



# NUTRITION NEWS

GARDENING: SAVINGS & STAYING ACTIVE

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## GARDENING



Gardening involves cultivating a plot of land with various plants, such as fruits, flowers, herbs, and vegetables. It has recently gained popularity, even with easy and inexpensive grocery store food access. Gardening has many benefits:

- *Increased exercise*
  - A day of gardening provides a full-body workout through functional movements, including squats, lunges, or physically intense exercise.
- *Saving money*
  - Growing your own produce can save money. Even a small backyard plot can yield plenty of fresh fruits and veggies.
- *Improved diet*
  - Gardening and eating homegrown produce can improve your diet by increasing vegetable consumption.
- *Time in nature*
  - Spending time outside is beneficial for both physical and mental well-being.
- *Reduced stress levels*
  - Gardening can reduce stress by improving mood, lowering anxiety levels, and providing a satisfying experience.
- *Social connection*
  - Gardening fosters social connections and reduces stress. The gardening community is welcoming and supportive, sharing knowledge and plants with new gardeners.

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## TIPS FOR BEING A GARDENER!



- Make sure to work with healthy soil.
- Plant seeds or get transplants.
- Make containers or raised beds.
- Understand how much sunlight plants need.
- Water needs to be readily available.

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# RECIPE IDEAS FOR A GARDENER!

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## BALSAMIC CUCUMBER SALAD

*Prep: 5 minutes   Total: 15 minutes   Servings: 6*



### *Ingredients*

- 1 large cucumber
- 2 cups grape tomatoes
- 1 medium red onion
- 1/2 cup balsamic vinaigrette
- 3/4 cup crumbled feta cheese

### *Directions*

1. Cut cucumber in half and cut tomatoes in halves, and cut onion in half and slice thinly.
2. In a large bowl, combine cucumber, tomatoes and onion. Add vinaigrette; toss to coat. Refrigerate, covered, until serving. Just before serving, stir in cheese. Serve with a slotted spoon.

## GRILLED GARDEN PIZZA

*Prep: 20 minutes   Total: 30 minutes   Servings: 6*



### *Ingredients*

- 2 plum tomatoes
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1 frozen pizza dough
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1/2 cup shredded Parmesan
- 1/2 cup corn
- 1/4 cup red onion
- 8 oz. mozzarella cheese
- 1/2 cup spinach
- 3 Tbsp. basil

### *Directions*

1. Sprinkle tomatoes with salt; set aside. On a lightly floured surface, divide dough in half. Roll or press each to 1/4-in. thickness; place each on a greased sheet of foil (about 10 in. square). Brush tops with 1 tablespoon oil.
2. Carefully invert crusts onto a grill rack, removing foil. Brush tops with remaining oil. Grill, covered, over medium heat until bottom is golden brown, 2-3 minutes. Remove from grill; reduce grill temperature to low.
3. Top grilled sides of crusts with Parmesan or Asiago cheese, tomatoes, corn, onion and mozzarella cheese. Grill, covered, on low heat until cheese is melted, 4-6 minutes. Sprinkle with spinach and basil.