

# Know your Veggies: Fennel

February 2011

All of us know we need to eat more vegetables. The reason many don't like vegetables is because of dead taste buds. When one is a big consumer of highly processed foods (fast foods or eating most of your food from a box, bag or can), they're consuming foods with excessive amounts of salt, artificial flavor enhancers and preservatives. If you want to eat more vegetables and be able to appreciate how good they do taste, focus on reducing or eliminating those processed foods!

Another reason many people struggle with vegetable intake is they get stuck in a "carrot rut". We tend to eat the same vegetables all the time and get burnt out; usually sticking with the habit of eating whatever our families ate when we were growing up. The focus of the next few newsletters will be to educate you on a few new vegetables you can try out.

We would like to take this time to introduce you to "Fennel" (pronounced: feh-nell).

Fennel can be a replacement for celery in recipes and the feathery leaves can be used as a spice or garnish. It's a strong antioxidant (quercetin, kaempferol, rutin) which makes it useful for reducing inflammation and helping with recovery from chemotherapy and radiation.

Fennel has also been used medicinally to help regulate menstrual cycles, stimulate lactation and facilitate birth.

## Nutrition Density: 1 cup sliced, raw

- Calories: 27.0
- Protein: 1.1g
- Total Carbohydrate: 6.3g
  - Dietary Fiber: 2.7g
  - Sugars ~
  - Starch ~
  - Glycemic load: 2 ☺
- Calcium: 42.6mg
- Magnesium: 14.8mg
- Potassium: 360mg ☺
- Sodium: 45.2mg
- Vitamin A: 117IU
- Folate: 23.5 mcg

**TASTE:** sweet yet spicy flavor that resembles licorice.

**TEXTURE:** similar to celery without the bothersome strings.

**USES:** eaten raw, sautéed, soups and casseroles.

*NOTE: For those that aren't a fan of licorice, cooking does mellow the licorice flavor.*

**CHOOSING:** Look for a firm, white bulb with full stalks. Trimmed stalks indicate an old vegetable which may not be as flavorful or nutrient dense.



There are many videos on the internet that can teach you how to prepare fennel for cooking. Visit [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) and search "best fennel tips".

### **Italian Fennel Casserole** Serves 4

- 2 tablespoons oil (preferably coconut oil)
- 1 large onion, peeled and sliced thin into ½" – 1" pieces
- 3 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1 pound fennel, sliced thin into ½" – 1" pieces
- 12 oz chopped tomatoes
- Salt and pepper, to taste



#### Topping

- 8-10 ounces of breadcrumbs
- 3-4 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 teaspoon sea salt
- 1-2 teaspoons black pepper

#### Directions:

Preheat oven to 400°. Heat oil in a large pan. Add onions and garlic. Sauté for about 3 minutes. Add fennel and sauté another 5 minutes. Add tomatoes, season with salt and pepper, and cover and simmer for 10 minutes. Then, transfer the mixture to a lightly greased 2 quart oven proof dish. Mix the bread crumbs, olive oil, salt and pepper and sprinkle over the top then bake (uncovered) for 15-20 minutes until the top is nice and crisp. Serve immediately.

### **Fennel Sauté** Serves 4

- 2 fennel bulbs, sliced thin into ½" – 1" long pieces
- 1 large sweet onion (Vidalia), sliced thin into ½" to 1" long pieces
- 1-2 tablespoons butter
- Salt/pepper to taste

#### Directions:

In a sauté pan, melt butter over medium heat. Add onions, sauté for 5 minutes then add fennel and salt and pepper to taste. Sauté another 10 minutes and serve.

### **Fennel Cucumber Salsa**

- 1 English cucumber, diced
- 1 large fennel bulb, diced
- 1 avocado - peeled, pitted, and diced
- 1/2 red onion, chopped
- 1/2 cup pickled banana peppers, diced
- 1 bunch cilantro, chopped
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- salt and pepper to taste

#### Directions:

Combine the cucumber, fennel, avocado, red onion, banana peppers, cilantro, honey, lemon juice, salt, and pepper in a bowl. Allow mixture to sit 20 minutes before serving.

**Don't Guess About  
Your Health...**

**Schedule a Nutrition  
Consultation Today**

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Federal Law requires that we warn you of the following:

1. Your individual health status and any required health care treatments can only be properly addressed by a professional healthcare provider of your choice. Remember: There is no adequate substitution for a personal consultation with your chosen health care provider. Therefore, we encourage you to make your own health care decisions based upon your research and in partnership with a qualified health care professional.

2. The Constitution guarantees you the right to be your own physician and to prescribe for your own health.