

10 Tips for Getting Children to Eat Fresh Produce!

From The Produce Lady





Meet The Produce Lady

Brenda Sutton, Director, N.C. Cooperative Extension, Rockingham County

The Produce Lady

Resources for consumers and farmers:

- ❖ Video series
- ❖ Easy, nutritious recipes
- ❖ Tips on food safety & healthy eating
- ❖ Farmers market demonstrations
- ❖ News columns & Newsletter
- ❖ The Produce Lady online
 - Website (www.theproducelady.org)
 - YouTube
 - The Produce Lady Blog
 - Facebook



Coordinated by N.C. MarketReady, the Extension outreach of the N.C. State University Plants for Human Health Institute.



1. Grow a Garden with the Children



Get your children involved in growing a vegetable garden. It will help them to appreciate fresh produce – plus children are more likely to eat what they grow!

2. Keep it Fresh



Prepare produce that's fresh and in-season where you live. There's no way to imitate the flavors of fresh-from-the-farm fruits and vegetables. Your children will notice the difference in taste!

The best bet for quality produce: your local farmers market.

3. Meet Your Local Farmers



Make a visit to your local farmers market a fun family outing. You'll find the best local produce, and you can introduce your children to the farmers who grow their food. Encourage them to ask questions and help choose fresh fruits and vegetables. Have an adventure and bring the "Farmers Market Treasure Hunt" sheet you can find on theproducelady.org!

4. All in the Family



The family that cooks together eats more fresh produce together! Have your little sous-chefs help gather and prepare the ingredients. Let them select the correct utensils, measuring cups, bowls and other materials. It helps children look at fruits and vegetables in a new way when they're a part of the preparation process.

5. Mix it Up



Add fruits and veggies into dishes your children enjoy. Mix fruit pieces in with yogurt or make [fruit smoothies](#). Add chopped fruit, especially berries and bananas, to your child's cereal. Mix in chopped veggies with pasta sauces, lasagna, casseroles, chili, omelets and other common dishes or add them as toppings for pizza.

And for dessert: [chocolate zucchini cake!](#)

6. Seasonal Snacks



Snacks that have a seasonal or holiday theme are always a hit with children. “Mummy Bones” are Halloween favorites, but are delicious any time! Look for this and other simple seasonal snacks on my [Recipes page](#). Get creative and ask your children to brainstorm ideas for their own seasonal treat using tasty fruits and vegetables!



7. Parents Eat Produce, Too!



Parents are a key ingredient in getting children to appreciate the vibrant colors, sweet smells and fantastic flavors of fruits and vegetables. If you eat and enjoy fresh produce, chances are your children will too. Leading by example is important!



8. Grilling is Great



Try grilling corn-on-the-cob, tomatoes and even peaches this summer (make sure there's ice cream on the side)! Don't let your children miss out on the produce-grilling experience – nothing ever tasted so good!

9. Cool Treats on Hot Days



Fresh fruit pops are healthy summer snacks that children will request! Have them help skewer seasonal fruits like watermelon, cantaloupe, grapes, peaches or blueberries on a kebab. Put the pops in the freezer just long enough to develop frost and they're good to go. Simple, short and sweet!

10. Persistence Pays!



We all know the adage, “If at first you don’t succeed, try, try again.” Be creative and explore new ways to enjoy fresh fruits and vegetables. It’s never too early to introduce wonderful, fresh produce into your children’s diets. Who knows – you may even find a new favorite dish!



4-H Children Resources

Contact your county [N.C. Cooperative Extension Center](#) for 4-H gardening and cooking projects for children.





Contact

The Produce Lady is coordinated by N.C. MarketReady, the Extension outreach of the N.C. State University Plants for Human Health Institute at the N.C. Research Campus.

Project Coordinator: Leah Chester-Davis (leah_chester-davis@ncsu.edu)

The Produce Lady: Brenda Sutton (brenda_sutton@ncsu.edu)

Writer: Justin Moore

www.theproducelady.org