

Nutrition News - October 2025

October Is National Apple Month

Apples have been a key crop in Dutchess County for centuries, both for food and drink. The crop was probably introduced to the Hudson Valley by Dutch settlers in the 17th century. By the early 20th century, over 1,000 varieties of apples were being grown in New York. The New York State census of 1875 counted 18,278,636 apple trees. Apple orchards are some of Dutchess County's longest-standing small businesses, with families often living on the farms they've operated for generations.

Is An Apple A Day All That?

"An apple a day keeps the doctor away" is an old Welsh proverb that most of us are familiar with, but just how and why are apples healthy for you?

Apples are continuously being praised as a "miracle food". The phytonutrients and antioxidants in apples may help reduce the risk of developing Alzheimer's, obesity, cancer, hypertension, asthma, allergies, diabetes and heart diseases.

Quercetin, one of the antioxidants found abundantly in apples, reduces inflammation and helps in reducing Alzheimer's. Researchers from the State University of Rio de Janeiro found that overweight women who eat three apples a day lost more weight than women who did not have apples in their diet.

Apples are also the best sources of soluble fiber (pectin). They help fill you up and help good bacteria to thrive in your colon.

Older women who ate apples everyday had 23% less bad cholesterol (LDL) and 4% higher good cholesterol (HDL) just after 6 months, according to a 2011 Florida State University study.

Ursolic acid, a natural compound found in an apple's skin, may prevent muscle wasting that can result from aging or illness.

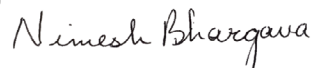
Apples and Carbs

Apples do contain carbohydrates, which impact blood sugar levels, but the carbs in apples affect your body differently from "junk food" processed carbs. Among 38,000 women observed in a study at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, eating an apple a day lowered the risk of developing type 2 diabetes by 28%, as compared to not eating any apples. Even eating just a few apples per week had a similar protective effect. Polyphenols in apples help prevent tissue damage to beta cells in your pancreas.

Quercetin helps regulate the immune system and reduce inflammation. A study of 68,000 women published in the journal "Advances in Nutrition" found that those who ate most apples had the lowest risk of asthma.

Eating apples is linked to a lower risk of major diseases, including cancer, diabetes, heart diseases and bone loss. And they're convenient to take along with you in a jacket pocket or handbag. For the greatest benefits, eat the whole fruit—both skin and flesh. Check the back page for a tasty, healthy apple recipe!

Sincerely,



Nimesh Bhargava
OFA Nutrition Services Coordinator

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Recipe: Spiced Butternut Squash and Apple Casserole (Serves 8)

Ingredients

1½ teaspoons chopped fresh rosemary
¾ teaspoon pumpkin pie spice
½ teaspoon chopped fresh thyme, plus more for garnish
¾ teaspoon salt, divided
½ teaspoon ground pepper, divided
1 butternut squash (about 2 pounds), peeled, seeded and cut into ½-inch pieces (about 6 cups)
2 tablespoons neutral oil, such as canola or avocado, divided
2 cups thinly sliced shallots
2 tablespoons red-wine vinegar
⅓ cup apple cider
3 tablespoons pure maple syrup, divided
3 small Granny Smith apples, unpeeled, chopped (about 4 cups)
½ cup crumbled goat cheese
¼ cup finely chopped walnuts
¼ cup pomegranate arils (edible seed pods)

Directions

Preheat oven to 400°F. Whisk 1½ teaspoons rosemary, ¾ teaspoon pumpkin pie spice, ½ teaspoon each thyme and salt and ¼ teaspoon pepper together in a small bowl. Combine squash, 1 tablespoon oil and 2 teaspoons of the seasoning mixture in a 9-by-13-inch baking dish; toss until well-coated. Spread in an even layer. Roast, stirring once, until the squash is just fork-tender, and beginning to brown, about 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, heat 1½ teaspoons oil in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Add 2 cups shallots and the remaining ¼ teaspoon each salt and pepper; cook, stirring occasionally, until the shallots are slightly tender and starting to brown, 3 to 4 minutes. Stir in 2 tablespoons vinegar; cook, stirring constantly, until browned bits from the bottom of the pan have loosened, about 1 minute. Add ⅓ cup cider and 2 tablespoons maple syrup; cook, stirring often, until the liquid is reduced by half, about 3 minutes. Remove from heat.

Add the shallot mixture, chopped apples and the remaining 1½ teaspoons oil and 1½ teaspoons reserved seasoning mixture to the baking dish with the roasted squash, stir to combine. Sprinkle with ½ cup goat cheese. Bake until the liquid is bubbling along the edges of the pan and the apples are tender, 15 to 20 minutes.

Meanwhile, cook ¼ cup walnuts and the remaining 1 tablespoon maple syrup in a small nonstick skillet over medium-high heat, stirring constantly, until the walnuts are fragrant and begin to stick together slightly, 2 to 3 minutes. Transfer to a clean cutting board; let stand until cool enough to handle, about 5 minutes. Coarsely chop the nuts, breaking apart any large clusters. Sprinkle the nuts and ¼ cup pomegranate arils over the casserole. Garnish with additional thyme, if desired.