

EATING WELL IN WINTER

By Noelle Armstrong

How do we feed our children in a way that is healthy and in season throughout the winter? This is a question that has been asked time and again over the years. We want to make sure that they are getting all their needed nutrients so their bodies can function and be well throughout the day.

Becoming knowledgeable and being a little creative are two great places to start. The Environmental Working Group, www.ewg.org, will provide you with a list of the foods that are generally higher in pesticides and should be purchased organically, and the foods that are considered safe to purchase conventionally. This is a wonderful tool to keep handy when going to the market. I know that apples, peaches, cherries and lettuce, to name a few, need to be bought organically. But if the pocketbook needs some tightening, bananas, broccoli and avocados are safe to purchase conventionally.

Children may initially turn away from fruits and veggies. Remember, they don't have to eat the whole serving—just a little is enough to start getting their tastes buds used to the flavor. An easy way to start is by adding fruits and veggies to baked goods. Banana bread, pumpkin muffins, or zucchini bread in the morning is a great way to start the day. With one fruit or veggie already consumed, you are ahead of the game. You can add additional puréed carrots, sweet potatoes or cauliflower to these without affecting the flavor. To make the baked goods even healthier you could use the amazing honey from Hanson's Farm in Bridgewater in place of sugar. The exchange would be 1/3 cup honey to one cup of sugar. I use this for everything, even cookies, and no one is the wiser. Instead of oil or butter try a natural or organic applesauce. Using whole wheat pastry flour instead of white or wheat flour also works well. It is still a whole grain, but it is a little lighter than regular whole wheat flour and it tastes delicious.

Here is a great recipe to try; your kids will think they are eating a "cookie" for breakfast!

Breakfast Fruit & Nut Cookie

- ½ cup organic brown sugar
- ¼ cup organic applesauce
- 3 egg whites
- ¼ cup chopped dried cherries
- ¼ cup dried cranberries
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1½ cups whole wheat pastry flour
- ½ cup bran flakes, optional
- 2 Tbsp ground flax seed
- ½ tsp baking soda
- ¼ tsp ground cinnamon
- ¼ tsp ground allspice
- ¼ cup slivered almonds

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Combine sugar, applesauce, and egg whites in a large mixing bowl. Stir in chopped dried fruits and vanilla.

Measure flour into a separate bowl. Combine with bran flakes, baking soda, flax seed and spices. Stir with a whisk or a fork.

Add flour mixture to egg mixture, stirring until just combined. Fold in the almonds.

Drop by tablespoons onto baking sheets lined with parchment paper. Bake for 12 minutes or until lightly browned on top. Cool slightly on pans, then transfer to wire racks to cool completely

The recipe was adapted from *The Eat Clean Cookbook*, by Tosca Reno.

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