

## Extension

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### Color Your Way to a Healthy Day!

By Anne Zander, Family & Consumer Science Extension Agent, Boulder County

We know that “eating your greens” is good for you but we have also learned that blues, reds, yellows, oranges, purples, and even whites are good for you too. All colors have a variety of vitamins, minerals and phytochemicals that help lower the risk of some cancers and help keep us “heart healthy.”

Here are just a few examples of health benefits in colorful foods:

**Blue/Purple** in your diet helps maintain:

- memory function
- healthy aging
- urinary tract health

**Red** in your diet helps:

- healthy aging.

**Green** helps with:

- vision
- strong bones and teeth

**Yellow/Orange** will help maintain:

- healthy immune system
- Vision health

**White** in your diet is good for:

- keeping cholesterol levels in check



We can enjoy fruits and vegetables year-round by purchasing them fresh, frozen, or canned. But, with the growing season here, consider getting out to a local farmers market in your area to see, smell, touch and taste the best of the best in local foods. To find a local farmers market, farm stand, or u-pick-it operation, look it up in the 2011 Colorado Farm Fresh Directory. It's available at most Colorado State University Extension offices, local chambers of commerce, libraries and online at [www.coloradoagriculture.com](http://www.coloradoagriculture.com)

#### 4 Tasty Ways to Keep Fruits and Vegetables Fresh

##### 1. On your countertop

Many fruits do best when they are ripened on the counter, then refrigerated once fully ripe. Use this method to keep foods like melons, peaches, plums, nectarines, avocados, and tomatoes tasting their best. Do not leave fruit in plastic bags on counters, because this can slow the ripening

process and may lead to rotten spots. Paper bags allow better airflow.

## 2. In your refrigerator

Most other fruits/vegetables are best stored in the refrigerator. You can put produce in plastic bags with holes to allow for airflow. Store fruits and vegetables in separate drawers; fruits give off a gas that can shorten the storage life of other items. Vegetables such as broccoli give off odors that can affect the taste and quality of fruits. To avoid mold, do not wash berries until right before you eat them.

## 3. In your cupboard

Some produce items are best stored in a clean, dry, airy space with no direct light like in a cupboard. Foods in this group include potatoes, sweet potatoes, yams, winter squashes, onions, and garlic.

## 4. In your freezer

You can keep extra summer fruits and veggies in your freezer. Contact your County Colorado State University Extension website/office for the fact sheets on Freezing Fruits & Vegetables.

## Let's Talk:

Believe it or not, it is possible to raise kids who like eating a wide variety of fruits and vegetables. The secret is to never bribe or threaten kids about eating green or orange things. Just follow some simple steps.

- Enjoy a variety of fruits and vegetables yourself. The most important thing that adults can do for children's eating is to model healthy habits. If you enjoy eating a variety of colors in your produce, children will see that as a normal thing to do.
- Cut up vegetables for meals and snacks. Children usually like the taste and texture of raw vegetables better than cooked ones.
- Serve bright, colorful vegetables. Everyone eats with their eyes first. All of us find bright and colorful vegetables more appealing. When cooking vegetables, keep them brightly colored and crunchy in texture by steaming or microwaving them for just a few minutes.
- Be adventurous with vegetables and fruits. Buy new items and try new recipes.



## Recipe for Health:

### Fruit S'mores

*(allergy note: contains wheat and dairy)*

#### Ingredients:

Graham crackers (plain, cinnamon or chocolate)

Chocolate bar or chocolate chips (milk, dark, semi-sweet or white chocolate)

Marshmallows (regular or mini)

Slices of fruit (strawberries, bananas, peaches, apples)

#### Directions:

Line a microwave-safe plate with graham cracker squares. On each graham cracker, place some chocolate and marshmallows. Microwave for 15 to 20 seconds or until the marshmallows begin to puff. Place slices of fruit on top of the soft marshmallows then cover with another graham cracker square.

