

# SNACK FACTS

## CUCUMBERS



**Don't forget to wash your hands before you eat!**  
Handwashing is one of the simplest and best ways to stay healthy and prevent spreading germs.

### CUCUMBERS

Vegetable family: gourd

**Are cucumbers grown in Ontario?**

- YES!
- Ontario produces 3 varieties: "Slicing", "Mini" and "Ontario Greenhouse" or English cucumbers.

**The cucumbers sent to your school were grown in Grimsby, Ontario**

**When are cucumbers grown?**

- Cucumbers can be grown in a field or in a greenhouse.
- Field cucumbers peak from June to September.
- Greenhouse cucumbers peak from February to July and again in September and October.

**How are cucumbers used?**

- As a fresh and crispy snack
- Cut up into slices and added to salads or sandwiches
- To make pickles or relish

**Where are the nutrients?**

- Many are in the skin of the cucumber

**Did you know?**

- Cucumber skins are a good source of Vitamin K
- Botanically, cucumbers are really a fruit

Vegetables and fruit contain vitamins, minerals, fibre and belong to five different colour groups: red, yellow-orange, green, blue-purple, and white-tan-brown.

Cucumbers belong to the green colour group:

- Green vegetables and fruit contain special compounds called *phytochemicals* such as *lutein* which may help maintain vision and *indoles* that may help lower the risk of some cancers.

**Reference:** *Paint Your Plate! Create a Masterpiece Vegetable and Fruit Action Guide for Schools.* Northern Healthy Eating Project. 2006.

Paint your plate.  
Create a masterpiece.



**Students:**

- Do you know where Grimsby, Ontario is? Can you find it on a map? (Answer on back)

**Parents:**

- Next time you're grocery shopping with your child ask them to pick out a cucumber to eat that week.

**Teachers:**

- For ideas on how to make vegetables and fruit come alive in your class, refer to *Paint Your Plate! Create a Masterpiece Vegetable and Fruit Action Guide for Schools.*



# SNACK FACTS

## Why buy local produce?

- To support local farmers and farming families
- Produce bought at farmer's markets or roadside stands can be cheaper
- Visiting local "pick your own" farms can be a fun activity for the whole family
- Local produce doesn't have to travel as far which means less pollution is created during transportation, fewer waxes, chemicals and pesticides are used and most importantly, it is fresh and tasty!

## Why not grow your own produce?

Do you have extra space in your back yard or along the side of your house? Planting your own food could make a fun family project and children will enjoy eating produce they helped grow. Ask your child what vegetables or fruit they would like to grow. Here are some ideas:

- |               |                |
|---------------|----------------|
| • Tomatoes    | • Beets        |
| • Potatoes    | • Celery       |
| • Cucumbers   | • Lettuce      |
| • Green Beans | • Carrots      |
| • Cauliflower | • Squash       |
| • Peas        | • Broccoli     |
| • Cabbage     | • Turnips      |
| • Peppers     | • Strawberries |

Source: *How does our garden grow? A guide to community garden success* by Laura Berman. FoodShare Metro Toronto, 1997  
For more information visit [www.foodshare.ca](http://www.foodshare.ca)

## Where is... Grimsby, Ontario?

Grimsby is a town in the Niagara Region, near Lake Ontario.



## Asian Carrot Cucumber Pickle

- 1/2 cup (125 mL) rice wine vinegar
- 2 tbsp (30 mL) granulated sugar
- 1 tsp (5 mL) olive oil
- 1/2 tsp (2 mL) salt
- 1/4 tsp (1 mL) ground black pepper
- 1/2 large English cucumber, halved and thinly sliced
- 2 cups (500 mL) thinly sliced carrots
- 2 tbsp (30 mL) finely chopped red bell pepper



In a medium bowl, whisk vinegar, sugar, oil and black pepper until sugar is dissolved. Add cucumber, carrots and red bell pepper; toss to coat. Serve right away or cover and refrigerate for up to 30 minutes.

Recipe reprinted with permission of Dietitians of Canada from *Simply Great Food*, published by Robert Rose Inc, 2007  
<http://www.dietitians.ca/eatwell>

## Remember:

Try to make healthy eating and physical activity a part of your daily routine.



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