

FOOD \$ENSE



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July 2011

Mushrooms

Food \$ense Guide to Eating Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

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Utah Local Fresh Season:

Availability: Mushrooms should be purchased from a reputable grower or grocer instead of hunting them yourself, as there are many poisonous mushrooms. Incorrectly indentifying a mushroom can lead to serious health problems or even death. Mushrooms are available year around and in different varieties.

Eating: Mushrooms are very similar to meats and other vegetables. Virtually any and all seasonings go well with mushrooms.

Selecting: Select mushrooms that look firm, moisture-free (not dry), that have unblemished caps, and are free of mold. For best results place purchased loose mushrooms in a paper bag in the refrigerator, airtight plastic bags tend to retain moisture and will accelerate spoilage. Properly stored mushrooms will last for approximately 5 days.

Cleaning and Preparing: Clean mushrooms only when you are ready to use them. Remove any bits of debris on the surface, rinse with cold running water or gently wipe the mushrooms with a damp cloth, paper towel or soft brush.

Preparation Hint: To retain the color squeeze a small amount of lemon juice onto the mushrooms.

Storing: Mushrooms keep for up to a week in the refrigerator. Keep mushrooms in the original packaging until ready to use. Once opened, store

mushrooms in a porous paper bag. This will give the mushrooms a longer shelf life.

Cooking: Mushrooms are very versatile and can be eaten raw or cooked whole, sliced or chopped. Certain varieties like shiitake and portabella must have their stems discarded or used as a flavoring agent, as they are often tough.

Sautéed: Cut mushrooms in slices and add to a pan melted butter or oil. Sautee mushrooms until liquid is gone or until golden brown.

Roasted: Combine salt, pepper and garlic with whole mushrooms. Bake in the oven at 400 degrees for 30 minutes or until golden brown.

Microwave: Add mushrooms to a microwave safe bowl, cover and cook on high for 2 to 3 minutes

Grilling and broiling: This works best if larger mushrooms are used. Brush oil on the mushrooms until moist, add salt and pepper, grill or broil for 4 to 6 minutes on each side.

If you want to add mushrooms to a stew or braise, consider sautéing them first. Mushrooms tend to shrink as they cook, and a long stewing process may not give you the results you were looking for.

Highlighting Nutrition in Mushrooms:

Mushrooms are high in selenium, riboflavin, niacin potassium and pantothenic acid. Mushrooms are fat free and low in calories.

Preserving Mushrooms: Mushrooms can be frozen, but they must be cleaned, cooked, and placed in a ½ cup or 1 cup container to freeze. Frozen mushrooms will last several months. Fresh mushrooms should never be frozen, but sautéed mushrooms can be frozen and stored for up to a month. Mushrooms can be canned or dried. For more information go to www.uga.edu/nchfp/.

References:

1. www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov
2. <http://health.learninginfo.org/nutrition-facts/mushrooms.htm>
3. www.ehow.com
4. www.pioneerthinking.com

Fresh Mushroom Soup

- 1 ½ pounds fresh mushrooms
- 8 scallions
- ½ tsp thyme
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- 1 Tbsp Dijon mustard
- 1 quart fat-free, no added salt, chicken broth
- 1 cup plain non-fat yogurt

Chop mushrooms and scallions into bite-sized pieces. Sauté in chicken broth until tender. Add thyme, pepper, and mustard. Bring to boil and simmer for 15 minutes. Add yogurt, stirring just to blend, and serve.

Grilled Mushroom Quesadillas

- 2 lbs fresh white button mushrooms, sliced
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp salt
- 6 tortillas
- 2 cups (around 8 ounces) shredded cheese, such as reduced-fat cheddar and Monterey jack, plus extra for garnish
- 2 ripe avocados, peeled, pitted and thinly sliced
- 6 tbsp fresh cilantro leaves (optional)
- Salsa verde and diced tomatoes, for garnish

Sauté: Heat olive oil in large non-stick pan over medium high heat. Add a single layer of mushrooms and cook, without stirring, for about 5 minutes or until mushrooms become red-brown on one side. Add salt, flip mushrooms and cook about 5 minutes more, until other side is same color. While mushrooms cook, assemble quesadillas; distribute half of six tortillas. When mushrooms are done, distribute mushrooms and cilantro leaves, if desired, among tortillas and top with remaining cheese. Fold tortilla in half and grill or warm in skillet until cheese begins to melt, and then flip to cook other side. Transfer to cutting board, cut into wedges and serve with salsa verde, tomatoes and additional cheese.

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This publication is issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Noelle E. Cockett, Vice President for Extension and Agriculture, Utah State University.
(FN/FoodSense/2011-17pr)