

2020.08.02 – Fresh Produce

Whether it's the Farmers Market, the "U Pick'em Berry Farm," or your own garden, fresh produce is at its peak and that my friends is a good thing. All around this is a win-win situation. Family farmers benefit directly from your support, and can tell you exactly how their food is grown. Is it organic? Has it been genetically modified? Our environment experiences less pollution from shipping produce miles and miles from where it is grown. This close-to-home food probably isn't gassed or waxed to extend its freshness.

Has it been a while since you went to a Farmer's Market? Has everyone in your family even been to one? This is a great time to make family memories. Put down the electronics and head into the fresh air! You can expect to see a variety of fruits and vegetables, but there are probably a few you have never eaten. In addition to standard carrots, you might find multi colored ones and a variety of heritage tomatoes. You might try one or two vegetables new to you. You can shred kohlrabi like cabbage, or cook parsnips the same way you would potatoes.

Depending on the season, you may find bedding plants, apples, or corn. You might also find eggs, preserves and fresh flowers. It helps remind us and teach kids that food doesn't just show up in the grocery store cooler, blemish free and wrapped in plastic. There are real live people, working in the soil, planting seeds, pulling weeds and harvesting what we eat. You will probably see the same ones week to week. This is a good time to connect with them and learn how to prepare the food. If possible, have your kids pick out a few items. When you get home, they can also help prepare them. You will all eat well for several days.

If it isn't possible to get to a farmers market, there are still vegetables you can grow this fall. In August, once temperatures begin to drop, you can plant radishes, spinach and peas. Some cities host farmer's markets throughout the week. Check with your local city for details.

Here is a recipe using fresh berries. The kids can help with the prep and everyone can enjoy! Modify as needed. ***Strawberry-chocolate Greek yogurt bark***

Line a 10x15 pan or a 9x13 cake pan with parchment paper  
In a bowl mix: 3 cups whole-milk plain Greek yogurt (or any freezable "yogurt")  
1/4 cup maple syrup or honey  
1 tsp vanilla

Pour into the cake pan and top with 1 1/2 cups sliced strawberries  
(or berries of your choice) and 1/4 cup mini chocolate chips

Freeze for 3 hours or until very firm. Cut or break into bite size pieces.  
Take out 15 minutes before serving and enjoy!  
Freeze in an airtight container for up to a month.

Elizabeth (Betsy) Clark, DNP, RN  
Faith Community Nurse  
Saint Andrew Catholic Church and School  
[parishnurse@saint-andrew.net](mailto:parishnurse@saint-andrew.net)

All rights reserved.