October is Apple Month!

Nothing says “it’s fall” in Western New York more than the fresh, local apples being sold at farmers’ markets, farm stands and in the supermarket. Many orchards allow families to pick their own apples, which is a great way to spend a sunny, crisp weekend day together. To find U-Pick locations, visit [http://www.nyapplecountry.com/pick.php](http://www.nyapplecountry.com/pick.php).

Store apples in the crisper drawer of your refrigerator to keep them crunchy and delicious. The cool air helps to preserve and keeps them fresher than apples stored at room temperature. Avoid storing them near foods with strong odors like onions. Storing apples with broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, cucumbers or leafy greens can damage the vegetables, as apples give off a gas that can cause other fruits and vegetables to spoil more quickly.

Research shows that apples are a good source of fiber, vitamin C and pectin, which is a soluble fiber that can help lower cholesterol. They make a great, on-the-go snack and are a great ‘fast food’ – just wash and eat! Try adding raw apples to salads and sandwiches, dipping slices in peanut butter for a healthy snack or cooking apples to make your own, fresh applesauce.

In Season This Month: Veggies and Fruits Galore!

This month, before the first frost, look for green and yellow beans, corn, eggplant, lettuce, peppers, spinach, summer squash and tomatoes. All month you can find beets, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, collard greens, kale, leeks, onions, parsnips, potatoes, pumpkins, winter squash, Swiss chard, turnips, apples, grapes, pears and watermelon.
Go to the public library with your child and borrow “Apples” by Gail Gibbons. This terrific book tells the reader about how apples are grown and harvested. After you read the book together, do an apple taste test. Choose a number of different apple varieties from the grocery store or farmers’ market. You only need to buy one apple from each variety you choose. Try varieties you are not familiar with to see if there are other varieties you might like to eat as a family. Rate each variety and decide what variety (or varieties!) is your new favorite apple.

### Autumn Soup

**Serving Size:** 1 1/2 cups  
**Servings per recipe:** 6

**Ingredients:**
- 1 butternut squash (about 4 pounds)  
- 1 tablespoon olive or canola oil  
- 1 onion, diced (about 1 cup)  
- 2 apples (peeled, cored and sliced) (about 2 cups)  
- 4 cups reduced sodium chicken broth  
- 4 ounces Neufchatel cream cheese, cubed

**Directions:**
1. Wash squash and pat dry with a paper towel. Prick skin 6-8 times with a knife or fork. Places squash on a microwave safe plate and microwave for 5 minutes.
2. When the skin of the squash is cool enough to touch, cut off the tops and bottom of the squash. Cut off peel and cut in half lengthwise. Scoop out seeds. Cut squash in cubes.
3. Heat oil in a large saucepan over medium high heat. Add onion and cook for 5 minutes.
4. Add squash, apples and chicken broth. Heat to boiling and then reduce heat to medium low. Cover and cook for 25 minutes until squash and apples are tender.
5. Blend soup until smooth with a blender or food processor.
6. Return soup to saucepan and add Neufchatel cheese. Cook and stir with a whisk until cheese is melted.

*Nutrition Facts: Serving Size – 1 1/2 cup, 210 Calories, 63 Calories from Fat, 7g Total Fat, 30% Calories from Fat, 2.5g Saturated Fat, 0g Trans Fat, 15mg Cholesterol, 440mg Sodium, 35g Total Carbohydrate, 6g Dietary Fiber, 12g Total Sugars, 6g Protein, 0mcg Vitamin D, 138mg Calcium, 955mg Potassium, 2mg Iron

Source: Healthy and Homemade 2019 Nutrition and Fitness Calendar, Iowa State University Extension and Outreach