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Using, Storing, and Preserving Broccoli  
Michigan State University Extension Service  
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# BROCCOLI

Michigan-grown broccoli is available July through October.

## NUTRITION INFORMATION

One cup of raw broccoli has:

- 20 Calories.
- 0 grams fat.
- 2 grams fiber.

Broccoli is high in both vitamins A and C. A food is high in a nutrient if a serving provides 20 percent or more of the Daily Value for that nutrient.

Nutrient information is based on the USDA nutrient composition database.

## HOW TO BUY



■ Choose broccoli with dark green florets (they may have a purplish cast). If the florets are enlarged, opened, yellowish-green or wilted, the broccoli is not fresh.

- Avoid broccoli with thick, tough stems.
- Do not buy broccoli that is soft or slippery (this is a sign of spoilage).

## YIELD

1 pound of broccoli equals about:

- 6 cups raw, trimmed pieces (florets and stems).
  - 4 to 6 servings (1 cup raw, 1/2 cup cooked, chopped).
- 2 to 3 pounds fresh broccoli equal 2 pints frozen broccoli.

## HOW TO STORE

Store broccoli in the refrigerator in a plastic bag. Use broccoli within 3 days of purchase. The longer you store broccoli, the lower the vitamin content.

## FOOD SAFETY TIPS

Keep broccoli in the refrigerator away from raw meat so that meat juices do not contaminate it. Wash broccoli using cool running water before preparing or eating.

## QUICK AND EASY SERVING TIPS

- Include raw or 2-minute blanched broccoli on a raw veggie tray. Serve broccoli florets and/or stalks that have been peeled and cut into sticks. Low-fat ranch-style dressing makes an easy dip.
- Lightly brush cooked broccoli with lemon juice, margarine or butter.
- Add chopped, cooked broccoli to omelets or scrambled eggs.
- Fresh broccoli is delicious in stir-fry dishes, casseroles and salads and on pizza.

## HOW TO PREPARE

### To blanch or boil

Put water into a saucepan and bring to a boil. There should be enough water to just cover broccoli. Add the washed and trimmed broccoli. Quickly bring to a second boil and cook, uncovered, over medium heat for 3 to 5 minutes.

### To steam

Wash and trim broccoli. Cut broccoli into pieces. Bring about 1 inch of water to a boil in a saucepan. Fill steamer basket with broccoli, arranging larger pieces on the bottom, and put it over the boiling water in the saucepan. Cover, and steam 3 to 5 minutes or until desired tenderness.

### To stir-fry

Wash and trim broccoli. Cut off florets and save in a bowl. Peel stalks and cut into 1- to 2-inch strips, or angle cut. Heat 1 teaspoon of oil for each cup of broccoli. Stir-fry stalks for 1 minute in hot oil, then add florets. Stir-fry another 2 to 3 minutes.



# BROCCOLI

Remove from heat. If you prefer softer broccoli, cover and let sit for a few minutes.

## To microwave

Place 1 pound of washed, trimmed broccoli in a covered dish with 1/4 cup water. Cook on high power 6 to 8 minutes, rotating halfway through cooking. Let stand 3 minutes.

Note: Microwave cooking times are provided as a guide. Cooking times vary due to differences in microwave ovens. Check product often for desired doneness.

## RECIPES

### Broccoli Soup

1 1/2 cups broccoli, washed and chopped (or 10-ounce package frozen chopped broccoli, thawed)	2 cups nonfat milk
1/4 cup celery, washed and diced	2 tablespoons cornstarch
1/4 cup onion, peeled and chopped	1/4 teaspoon salt
1 cup low-sodium chicken broth	dash pepper
	dash ground thyme
	1/4 cup grated Swiss cheese

Place vegetables and broth in a saucepan. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, cover and cook over medium heat 8 minutes or until vegetables are tender. Mix milk, cornstarch, salt, pepper and thyme. Add to cooked vegetables. Cook, stirring constantly, until soup is slightly thickened and mixture just begins to boil. Remove from heat. Add cheese and stir until melted. Makes 4 (1 1/4 cup) servings.

This is an official 5 A Day recipe. Official recipes of the 5 A Day program meet specific criteria developed by the Produce for Better Health Foundation in cooperation with the National Cancer Institute.

Nutritional analysis per serving: 115 Calories; 3 grams (g.) fat; 10 milligrams (mg.) cholesterol; 225 mg. sodium.

### Broccoli Baked Potatoes

6 medium russet potatoes  
3 stalks broccoli  
1/4 cup skim milk  
1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese  
1/8 teaspoon pepper

Scrub potatoes. Make shallow slits around the middle as if you were cutting the potatoes in half lengthwise. Bake at 400 degrees F until tender, about 45 minutes. Peel broccoli stems. Steam whole stalks just until tender and chop finely. Carefully slice the potatoes in half and scoop the insides into a bowl with the broccoli. Add the milk,

3/4 cup cheese and pepper. Mash together until the mixture is pale green with dark green flecks. Heap into the potato shells and sprinkle with remaining cheese. Return to oven to heat through (about 15 minutes). Makes 6 (whole potato) or 12 (1/2 potato) servings.

This is an official 5 A Day recipe.

Nutrition analysis per potato: 315 Calories; 6 g. fat; 25 mg. cholesterol; 6.6 g. fiber; 160 mg. sodium.

## HOW TO PRESERVE



Broccoli and other similar strong-flavored vegetables usually discolor and grow stronger in flavor when canned. For this reason, freezing, not canning, is recommended. Freezing will result in a higher quality product.

### To freeze broccoli

- Select firm, young, tender stalks with compact heads. Remove leaves and woody portions.
- Immerse in brine (4 teaspoons salt to 1 gallon water) for 30 minutes to remove insects. Split lengthwise so florets are not more than 1 1/2 inches across. Rinse and drain.
- Blanch 3 minutes in boiling water or steam for 5 minutes. Cool promptly in cold water and drain.
- Pack into airtight freezer containers, leaving no head space. Seal, label, date and freeze. Use frozen broccoli within 8 to 12 months for best quality.

Freeze no more than 1 quart (2 to 3 pounds) of food per cubic foot of freezer capacity per day. A cubic foot will hold 30 quarts of food.

## INFORMATION

For more information on food, food preservation, USDA-tested and approved canning recipes, nutrition and health, see <<http://www.msue.msu.edu>>.

Information in this bulletin is based on USDA Canning Guide (September 1994), Using and Storing Broccoli (Michigan State University Extension, 1993), E-1881 Food Preservation Series-Broccoli (Michigan State University Extension, 1997), and So Easy to Preserve (University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Service, 1993).



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