

# Snacking and Cooking with Cool-Season Produce from Childcare Production Gardens

## Local Foods: Childcare Center Production Gardens 6

This publication includes simple recipes that childcare center cooks and educators can use to engage children in snacking and cooking with fresh cool-season vegetables from on-site production gardens and elsewhere. This is the sixth of eight publications about childcare center production gardens.

The first publication in this series, *Growing and Cooking Fruits and Vegetables at Childcare Centers* (<http://content.ces.ncsu.edu/childcare-center-production-gardens-1-growing-and-cooking-fruits-and-vegetables-at-childcare-cente/>), provides age-appropriate suggestions for engaging young children in food preparation.

The fourth publication in the series, *Growing Cool Season Vegetables in Childcare Production Gardens* (<http://content.ces.ncsu.edu/childcare-center-production-gardens-4-growing-cool-season-vegetables-in-the-childcare-production-g>), shares easy-to-grow, child-friendly, cool-season vegetables suitable for a childcare production garden.

This publication provides a set of simple recipes for snacks and prepared dishes incorporating production garden produce for children to enjoy.

### SALADS MADE EASY

Salads can be easily created by using seasonal greens and vegetables harvested from the on-site production garden.

#### Greens

- Spinach
- Baby kale
- Mixed lettuces
- Baby chard

#### Vegetables

- Carrots
- Onions
- Broccoli
- Peppers: red, yellow, orange, purple
- Tomatoes
- Green peas
- Sugar snap peas
- Summer squash

### SUGAR SNAP PEAS

#### Raw or lightly cooked

- Eat them raw with a favorite dip.
- Lightly steam and stir in with buttered pasta, parsley, and garlic.
- Roast with olive oil and salt under a broiler until crisp-tender and lightly browned on the edges; drizzle with a few drops of toasted sesame oil before serving.

### ROASTED VEGETABLES

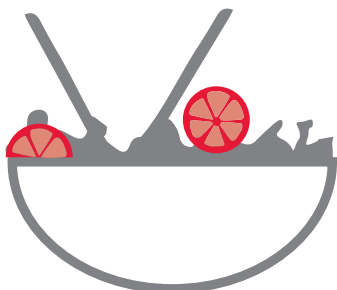
Try various combinations from the roasted vegetables chart below. Choose items that are in season and harvestable from the garden. Increase the amount of oil and seasoning as the quantity of vegetables is increased.

Try these combinations:

- Sweet potatoes and garlic pepper seasoning
- Red potatoes, garlic and rosemary
- Eggplant and parsley
- Carrots and parsley
- Potatoes with cauliflower, onions, and rosemary

### ROASTED VEGETABLE CHART

VEGETABLES	SPICES/HERBS
<b>Use 4 cups of one or more</b>	<b>Use 2-3 teaspoons of one or more</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Broccoli</li> <li>■ Red potatoes</li> <li>■ Sweet potatoes</li> <li>■ Carrots</li> <li>■ Onions</li> <li>■ Peppers</li> <li>■ Eggplant</li> <li>■ Zucchini</li> <li>■ Squash</li> <li>■ Acorn squash</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Chili powder</li> <li>■ Rosemary</li> <li>■ Cumin</li> <li>■ Garlic cloves</li> <li>■ Curry powder</li> <li>■ Sage</li> <li>■ Parsley</li> <li>■ Cinnamon</li> <li>■ Garlic pepper seasoning</li> </ul>
<b>OILS (choose one)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Olive oil</li> <li>■ Canola oil</li> <li>■ Corn oil</li> </ul>	



# Salad Recipes

## MAKE YOUR OWN SALAD DRESSING

### 3 tablespoons of lemon juice or any vinegar

- Lemon juice
- Balsamic vinegar
- Rice vinegar
- Cider vinegar

### ½ cup (or less) oil

- Olive oil
- Canola oil
- Safflower oil
- Vegetable oil

### ½-1 tablespoon of herbs and condiments

- Herbs from garden
- Shallots
- Dijon mustard
- Garlic
- Parmesan cheese

### Salt and pepper to taste

## KALE SALAD

### Serves 12 to 16

- 1 large bunch kale (about 1 pound), washed
- 4 ounces parmesan cheese, grated
- 2 ounces golden raisins
- 2 lemons, juiced
- ½ cup olive oil
- Salt and fresh black pepper

Fold several kale leaves lengthwise and using the point of a chef's knife, cut away the thick center stems and discard. Roll the remaining stack of de-veined leaves into a tight cigar shape and slice into strips. Alternately, have children help prepare by tearing the kale into bite size pieces. Toss the kale with the cheese and raisins. Whisk the lemon juice and olive oil in a small bowl and pour over the salad. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Let the salad sit at room temperature for 10 minutes before serving.



Stirring kale and dressing for a winter salad.

# Roasted Recipes

## ROASTED SWEET POTATOES

### Serves 4 to 6

- 2 to 3 medium sweet potatoes, peeled
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- ½ teaspoon curry powder
- ¼ teaspoon ground cumin
- ⅛ teaspoon ground cloves
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper

Preheat oven to 425°F. Cut sweet potatoes in half lengthwise; cut each half into six wedges. Combine sweet potato wedges, olive oil, and spices in a bowl. Toss gently to coat. Place wedges in a single layer on a baking sheet. Bake until very tender. Serve warm.

## ROASTED BROCCOLI AND RED PEPPERS

### Serves 8 to 10

- 5 cups fresh broccoli florets (about 1 large head)
- 1 red bell pepper, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 2 teaspoons olive or vegetable oil
- ½ teaspoon lemon pepper
- 1 clove garlic, minced

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Add broccoli, pepper, oil, lemon pepper, and garlic to a self-sealing plastic bag; shake until ingredients are combined (or mix together in a bowl). Spread the mixture out in an even layer on a baking sheet. Engage young children by having them shake the bag of vegetables and place them on a baking sheet. Bake until vegetables are tender enough to pierce with a fork, 15 to 20 minutes. Serve warm.

## ROASTED KALE CHIPS

### Serves 6 to 8

- 1 bunch kale
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 teaspoon salt

Heat oven to 300°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Wash kale and dry well. With your hands, remove and discard the thick stems from the kale. Tear leaves into bite-sized pieces. Drizzle kale with olive oil and sprinkle with salt. Toss to coat. Arrange kale pieces in a single layer on the baking sheet. Bake 10 minutes or until edges are slightly brown but not burnt.

# Braised Recipe

## BRAISED COLLARD GREENS

Serves 6 to 8

- 1 large bunch or 2 small bunches collard greens
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 large onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ½ teaspoon red pepper flakes
- Salt and freshly ground pepper
- ½ cup apple cider vinegar
- 1 tablespoon dark brown sugar



To remove stems from collards, stack five or six leaves in a pile and make two long cuts on either side of the ribs from near the top of the leaves down to the stem end. Pull the stems free from the leaves. Cut leaves in half lengthwise, stack the halves, and cut crosswise into ½-inch slices. Repeat with all leaves. Submerge the collards in water in a large bowl or fill a sink with cold water and let rest for a few minutes. Gently lift the collards from the water, leaving the dirt behind.

In a large sauté pan over medium heat, add olive oil and diced onions. Reduce heat to low and cook for 10 minutes until onions are tender and transparent. Add garlic and red pepper flakes, and cook for 1 minute more. Increase heat to medium and add greens. Stir until greens become wilted.

When the greens have wilted, add the cider vinegar, sugar, and salt and pepper to taste; stir. Cook until the vinegar reduces a bit and greens are tender, about 15 to 20 minutes. Taste and adjust for seasoning until a good balance of sweet, sour, and spicy is achieved. Serve warm.

# Sautéed Recipes

## SAUTÉED COLLARD GREENS

Serves 8 to 10

- 2½ pounds collard greens
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- Salt and pepper
- 1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice

Remove and discard stems and center ribs of collard greens. Cut leaves into 1-inch pieces. In a pot of boiling water, cook collards 15 minutes and drain in a colander, pressing out excess liquid with the back of a wooden spoon. In a 12-inch heavy skillet, heat butter and oil over medium-high heat and stir in garlic, collards, and salt and pepper to taste. Sauté collard mixture, stirring until heated through, about 5 minutes. Drizzle collards with lemon juice and toss well. Serve warm.

## SAUTÉED MUSTARD GREENS

Serves 6 to 8

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, chopped
- 1½ pounds mustard greens, washed and chopped
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
- 1 cup chicken stock

Heat olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add onion and garlic, and sauté until tender and fragrant. Mix in the mustard greens. Cook until greens have wilted, about 3 minutes. Add pepper to taste. In a small bowl, whisk the Dijon mustard with the chicken stock. Add mixture to the wilted greens and cook until the liquid has almost evaporated. Serve warm.

## SAUTÉED SWISS CHARD (OR SPINACH)

Serves 6 to 8

- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 bunch Swiss chard greens, chopped (about 4 cups)
- Parmesan cheese, grated
- Toasted bread or crackers

Sauté onions and garlic until onions are clear. Add chopped chard. Continue to sauté until greens are limp. Squeeze the juice out. Spoon greens onto toasted bread or crackers. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese and bake for a few minutes at 325°F. Serve immediately.



**PREPARED BY:**

**Carol Mitchell**, Lead Author, Local Food Coordinator  
Wake County Cooperative Extension

**LOCAL FOODS PUBLICATION EDITOR:**

**Joanna Massey Lelekacs**, Coordinator, Local Foods Program  
NC Cooperative Extension  
Center for Environmental Farming Systems

**CHILDCARE CENTER PRODUCTION GARDENS  
PUBLICATION EDITORS:**

**Robin C. Moore**, Director  
Natural Learning Initiative (NLI)  
NC State College of Design  
with the NLI Early Childhood Gardening Team:

**Nilda Cosco**  
**Sarah Konradi**  
**Mary Archer**  
**Caroline Asher**  
**Karli Stephenson**, Graphic Designer

**PUBLISHED BY:**

NC Cooperative Extension Service

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:**

The authors wish to express appreciation to J. Dara Bloom, Nichole Huff, Susan Jakes, Lynn Policastro, Debra Ireland, and Barbara Scott for their assistance in preparing this publication, and to the John Rex Endowment, [www.rexendowment.org](http://www.rexendowment.org), for their grant support.

**SUGGESTED CITATION:**

Mitchell, C. (2015). *Snacking and Cooking With Cool Season Produce*. LF-007-06. Raleigh: North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service. [content.ces.ncsu.edu/childcare-center-production-gardens-6-snacking-and-cooking-with-cool-season-produce-from-childcare](http://content.ces.ncsu.edu/childcare-center-production-gardens-6-snacking-and-cooking-with-cool-season-produce-from-childcare)



College of Agriculture  
and Life Sciences

---

Distributed in furtherance of the acts of Congress of May 8 and June 30, 1914. North Carolina State University and North Carolina A&T State University commit themselves to positive action to secure equal opportunity regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, sex, age, veteran status, or disability. In addition, the two Universities welcome all persons without regard to sexual orientation. North Carolina State University, North Carolina A&T State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and local governments cooperating.

LF-007-06

09/15–2,300 copies–DI/KS

2,300 copies of this public document were printed at a cost of \$377.89, or \$0.16 per copy

[content.ces.ncsu.edu/childcare-center-production-gardens-6-snacking-and-cooking-with-cool-season-produce-from-childcare](http://content.ces.ncsu.edu/childcare-center-production-gardens-6-snacking-and-cooking-with-cool-season-produce-from-childcare)