein to the diet.** Spinach also contains many lesser known antioxidant compounds **such as flavonoids. Antioxidant are crucial to our body's natural defenses, helping reduce the risk of cancer.** Not enough? Spinach may play a role in the slowdown of the aging process, and help to maintain brain function. **These potential health benefits, along with the proven nutritional benefits of spinach make it a must have in your diet.**

### Did you know?

- ✓ **Spinach was the first frozen vegetable to be sold for commercial use.**
- ✓ **When Popeye made his debut on January 17, 1929, spinach became the third most popular children's food after turkey and ice cream. Today, more than 94% of Americans associate spinach with Popeye.**
- ✓ **The first spinach was cultivated in Persia 2000 years ago and became popular in Italian and French cooking in the Middle Ages.**
- ✓ **Spinach is a very hardy crop and can withstand temperatures as low as 20°F.**

Brought to you by the  
Healthy CHANGE Coalition





## HARVEST OF THE MONTH

### More Spinach Facts



Ever wonder what a la Florentine means on a menu? Well, Catherine de'Medici, who became queen of France in 1522, so loved spinach that she reportedly insisted it be served at every meal. Because she was from Florence, dishes including spinach became known as a la Florentine.

**Catherine wasn't the first royalty to prize spinach, either. In the 7th century, the King of Nepal sent spinach to China as a gift. The green leafy vegetable didn't arrive in Europe until the 11th century, and the Moors introduced it to Spain. In England, it was long called "the Spanish vegetable."**

Spinach was a good choice for Catherine to include on a daily basis, as far as nutrition goes. It's an excellent source of iron, magnesium, manganese, calcium, folate, potassium and vitamins K, A, C, B6 and **B2. It's also a very good source of dietary fiber, protein, phosphorus, copper, zinc and vitamin E, and a good source of omega-3 fatty acids, niacin and selenium.**

Spinach belongs to the same family as Swiss chard and beets, and there are three main types. Savoy (or curly leaf) spinach has dark green, crinkly, curly leaves. Slightly bitter, it's better for cooking than eating raw. Semi-Savoy is similar to Savoy but less crinkled, making it easier to clean. It's also best when cooked. Flat-leaf spinach has smooth, spade-shaped leaves. Best eaten raw, it's the most popular of the spinaches in the United States. It's tender and a little sweet.

Baby spinach is more delicate and milder tasting than regular spinach.



### Cooking Corner

#### SPINACH & STRAWBERRY SALAD



##### Ingredients

- ½ pound strawberries
- ¼ cup vinegar
- ¼ cup olive oil
- ¼ cup honey
- 1 Tbsp poppy seeds
- ½ tsp paprika
- 1 Tbsp minced red onion
- 5 cups baby spinach
- ½ cup cooked crumbled bacon
- ¼ cup sunflower seeds
- 2 oz. feta cheese, crumbled

##### Preparation

1. Wash strawberries, remove stems, and slice.
2. Whisk vinegar, olive oil, honey, poppy seeds, paprika, and onion in small bowl, blender, or food processor.
3. Toss spinach, strawberries, **bacon, sunflower seeds, feta** and half of the poppy seed dressing. Add more dressing if you need to, otherwise save the rest for the next time you make the salad.

Created for the Healthy CHANGE Coalition by Sara Beadle, Chequamegon Food Co-op.  
Questions? Contact Sara at (715) 682-8251 or [sarab@cheqfood.coop](mailto:sarab@cheqfood.coop).