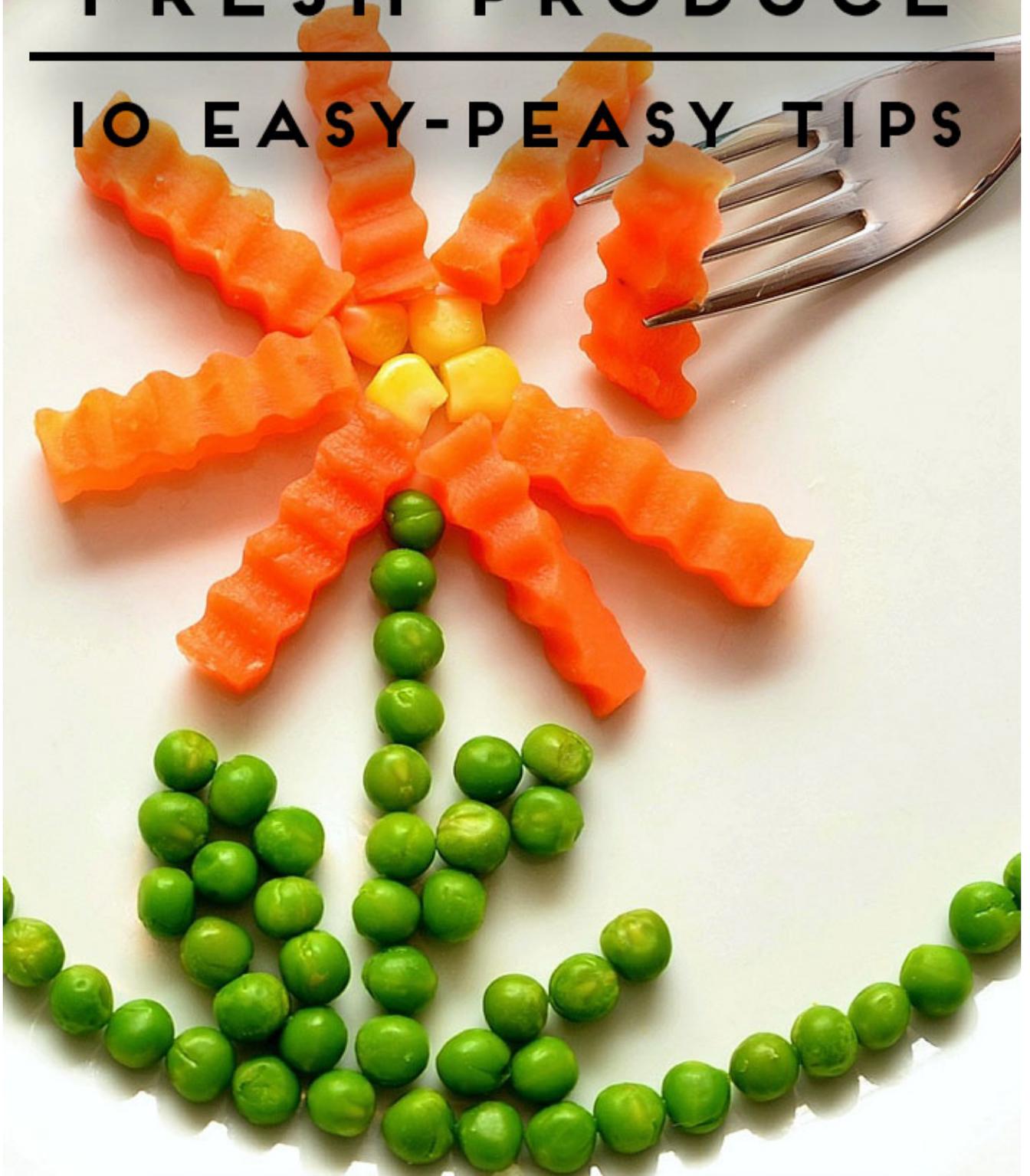


How to Eat More Fresh Produce // 10 Easy-Peasy Tips

HOW TO EAT MORE FRESH PRODUCE

10 EASY-PEASY TIPS



LIVE WELL UTAH

Looking for some easy ways to eat more veggies and fruits? We have 10 tips to help you do just that.

In the last article, we learned about ways to make fruits and vegetables part of your diet on a budget. This is important, because fruits and vegetables are full of essential vitamins and minerals. They are also low in calories, but they have lots of fiber and water. This means that when we eat fruits and vegetables, they fill our stomachs, but don't add a lot of calories. Besides cost, another reason people often don't get enough fruits and vegetables is time or convenience. Read on for 10 tips to make eating fruits and vegetables fit into your busy lifestyle:

1. Keep frozen fruits and vegetables on hand. They have the same amount of nutrition as fresh, and they are all ready to go—no cleaning or chopping needed!
2. Cook fresh or frozen vegetables in the microwave with a little water for a quick side dish.
3. Make extra vegetable soup and freeze it for days when you don't have time to cook. Then just defrost in the microwave.
4. Don't have time to defrost soup? Open a can of low-sodium soup, add a bag of frozen veggies and serve as soon as it is warm.
5. Plan ahead—clean and chop fresh vegetables when you have time so they are ready to go. Then you can use them in recipes, eat them with dip or add them to a salad or wrap. Just be aware that chopped veggies may go bad faster, but most chopped veggies will keep for a few days or a week.
6. Pre-package those chopped veggies in small bags, and then you have an instant snack ready to grab on the way out the door. Think beyond carrot and celery sticks—try bell peppers, cucumbers, broccoli, cauliflower and zucchini slices.

7. Fruits like oranges, apples and bananas make great food on the go without any additional work from you.
8. Just like with the vegetables, you can also clean and chop fruit ahead of time. I like to do this with berries, melons and stone fruits like peaches. Add a little lemon juice to sliced fruit, and package them in small containers so they don't get squashed in your purse or bag.
9. Dried fruit makes a great on-the-go snack, and since it keeps for a long time, you can stash some in your car, desk or bag for when you are hungry and don't have a snack packed. Just make sure you stick to the portion size—you only need $\frac{1}{4}$ cup.
10. Fruits and vegetables can also be a great part of a quick breakfast—try fresh fruit on your cereal, or pack fresh fruit, yogurt and granola in a container or glass jar for breakfast on the go. Most people don't think of vegetables at breakfast, but many vegetables are great with eggs in an omelet, scrambled or even just on the side. My favorite is avocado and salsa!

This article was written by Carrie Durward, Extension Nutrition Specialist