

FRESH News

December 2013

The holiday season is a time for family, fun, and festivity! A great way to incorporate the holiday spirit into your community is to help those less fortunate by volunteering your time. There are many opportunities throughout the valley, and one that stands out year after year is St. Mary's Food Bank. Founded in 1967, their goal and mission statement is "To alleviate hunger through the gathering and distribution of food while encouraging self-sufficiency, collaboration, advocacy and education." Furthermore, The St. Mary's Food Bank Drive would be a great event for yourself and family to volunteer.

This year, start a new tradition by helping this Valley non-profit sort, box, and bag food for the over 857,000 Arizonans living in poverty. St. Mary's Food Bank is the world's first food bank now serving 2/3 of Arizona's 15 counties. There are more details at www.firstfoodbank.org.



Monthly Crunch

Blood Oranges



How to Select

- Pick blood oranges that are firm to the touch.
- Pick ones that are heavy for their size, which means they'll be full of juice.
- Keep in mind small green or brown areas on the skin have no effect on flavor or quality.

How to Store

- To keep these ruby gems fresh longer, you can store them in the refrigerator where they'll stay good for up to two weeks.

Nutritional Benefits

- Great source of vitamin C
- Great source of folate
- Great source of calcium
- Great source of antioxidants
- Great source of vitamin A

Kale



How to Select

- Look for kale with firm, deeply colored leaves and moist hardy stems.
- Leaves should look fresh, unwilted, and be free from signs of browning, yellowing, and small holes.

How to Store

- Place kale in a plastic bag removing as much of the air from the bag as possible.
- Store in refrigerator where it will keep for 5 days.
- Do not wash kale before storing because exposure to water encourages spoilage.

Nutritional Benefits

- Good source of antioxidant and anti-inflammatory nutrients.
- Good source of fiber
- Good source of omega-3 fatty acids
- Good source of vitamin K

A BITE OF THE SEASON

Cabbage & Carrot Slaw with Blood Orange Vinaigrette

Ingredients

Vinaigrette

2 cups juice from organic blood oranges (about 4 oranges)
1 teaspoon fresh ginger, minced
1 tablespoon naturally prepared Dijon mustard
¾ cup extra virgin olive oil or expeller pressed safflower oil
pinch salt

Slaw

2 cups organic cabbage, shredded
¼ cup organic red bell pepper, cut into thin strips
1 cup organic carrot, shredded
¼ cup organic raisins
1 teaspoon raw honey
3 tablespoons Blood Orange Vinaigrette

Yield: makes 3 servings

Preparations

1. To make vinaigrette: In a saucepot over low heat, add 2 cups orange juice. Cook for about 35 minutes, reducing juice to half (1 cup).

Transfer the concentrated juice to a bowl and let cool to room temperature.

2. Then, put juice, ginger, mustard, olive oil, salt and pepper into a blender. Blend on high until thoroughly mixed together. It will appear thick and emulsified.



3. To make slaw: In a large bowl, add shredded cabbage, peppers, carrots, raisins and honey. Pour 3 tablespoons of blood orange vinaigrette over mixture; toss well.

*Find this recipe and others at <http://www.kashi.com>

Kale and Quinoa with Creole Seasoning

Ingredients

1 cup chicken broth
½ cup quinoa, rinsed and drained
2 quarts water
1 bunch lacinato (dinosaur) kale, sliced
1 teaspoon olive oil
1 large shallot, minced
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon Creole seasoning (such as Tony Chachere's)

Yield: makes 4 servings

Preparation

1. Bring chicken broth to a boil in a saucepan; stir in quinoa. Cover and reduce heat to low. Simmer until quinoa is tender and liquid is absorbed, about 10 minutes.
2. Bring water to a boil in a large saucepan; cook kale in boiling water until just tender, 2 to 3 minutes. Drain. Heat olive oil in the same saucepan over medium heat; cook and stir shallot until softened, about 5 minutes. Add kale, cooking and stirring, until desired doneness. Mix quinoa into vegetable mixture and season with salt and Creole seasoning.



*Find this recipe and others at <http://www.allrecipes.com>

In the Spotlight

The School Food Team would like to acknowledge
Avalon Elementary
With their continued excellence in the Fresh Fruit and
Vegetable Program!



At Avalon Elementary, a charter school in the East Valley, they are excited to have introduced The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program this year. They have a high enrollment of free and reduced meals; therefore, creating a need the staff is trying to meet. Through various resources they are able to educate students about nutrition and making better food choices. They currently serve three days a week and are hoping to increase at the start of period two. They interject food knowledge through classroom discussion, posters and during morning assemblies. Another way they educate the students is through the addition of Health and Nutrition class introduced this year.

Tasty Tidbits

December is...

National Pear Month!



National Food Days & Weeks in December

1st – Eat a Red Apple Day
25th – National Pumpkin Pie
Day
27th – National Fruitcake
Day

Local Produce

Fruits: Pink Lady Apples, Sundowner Apples, Red Blush Grapefruit, Canary Melons, Lemons, Blood Oranges, Navel Oranges, Sweet Oranges, Fairchild Tangerines, Minneola Tangelos

Vegetables: Arugula, Bean Sprouts, Beets, Bok Choy, Broccoli, Brussel Sprouts, Green & Red Cabbage, Carrots, Cauliflower, Celery, Cucumber, Collard Greens, Mustard, Greens, Kale, Iceberg Lettuce, Romaine Lettuce, Napa Cabbage, Green Onions



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Christmas Scavenger Hunt

A Christmas-themed Scavenger hunt is the perfect activity for family gatherings and holiday parties. For family gatherings, it is fun to pair up the adults with the kids and see which team finishes first. For kids parties, split the kids into teams and give them a time limit. Whichever team gathers the most items within the time limit are the winners!

- _____ 1 pine needle (real or artificial)
- _____ 1 yellow Christmas tree light
- _____ 1 metal ornament hook
- _____ 1 pinecone
- _____ 1 small piece of tree garland or tinsel
- _____ 1 mistletoe leaf
- _____ 1 holiday table decoration (a candle or figurine will work)
- _____ 1 gift tag
- _____ 1 red poinsettia flower
- _____ 1 piece of holiday chocolate
- _____ 1 piece of wrapping paper with a Christmas tree on it
- _____ 1 piece of gift ribbon
- _____ 1 Christmas cookie
- _____ 1 package of dry hot cocoa mix
- _____ 1 Christmas card
- _____ 1 candy cane
- _____ 1 silver jingle bell