

Food Facts and Fiction

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From now until April, I am giving you the chance to get free information about virtually anything you would like to know about food! All you need to do is e-mail me at ahanlon@upe.ca and I will either reply to your e-mail or answer your question in my column. Don't worry, I won't mention your name because that's just unprofessional.

I like to bake and I am trying to find a low calorie replacement for sugar. Besides "Sweet and Low", is there anything else I can use? I know "Sweet and Low" is bad for you because it is aspartame.

You're right, "Sweet and Low" is bad for you and you can't cook with aspartame because heat inactivates the quality in the aspartame that makes it sweet. Stevia is a new product that can be used in cooking and has virtually no calories. I tasted a muffin made with stevia and I didn't notice the difference. However, I tried putting stevia in my tea and I didn't like the taste at all. You can get stevia at health food stores. If you only shop at supermarkets, try their health sections before looking in their sugar aisles.

I am trying to eat more vegetables and fruit but I am getting bored with the same old stuff. Since fresh produce is kind of expensive, I don't want to start trying all these new products that I'll end up disliking. Have

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you tried any "different" kinds of fruits and vegetables? If you have, which products would you suggest?

By "same old stuff", I assume you mean products such as carrots, tomatoes, broccoli, apples, grapes, nectarines, and bananas. Asparagus is really tasty and often not as expensive as you would think. Snow peas are one of my personal favorites and are a great base for stir fry. Summer squash is a pumpkin-like vegetable that is bright orange in the middle. It can be easily placed in the oven at 350 F without doing any preparation before hand. The squash's center will become tender enough to eat and is tasty when Becel is added to it.

Red-skinned papaya is a fruit that is similar in texture to a kiwi. These papayas are to be cut in half and eaten with a spoon. The inside flesh is white with edible black seeds and the flavour is very subtle. Another fun fruit to eat is starfruit. You have to peel starfruit and they are not exactly bursting with flavour but when you cut them as if you were cutting a banana, each piece is a perfect star. Real pineapple is a huge surprise to those people who have only ever eaten canned pineapple. Real pineapple is so much sweeter and refreshing than the canned stuff. It is also affordable if you are only eating it occasionally and it is, by far, my favorite fruit.

So food guru, tell me. How perfect is your diet? I saw you at the wave scarfing down those chicken wings.

No comment.

P.S. Wings at the wave rock!!

Residence Life by Rebecca Shorten



"... And what are you supposed to be?"
"Uhh...I'm a ghost? Can I have my candy now?"