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The Good Herb

A monthly newsletter with ideas for
using the bounty of the garden!

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As I write this, the sun is shining—a rare sight this winter in Michigan! This time of year I try to always have a flowering plant or some fresh flowers on the table, just to remind me that spring is on the way! I also try to prepare salads that are colorful and nutritious, not only to ward off colds and flu, but to brighten the dinner table. I'll share a few of my favorites!

Connie

Fruit and Greens Salad with Ginger Vinaigrette

Ginger improves the absorption of nutrients in the body, reduces joint pain, and also helps clear sinuses during cold season. Gingerroot is found in the produce section.

¼ cup lemon juice

½ cup olive oil

½ teaspoon sea salt

1 Tablespoon Honey Mustard

1 teaspoon freshly grated ginger

Whisk all vinaigrette ingredients together and set aside.

Salad:

6 cups mixed salad greens

¼ cup chopped red onion

1 sweet red pepper, seeded and chopped

2 large peaches, cut into wedges (Soak in 2 cups water and 2 teaspoons lemon juice for 5 minutes after cutting peach up to stop it from turning brown. Drain and add peach to salad.)

½ cup feta cheese

1 cup blackberries

Toss dressing into salad and serve.

Serves 6.

Fruited Wild Rice Salad

Dressing: ¼ cup olive oil, 1/3 c. orange juice, 2 Tablespoons honey

Salad:

1 cup cooked wild rice

2 golden delicious apples, chopped

Juice of 1 lemon

1 cup golden raisins

1 cup seedless red grapes, halved

2 Tablespoons each of minced fresh mint, parsley, and chives (or whichever is available at the store)

1 cup pecan halves

Salt and pepper to taste

Combine dressing ingredients and set aside. Cook rice according to package directions and drain if needed.

In a large bowl, toss apples with lemon juice. Add raisins, grapes, mint, parsley, chives, and rice. Add dressing and toss. Season with salt and pepper. Cover and chill several hours or overnight. Add pecans just before serving and toss lightly. Makes 8-10 servings.

Green Bean and Potato Salad with Thyme Vinaigrette

(Use fresh herbs if possible!)

6 medium potatoes (red skinned or Yukon gold)

1 pound fresh green beans

½ cup sliced black olives

1 red pepper, cut into bite sized pieces

½ red onion, minced

1 Tablespoon fresh thyme leaves (or 1 teaspoon dried)

1 Tablespoon fresh parsley, chopped fine (or 1 teaspoon dried)

Leaving skin on, cut potatoes into ½ inch pieces. Boil potatoes for about 20 minutes until soft, but not mushy. Trim green beans and cut into 1 inch pieces. Cook until crisp tender, about 5 minutes.

Cool potatoes and beans.

Mix together in a large bowl: green beans, potatoes, red pepper, minced red onion, olives and herbs.

Dressing

1/3 cup light olive oil, ¼ cup white wine vinegar, ¼ cup lemon juice, ½ teaspoon fine sea salt, 1 Tablespoon Dijon Mustard, ¼ teaspoon freshly ground pepper