

Brussels

Expand your vegetable menu

BY MELANIE POLK
SPECIAL WRITER

Variety is more than just the spice of life, it's the key to a healthy life as well. Eating a variety of wholesome foods is the best way to get all the important nutrients, fiber and phytochemicals that are proving so essential to guard against cancer and other serious diseases.

Scientists don't yet know exactly which specific elements in food offer the most protection, so eating many different kinds of vegetables, fruits and grains provides a full range of health-promoting benefits.

Keep this in mind the next time you're in the produce department, and expand your vegetable repertoire with something you've never tried before.

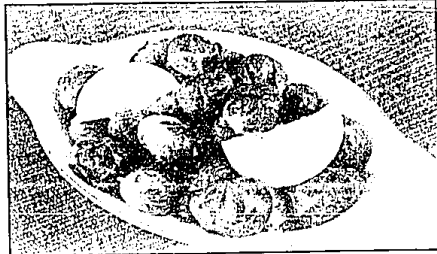
Sample some fresh fennel — it resembles celery, but has a wonderful licorice-like taste. The leafy tops should be unblemished and not limp, and

there should be no brown spots or cracks on the bottom of the bulb. Fennel is delicious eaten raw, so it is a welcome addition to any raw vegetable platter or salad.

It's also popular in Italian cooking; try julienne slices

sautéed with broccoli florets in a bit of olive oil, then sprinkled with lemon juice and seasoned to taste with salt and pepper.

Look for Jerusalem artichokes, whose knobby tubers are starchy like potatoes, but sweeter. Raw, they have the crunch and mild flavor of water chestnuts which make them perfect for salads (try them cubed in a Waldorf



Delicious side dish: This simple recipe for orange-battered brussels sprouts may become a new, easy favorite at your house.

salad). When cooked, they have a sweet, nutty flavor that's great in stir-fries or stews. Try Jerusalem artichoke slices steamed tender crisp with sliced carrots, sautéed onion, garlic and thyme, splashed with lemon juice.

Experiment

Don't let the odd appearance of kohlrabi put you off; it looks and tastes like a cross between turnip and cabbage. You can eat the bulb and the leaves, as both are highly nutritious.

Use the bulbs in any recipe calling for turnips and enjoy the slight cabbage flavor. Serve kohlrabi strips raw with your favorite lowfat dip.

Or, sauté steamed, tender-crisp sliced kohlrabi with corn, tomatoes, scallions, garlic, parsley and a bit of chili powder for a flavorful side dish.

Aside from these vegetables that you may have never encountered before, remember to bring home some "old favorites" that may not be regulars on your menus, like

beets, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, Swiss chard, egg plant, akra, parsnips, or rutabagas.

ORANGE-BUTTERED BRUSSELS SPROUTS

10 ounce package frozen brussels sprouts
2 teaspoon water
2 teaspoon frozen orange juice concentrate
1 teaspoon margarine
1/4 teaspoon sesame seeds

Cook brussels sprouts according to package directions; drain.

Meanwhile, in a small saucepan, combine remaining ingredients. Cook and stir over low heat until margarine melts. To serve, toss orange juice mixture with brussels sprouts.

Nutrition information: Each of the four 2 1/2-cup servings contains 44 calories and 1 gram of fat.

Recipes and information compliments of Melanie Polk, and the American Institute for Cancer Research.

Latkes from page B2

bite to the classic latke. These make a tempting platter, which is sometimes garnished with pesto sauce.

2 eggs
1/4 small onion, but into 3 pieces
4 medium potatoes, peeled and cut into 1-inch chunks
1/4 cup matzo meal
1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese

2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
1/3 to 1/2 cup olive or vegetable oil

In a food processor, combine eggs, onion, and potatoes. Process until onion and potatoes are finely chopped.

Transfer to a mixing bowl and blend in matzo meal, cheese,

parsley, and mustard.

Heat 1/4 cup oil in a large non-stick skillet over medium heat. Slide rounded tablespoons of potato batter into the hot oil, pressing each with a wide spatula to flatten slightly.

Cook until golden brown and crisp on both sides about three minutes per side. Drain on paper towels. Serve hot. Makes 24; 6 to 8 servings.

Sweets from page B2

late butter mixture to beaten sugar and eggs, mix well and stir in crushed peppermint.

Spread mixture evenly into greased and parchment lined half sheet trays.

Bake at 350°F for 35 to 40 minutes until lightly browned. Test by poking wooden toothpick into center of half sheet tray and see if it swipes clean which would indicate brownies being done. Makes about 5 dozen.

SPICED HOLIDAY COOKIES

1/3 cup butter softened
1/3 cup vegetable shortening
1 1/2 cups sugar
1 cup sour cream
1/2 cup molasses
2 eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla
5 1/4 cups flour
1 tablespoon ground cinnamon
2 teaspoons baking powder
2 teaspoons ground ginger
1 teaspoon ground allspice
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon salt

Cream butter, shortening and sugar. Add sour cream, molasses, vanilla and eggs continue to beat until smooth.

In separate bowl combine all dry ingredients. Add half of dry ingredients to wet ingredients, mix well. Add other half to mixture and blend.

Divide dough in two wrap in plastic and chill for two hours. Roll dough 1/4 inch thick and cut with holiday shaped cutters.

Bake on greased or parchment prepared half sheet trays at 350°F 7-9 minutes. Makes about 4 dozen 3-inch cookies

ALMOND APRICOT BISCUITS

2 cups all purpose flour
1 cup whole wheat flour
1 1/4 teaspoons baking powder

1/2 teaspoon salt
1 1/2 cups sugar
1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter

2 whole eggs
1/2 teaspoon almond extract
1 tablespoon grated orange peel

1 cup diced "dried" apricots
1/2 cup sliced toasted almonds

Egg wash
1 egg
1 tablespoon milk

Mix flours, baking powder and

salt. Beat sugar, butter, eggs and extracts

Fold in dry ingredients, nuts and apricots. Divide dough in half and mold into a piece 3 inches wide and 8 inches long.

Brush with Egg Wash made from 1 egg mixed with 1 tablespoon milk.

Bake log in 350°F oven 15-20 minutes until golden brown on prepared cookie sheet with parchment paper.

Cool 8-10 minutes and slice logs on a diagonal 1/2-inch wide slices. Arrange slices cut side down on parchment prepared baking sheet and return to oven for 5 minutes. Remove and cool.

Makes 2 1/2 dozen.

Chef's tip: Melt 1 cup semi-sweet dark chocolate over a double boiler, dip ends of biscotti in chocolate.

DARK CHOCOLATE BARK

2 pounds semi-sweet chocolate (broken up)
1/4 cup walnuts (chopped)
1/2 cup pretzels (chopped)

1/2 cup Holiday M&M's

To make bark, melt chocolate in a double boiler on low heat. Stir in ingredients. Spread evenly on cookie sheet with parchment paper. Chill and break into pieces.

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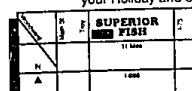
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