



Recipe of the Month

EASY CHEESY EGGPLANT

Eggplant

Dark purple eggplants are the most common type sold commercially in the United States. They weigh about 1 to 5 pounds each and come in two shapes: oval and elongated.

They come in a range of whites, mauves, and purples, although there are also yellow and green varieties.

Eggplants can be striped or solid, fat or sleek, and are considered a vegetable, though botanically, they are fruit.

Eggplants are common in Mediterranean, Italian, Indian, Asian, and Middle Eastern dishes. They are low in fat and contain small amounts of several important vitamins that are needed daily. It is very low in sodium and calories, with only 15 calories for ½ cup serving.

Choose firm, unblemished eggplants that are heavy for their size. They are perishable and grow bitter with age.

Unlike many vegetables, eggplant is not harmed by long cooking. An undercooked eggplant can have a chewy texture; but overcooked eggplant is just very soft.

Both cold and warm temperatures can damage eggplant. It is best to store eggplant uncut and unwashed in a plastic bag in the cooler section of the refrigerator.

Eggplant may be cooked with or without its skin. However, large eggplant and most white varieties have thick, tough skin and should be peeled prior to cooking with a vegetable peeler.

Eggplant can be baked, grilled, steamed, or sautéed. It is versatile and works well with tomatoes, onions, garlic, and cheese. The only way eggplant is unacceptable is raw.

Eggplant is delicious fried, but be warned, they absorb more fat during cooking than most other vegetables.

Presentation Plan

Grocery list:

Eggplant, tomatoes, onions, salt, dried basil, garlic powder, butter, applesauce, mozzarella cheese, Parmesan cheese and whole wheat bread crumbs

Equipment needs:

Cutting board, chef's knife, baking dish, measuring spoons and cups, aluminum foil, oven, oven mitt, serving spoons and sampling plates and fork

Display preparation:

- Cover display table with bright table cloth or placemats for display area.
- If available have several eggplants for display to showcase different varieties.
- Have plates, serving spoons, and forks for sampling.

Demonstration steps:

1. Discuss the focus commodity and talking points for eggplant.
2. Prepare recipe, discussing function of the ingredients to the success of the final product.
3. While eggplant is baking, you will have time to prepare another quick summer recipe.
4. Serve samples to participants.

Easy Cheesy Eggplant

- 3 cups** cubed eggplant
- 2 medium** tomatoes, sliced
- 1 large** onion, sliced
- ¼ cup** melted butter
- ¼ cup** applesauce
- ¼ teaspoon** salt
- ½ teaspoon** dried basil
- ¼ teaspoon** garlic powder
- 8 ounces** shredded mozzarella cheese
- ½ cup** whole wheat bread crumbs
- 2 tablespoons** grated Parmesan cheese

Directions: **Peel** eggplant and slice into ½ inch cubes.

Layer eggplant, tomatoes, and onions in a casserole dish.

Mix butter and applesauce and pour ½ over the vegetable mixture.

Sprinkle with the salt, basil, and garlic powder.

Cover and bake for 20 minutes in a 450° F oven.

Remove from oven and top with mozzarella cheese, whole wheat bread crumbs, and Parmesan cheese. Pour the remaining butter and applesauce mixture over the cheese.

Bake an additional 10 minutes, uncovered.

Yield: 12, ½ cup servings

Nutritional Analysis: *120 calories, 7 g fat, 170 mg sodium, 6 g carbohydrate, 2 g fiber, 6 g protein.*

Source: www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov

For more delicious recipes and information using “Kentucky Proud” fruits and vegetables, contact your local Cooperative Extension Service or visit: www.kentuckyproud.com.

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Kentucky Proud Project

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