



Spinach

Harvest of the Season

Eat More Arizona Grown Spinach

Fuel up with vegetables. By including more vegetables in your family's diet, you are helping your family be at their best. Eating a variety of vegetables gives you lots of vitamins and minerals that you need. Fill half your plate vegetables and fruits and help keep your heart, teeth, gums, eyes and skin healthy.

Spinach is one of the top vegetables grown in Arizona. Most recently, spinach was harvested from 7,200 acres. That is over 136 million pounds of spinach!

Why Eat More Spinach?

Power foods like spinach are full of nutrients. Here's how the nutrients in spinach keep you and your family healthy:

Nutrients Found in Spinach	
Iron	Helps give you energy to feel good and stay healthy
Calcium	Helps form bones and teeth and keeps them strong
Vitamin K	Plays a role in bone and blood health
Potassium	Helps you maintain a healthy blood pressure
Magnesium	Helps bones stay strong

What are Different Types of Spinach?

Try different types of spinach to find your family's favorite.

- Malabar
- Smooth-leafed
- New Zealand
- Space
- Red Stem

How Much Do We Need?

In general, your family should eat:

Age	Vegetables	Fruits
Children 2 - 3	1 cup	1 cup
Children 4 - 8	1 1/2 cups	1 to 1 1/2 cups
Older children and teens	2 to 3 cups	1 1/2 to 2 cups
Adults	2 1/2 to 3 cups	2 cups

You are a positive influence in your children's lives. Help them develop healthy eating habits for life. Offer them vegetables at meals and snacks.

Make half your plate vegetables and fruits. Visit [choosemyplate.gov](https://www.choosemyplate.gov) for more information.

How to Choose, Store and Prepare Spinach

Choose:

- Choose fresh, crisp, green leaves of spinach that are free from damage or spots.

Store:

- Wash spinach as soon as you get home. To wash spinach, follow these steps:
 1. Place in a sink or large bowl of cold water.
 2. Remove stems by twisting or cutting spinach leaves off just above stem line and place in water.
 3. Move bunches of spinach around in water, then let the spinach stand for a few minutes while dirt sinks to the bottom.
 4. Use a paper towel to pat dry.
- Wrap fresh spinach loosely with a wet paper towel and refrigerate in a plastic bag.
- Use stored fresh spinach within three to five days.
- Fresh spinach can be frozen for up to one year. Frozen spinach can be cooked without thawing.

Prepare:

Steaming fresh spinach in a microwave is a quick and easy way to prepare spinach and maintain its nutrients.

1. Place prewashed spinach in a microwave-safe dish.
2. Cover with a lid.
3. Microwave on high for two to three minutes.
4. Let spinach stand for another two minutes, then drain and serve.

TIP: Some recipes call for squeezing the extra water out of the spinach. If you do this, save the green water for soup or other cooking needs.

Spinach tastes good raw or cooked. It can be steamed, sautéed or boiled. Visit fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org for more information.

Plant and Grow Spinach

- Plant spinach seeds with your kids. Plant your seeds in an area or garden with full sun exposure.
- Spinach grows well in cool climates. They grow best in temperatures around 60° to 65° F.
- Plant spinach between mid-September and February.
- Spinach needs about one to two months to grow.
- Spinach is ready to be cut with scissors at the stem when there are at least five leaves.

Visit extension.arizona.edu for harvest and planting information.

Choose Locally Grown Vegetables and Fruits

- Arizona Grown vegetables and fruits taste best and cost less when purchased in season.
- Vegetables and fruits that are grown in Arizona spend less time in the back of a truck. This causes less damage to the vegetables and fruits.

When farmers sell directly to consumers, they cut out the middleman and receive full value for their produce. This allows farmers to continue to farm and provide service to the community.

Let your kids be produce pickers. Help them pick vegetables at a grocery store, your local farmers' markets, or at a u-pick farm near you! Go to arizonagrown.org for more information.

Spinach Stuffed Red Bell Peppers

Ingredients:

2 large red bell peppers, seeded and cut in half lengthwise
2 pounds fresh spinach or 2 packages (10 ounces each) chopped frozen spinach
¼ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon pepper
¼ teaspoon nutmeg
1/3 cup cilantro chopped



Makes 4 servings
1/2 pepper each.

Nutrition Facts

per serving	
calories	79
carbohydrates	13 gm
protein	7 gm
total fat	1 gm
saturated fat	0 gm
trans fat	0 gm
cholesterol	0 mg
fiber	7 gm
total sugars	4 gm
sodium	238 mg
calcium	231 mcg
folate	478 mcg
iron	7 mg
calories from fat	11%

Directions:

1. Wash hands with soap and warm water. Wash fresh vegetables before preparing.
2. Place the pepper halves in a steamer and steam 3 minutes over boiling water. Set aside.
3. Chop and season with salt, pepper and nutmeg.
4. Steam spinach for 3 minutes or until wilted.
5. Press out excess water and fill the pepper halves.
6. Steam the stuffed peppers 3 minutes or until heated through.
7. Cut each half into 2 wedges and serve.

For more free recipes, visit EatWellBeWell.org.



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