



# Chef Charles Says...



January

## Pick a Better... Beverage

Water, whether you consume it as a beverage or in food, is essential for life and good health. Because water has zero calories, drinking water is one way to limit calories. To increase your water intake consider the following:

- ◆ When you are thirsty, think water first instead of caloric beverages.
- ◆ When you are dining out, order water with meals. It is usually free.
- ◆ When you eat at home, serve water with meals.
- ◆ Keep a jug or bottles of cold water in the refrigerator.
- ◆ When choosing a beverage remember to use a large glass for water and a small glass for juice.

Not everyone likes the taste of plain water. Here are some suggestions for other low calorie options:

- ◆ Make water more exciting by drinking carbonated water or adding slices of lime, lemon, cucumber, or watermelon, which add flavor with few calories.
- ◆ Add a splash of 100 percent juice to plain sparkling water for a refreshing, low calorie drink.

So how much water do you need? In general, doctors recommend 8 or 9 cups a day. One approach is the “8 x 8 rule.” Drink eight 8-ounce glasses of water a day. The rule could also be stated, “drink eight 8-ounce glasses of fluid a day” as all fluids count toward the daily total. Although the approach really is not supported by scientific evidence, many people use this easy-to-remember rule as a guideline for how much water and other fluids to drink.



## Get the News

### Putting Nutrition Labels to Work

Nutrition facts labels work, but not enough of us are using them. People who read nutrition facts labels eat fewer calories, and less total fat, saturated fat, cholesterol and added sugars than non-label readers. In a nationwide survey, only 61.6% said they regularly check the nutrition facts label. Usage of other label resources was even lower: 51.6% check the ingredients list, 47.2% look at serving size, and 43.8% consider health claims when pondering a food purchase.

*Journal of American Dietetic Association, August 2010*



Chef Charles

Says...

Over the past three decades, the size of the average dinner plate has increased from nine to eleven inches. The larger the plate, the more likely you will be to fill it. Trick yourself into eating smaller portions by using smaller plates if you need to control your weight.



Developed by:  
Iowa Department of Public Health, [www.idph.state.ia.us/nutritionnetwork](http://www.idph.state.ia.us/nutritionnetwork)  
Iowa Department on Aging, [www.state.ia.us/elderaffairs](http://www.state.ia.us/elderaffairs)

Information & resources for seniors with home & family questions

ISU AnswerLine 1-800-262-3804

## Chef Charles Asks the Questions Is Fresh Food Really Better?

University research has found that canned, fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables all contain important nutrients that contribute to a healthy diet. Each form has benefits. Long shelf life, variety, convenience and out-of-season availability are great reasons to keep canned items on hand, for instance. Results also showed that by the time food is eaten; fresh, frozen and canned fruits and vegetables are nutritionally similar.

### What about all the sodium in canned foods?

Sodium is not needed in the canning process, but salt may be added to enhance the food's taste. Literally hundreds of canned items are available in low- and no-sodium options, and many manufacturers are continuing to reduce sodium content in their products by simply draining and rinsing canned food before reheating it, sodium can be reduced by 23-45%,



according to a 2007 study published in the *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*. Take a second look on the grocery shelf for a no- or low-sodium version of your favorite canned items. The recommended daily intake of sodium for people over the age of 40 is 1500 mg.

### Are the preservatives found in canned foods a problem?

No chemicals or added preservatives are needed for the canning process. Fresh fruits and vegetables are picked at the peak of freshness and often within hours, packed into a can, sealed and preserved through cooking. It is a simple concept that has provided consumers with nutrient-rich, freshly preserved food for the past 200 years. Since canned foods do not use preservatives, once they're opened, treat the ingredients as fresh. Transfer any unused portion to a clean, covered container, refrigerate and use within a couple of days.

## Be Active Resistance Training Fights Muscle Loss

From age 60 to 70, people who are physically inactive can lose about one percent of lean muscle mass a year. The loss doubles again about every 10 years. This eventually causes frailty in old age, making older adults more susceptible to falls and fractures, which limit their ability to live independently. Through resistance weight training with enough sustained intensity and time, older adults can slow down the loss of lean muscle mass or delay the losses that happen with normal aging. Stretch bands are a great example of resistance training. Before



you start, always check with a qualified health care provider. To support success remember to:

- ◆ Get good information from web sites, books, physical therapists and personal trainers on resistance training.
- ◆ Warm up before each exercise session with stretches and as much as five minutes of walking.
- ◆ Stop if you feel pain other than the resistance you expect to feel.
- ◆ Use resistance training only every other day, giving your muscles time to rest.
- ◆ Slowly increase your repetitions per set until you feel real resistance (tiredness of the muscle).
- ◆ Keep records of which exercises you use and muscle groups worked. Change exercises on a regular basis every six weeks to get the most from your workout.
- ◆ Always cool down with stretches.
- ◆ If you're on vacation or "fall off the wagon," try to get back into your routine within two weeks, as any prolonged layoff reduces the benefits developed during the prior period of exercise.

# Food Safety:

## Understanding Dates on Food Products

Expiration dates can alert you to danger, but not all foods carry them. While you can simply toss bad food, how do you know what is bad? Here is what to look for:



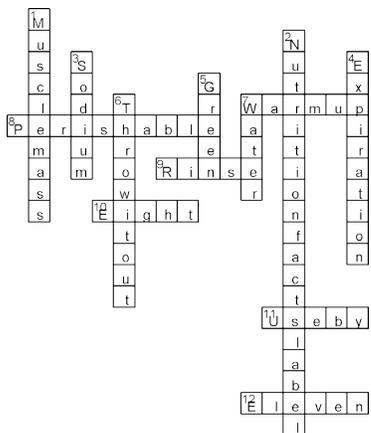
Check for product dates. An expiration date shows the last date the food should be consumed. A use-by date indicates the last day the product is likely to have peak flavor. A sell by or pull date indicates the last day a product should be sold.

Product codes, a series of letters and numbers, are used to track foods and if needed, recall them. They do not indicate a use-by date.

If you cannot find a date on canned food, remember that high-acid canned foods, such as tomatoes, can last 12-18 months and low-acid foods (fish, meat, and most vegetables) can last two to five years.

Do not open a can that is bulging, dented, or rusting because it can harbor harmful bacteria. Once opened, the food becomes perishable and should not be left unrefrigerated for more than two hours.

It is never a good idea to taste food to see if it is bad and the best advice is when in doubt, throw it out.



**Answers**

## Broccoli Mandarin Orange Salad



- 2 1/2 cups broccoli florets
- 1 tablespoon almonds
- 1 - 11 oz. can of mandarin orange sections, well drained
- 1 orange, grated peel and juice
- 2 green onions, chopped
- 4 teaspoons white vinegar
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1 tablespoon olive oil

Steam broccoli florets in covered saucepan for 3 minutes only. Remove quickly and rinse with cold running water until broccoli is no longer warm. Do not cook further. Place in serving bowl and chill, covered. Meanwhile, in a medium-sized bowl, combine almonds, drained mandarin oranges, grated peel and juice from orange, green onions, and remaining ingredients. Toss gently and allow to stand at room temperature for about 15 to 30 minutes. When ready to serve, pour marinated orange mixture on chilled broccoli and toss very gently. Season to taste with salt and pepper, if desired, and serve. Makes three one-cup servings.

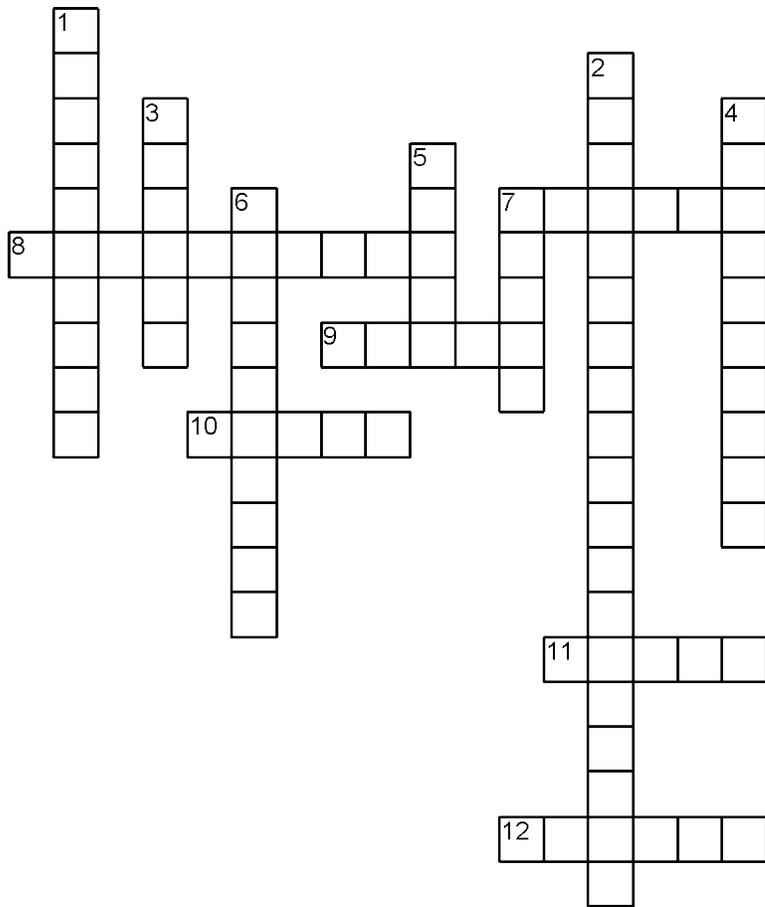
**Chef's Notes:** Vividly green vegetables such as green beans, cucumbers, broccoli, and zucchini will slowly turn a drab yellow-green color when in the presence of acids for a moderate period. To keep this salad bright in color, the orange-flavored salad dressing is added just before serving.

Calories 165; Sodium 81 mg; Protein 3 gm; Calcium 80 mg; 147mcg folate; 571 mg potassium

A Fruits & Veggies, More Matters® recipe from CDC.



# To Your Health!



## Across

7. Do this before beginning exercises.
8. When canned food is opened it becomes \_\_\_\_\_.
9. To reduce sodium content in canned foods, do this before heating.
10. How many 8-ounce glasses of fluid, including water, should you drink a day?
11. This date indicates last day the food will be peak flavor.
12. The average dinner plate diameter is \_\_\_\_\_ inches.

## Down

1. If you are physically inactive, you will lose this.
2. People who read this eat fewer calories, fat, cholesterol and sugar.
3. This ingredient is not required in the canning process for canned vegetables.
4. This date indicates the last day food should be consumed.
5. Add acid ingredients just before serving to keep \_\_\_\_\_ vegetable color bright.
6. When in doubt, \_\_\_\_\_.
7. This beverage is essential for life and good health.

## Resource

### Eldercare Locator Gets an Upgrade

The Eldercare Locator, a free, public service that connects older adults and caregivers with resources in their community, is getting a makeover. The enhanced toll-free call center (800-677-1116) and redesigned website now offer a connection to live information specialists and access to extensive resources. You may also access the information at: [www.eldercare.gov](http://www.eldercare.gov).



This material was funded by the Iowa Nutrition Network and USDA's Food Assistance Program. The Food Assistance Program provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. Food Assistance can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To learn more about Iowa's Food Assistance Program, contact your local county Department of Human Services office. Call 2-1-1 to find out how to contact your local office. Information also can be found at [www.yesfood.iowa.gov](http://www.yesfood.iowa.gov). In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, political beliefs or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250 or call (202)720-5964. USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.