How to eat:

- Citrus is a great addition to homemade vinaigrette. Wisk together olive oil, Dijon mustard, citrus juice of your choice, and salt and pepper to taste.

- Add citrus juice to your apple slices to keep them from browning.

- Add zest of any citrus to smoothies, salad dressing, marinades, etc. for an extra punch of flavor.

Citrus is known for its vitamin C content and just one orange packs more than 90% of the recommended daily amount. Vitamin C is a powerful antioxidant that prevents cell damage and helps to boost the immune system. Citrus also contains good amounts of B vitamins, potassium, phosphorous, magnesium and copper. Although you can find citrus in California year around, Winter citrus will have the most vibrant color and best flavor. Citrus juice is similar to salt in helping to enhance flavor, so it is a great way to cut back on the salt, just add a spritz of citrus juice to your meal. One medium orange has just 62 calories, 3 grams of fiber and 237mg of potassium.

Orange Date Smoothie

Makes: 1 serving

Ingredients:
1 medium orange, peeled and frozen in segments
1 cup soy milk
1/3 cup cooked sweet potato flesh
2 pitted dates
1 tbsp. tahini
1/2 tsp. vanilla extract
Pinch of salt

Directions:
1. Place all the ingredients in a blender and blend until smooth.
2. Add additional liquid if needed.

Nutrition Facts:
313 calories, 12g protein, 48g carbohydrate, 9g fiber, 25g sugar, 10g fat, 1g saturated fat, 0mg cholesterol, 170mg sodium

Fruit of the Month:
Citrus

March 2018

For questions, please contact Nicole Vargas, MPH, RD at nicole.vargas@ucr.edu or 951-827-5082
Veggie of the Month: Asparagus

March 2018

How to eat:

- Asparagus does not need to be cooked too long, just blanch for 2 minutes and add seasoning and its ready to serve.
- Roasted asparagus is a great side dish to any meal. Just toss with olive oil and salt and pepper and bake in a 425 degree oven for 12-15 minutes.
- Chopped asparagus is great in salads, pasta and mixed into eggs.

Asparagus is an excellent source of vitamin K, folate, copper, vitamin B1, selenium, vitamin B2, vitamin C and vitamin E. It is a good source of fiber, zinc and iron. Asparagus has a unique phytonutrient called asparagusic acid that is responsible for urine order after eating, but research is finding it may have beneficial antioxidant function as well.

Asparagus also contains a unique combination of anti-inflammatory nutrients. Asparagus come in green, white and purple varieties. Look for firm, thin stems with closed tips. The cut ends should not be to woody. Use asparagus within a day or two of purchasing for best flavor and texture.

Pasta with Asparagus

Makes: 8 servings

Ingredients:
- 20 baby artichokes
- 5 thin slices of lemon
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 pound asparagus
- 2 tbsp. flat leaf parsley
- 1 tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- 1/2 tsp. kosher salt
- 1/2 tsp. ground black pepper
- 1 tbsp. pine nuts, toasted

Directions:

Preheat oven to 450 degrees F. Cut off the top third of each artichoke. Trim stem to within 1 inch of base; peel stem. Remove bottom leaves and outer leaves, leaving the more tender leaves. Cut each artichoke in half length wise. Place artichokes, lemon slices and 1/2 tbsp. of olive oil in a bowl and toss to coat. Arrange mixture in a single layer on a baking sheet. Roast at 450 degrees for 15 minutes. Toss asparagus with remaining oil and add to artichoke mixture to roast for an additional 10 minutes. Place roasted veggies in a large bowl and add lemon juice, parsley, salt, pepper and pine nuts.

Nutrition Facts:
127 calories, 6g protein, 24g carbohydrate, 13g fiber, 6g sugar, 2g fat, 0g saturated fat, 0mg cholesterol, 223mg sodium.

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