Tastes of Spring

Taste spring! Enjoy fresh strawberries and asparagus. They remind us that summer is coming soon. Along with summer will come plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables. It’s easy to eat plenty of fruits and vegetables every day when they are fresh and taste wonderful.

Strawberries are great sources of vitamin C, folic acid and fiber. One cup of strawberries has as much vitamin C as an orange.

Strawberries make great snacks. Just rinse and eat! Strawberries also make wonderful desserts. Serve sliced strawberries on angel food cake or try a Strawberry Pizza.

Asparagus has a very short season, from later spring to early summer. It’s a special spring treat. Asparagus is a good source of vitamins A and C, and fiber. It’s also a great source of folic acid. Asparagus has more folic acid than spinach or oranges.

Asparagus is easy to prepare. Wash well and trim off about an inch at the end of the spear if it is tough. They can be laid flat in a steamer or stood upright in a tall pot with about 1 inch of water. Cook for 4 to 7 minutes or until they are tender.

Try one of these seasonings:

- Sprinkle with parmesan cheese.
- Top with shredded cheddar cheese.
- Mix together 1 tablespoon lemon juice, 1 tablespoon melted butter and dill weed. Pour over asparagus and toss lightly.

Roasting Asparagus

Wash well and trim off an inch at the end of the spear. Drizzle about 1 Tablespoon oil lengthwise onto a baking sheet. Lay the asparagus in the oil and roll back and forth until coated. Sprinkle with garlic powder and pepper. Roast at 400°F until tender. (8 to 15 minutes—depends on the thickness of spears.)
### Strawberries

Choose: Berries that are brightly colored, firm and have hulls attached. Avoid boxes that are leaking or show signs of mold. A pint equals about 2 cups of sliced berries.

Store: Berries should be stored in the refrigerator and are best if used within 2 to 3 days.

#### STRAWBERRY ORANGE SHAKE

| 2 cups fresh or frozen strawberries | 1 cup orange juice |
| 1 banana | 1 cup ice cream or frozen yogurt |

Blend together strawberries, banana, orange juice and ice cream or frozen yogurt until smooth.

Serve 4: cal 106; fat 2.1g; carb 20.2g; sodium 13mg

### Asparagus

Choose: Asparagus spears that are crisp, round and straight, with tight pointed tips that have not begun to flower. Choose asparagus spears that are the same thickness so the cooking time will be similar. Spears that are flat are usually tough. One pound makes about 3 servings.

Store: Asparagus should be stored in the refrigerator in a plastic bag and used within 3 to 5 days.

#### FREEZING TIPS

Buy extra strawberries and asparagus when the price is good. Freeze for later use.

**ASPARAGUS:**

Wash to remove dirt and sand. Cut off base of stalks. Place in boiling water for 2 to 3 minutes. Remove and place in ice water for 1/2 minute. Drain and pack in freezer bags. Freeze.

**STRAWBERRIES:**

Whole berries: Rinse and remove caps. Place on a tray in a single layer. Freeze for 2 hours. Pack whole berries in freezer bags. Freeze.

Sliced Berries: Rinse and remove caps. Slice berries and pack in freezer containers. Freeze.

### STRAWBERRY PANCAKES

| Frozen or homemade pancakes | 1 cup sliced strawberries |
| 6 Tbsp strawberry yogurt |

Mix strawberry slices with yogurt. Heat or make pancakes. Top pancakes with strawberry mixture and serve. Enjoy!

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