

NUTRITION BITS AND BITES

Growing and Gardening



The benefits of gardening

- Children feel encouraged and more involved in food preparation.
- They learn skills and gain confidence to grow food.
- They are exposed to new flavours and foods.
- They can pick out vegetables they would like to grow and take care of.
- Growing and preserving food is a life skill, and can promote life-long healthy eating habits.

Ideas to get kids growing

Gardening can feel overwhelming, but it does not have to be. Try out some of these ideas to get your kids into growing food!

- Start small by planting lettuce, radishes, and herbs in a container garden.
- Some plants grow especially well together. Try growing a “*three sisters garden*” by planting corn, winter squash and climbing beans together. Beans will climb the corn and the squash helps shade the ground around the corn to retain moisture in the soil.
- Leafy vegetables like lettuce and spinach grow quickly and can be harvested many times.
- Cherry tomatoes are yummy and often produce earlier than other types of tomatoes.
- Use vegetable scraps to grow food! Save the root ends of green onions, lettuce or celery. Place the stem in a small container with ½ inch of water with plenty of sunlight and watch it grow.
- If you do not have space to grow a garden, visit a farmer’s market or a farm and talk to the farmers to learn how their food is grown.

For more ideas and info on growing and preserving food visit: www.gettystewart.com, or <https://www.unlockfood.ca/en/Articles/Cooking-Food-Preparation/Growing-an-indoor-herb-garden.aspx>

Fresh Tomato Salsa

Ingredients:

- 6-7 plum or Roma style tomatoes, other varieties might work as well
- ½ onion
- ½ green, yellow, or orange sweet pepper
- ½ to 2 cayenne or jalapeno peppers (optional, depending on your taste)
- 2 cloves of garlic
- 3 tbsp. chopped cilantro or parsley
- 1 tbsp. lime juice
- 1 tsp. ground cumin
- ½ tsp. ground coriander
- Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions:

1. Wash tomatoes.
2. Slice tomatoes in half and remove seeds to limit the amount of liquid in the salsa
3. Dice and toss in bowl.
4. Chop onion, sweet peppers and hot peppers into small pieces and add tomato
5. Mince garlic, add tomatoes and combine all ingredients.
6. Add cilantro/parsley, lime juice, cumin, coriander, salt and pepper.
7. Mix well.
8. Taste and adjust seasonings to taste.
9. Enjoy immediately.

Ideas to get children involved:

- Young children can help wash the tomatoes and sweet peppers, as well as mix the ingredients together.
- Older children can help measure the ingredients.
- Have children of all ages smell the different herbs and describe the aroma.

Recipe from:

<https://www.gettystewart.com/fresh-tomato-salsa-or-pico-de-gallo/>



**** Refer to the Allergy Newsletter (September issue) for substitution ideas.**

For more nutrition topics, go to the news and events section of www.southernhealth.ca or Health Links 1-888-315-9257

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