

SNACK FACTS

TOMATOES



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.

TOMATOES

Are tomatoes grown in Ontario?

- YES!
- Ontario produces over 300 varieties
- You'll find three main types of tomatoes in grocery stores: round slicing tomatoes, oval plum tomatoes and small cherry/grape tomatoes.

The tomatoes sent to your school were grown in Exeter, Ontario

When are tomatoes grown?

- As tomatoes can be grown in a field or in a greenhouse, Ontario hothouse tomatoes are available all year round!

How are tomatoes used?

- Round slicing tomatoes are used for sandwiches or eating raw.
- Plum tomatoes are used for canning and to make spaghetti or pizza sauces.
- Cherry/grape tomatoes can be eaten whole as a snack, added to salads or cooked in dishes.

Did you know?

- Tomatoes are a good source of Vitamin K and a source of Vitamins A, C, B6, folate, potassium and magnesium.

- To keep tomato slices as juicy as possible, you should slice from top (stem) to bottom.

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

Tomatoes belong to the red colour group:

- Red vegetables and fruit contain special compounds called *phytochemicals* like *lycopene* and *anthocyanins* which may reduce some cancers and other diseases.

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



Students:

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

Parents:

- Watch out for the *Eat Vegetables and Fruit Throughout the Day!* handout which is full of great healthy eating tips.

Teachers:

- Tomatoes would be a great vegetable to grow in a school garden! Refer to *Paint Your Plate! Create a Masterpiece Vegetable and Fruit Action Guide for Schools* section 3.5 for more information.



For more information about Ontario produce visit www.foodland.gov.on.ca

Be a positive role model

Have you ever noticed your child mimicking what you or others do? Children learn through experiences and watching others. This is also how children learn and develop eating habits. Be a great healthy eating role model by following these tips:

Let your child see that you:

- Eat a variety of foods from each of the four food groups; Vegetables and Fruit; Grain Products; Milk and Alternatives; Meat and Alternatives; and
- Eat the recommended number of Vegetables and Fruit servings each day including one dark green and one orange vegetable.

If your child says "no" to something:

- Don't force them to eat it – if you do, they may develop negative feelings towards the food;
- Avoid using rewards or bribery – they may start to think there must be something wrong with that food if bribery is needed;
- Let them see you eating it and tell them why you like it; and
- Offer it again later – if they say no the first time don't give up!

Other helpful tips:

- Take your child grocery shopping and have them choose which vegetables and fruit they would like to have that week;
- Involve your child in the preparation or cooking process. For example, younger children can rinse and older children can cut vegetables or fruit; and
- Provide two or three different vegetables at dinner so your child can choose what they would like to eat.

Where is... Exeter, Ontario?

Exeter is a community located approximately 50 kilometres north of London. It is located in the southern portion of Huron County, Ontario.



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Pita Pizza

Have a pizza "your way" when you use individual pita bread for the crust. Cheese and tomatoes are the only essential toppings – mix and match others and in 15 minutes, custom-built pizzas emerge from the oven, fresh, hot and delicious.



- 1 tbsp (15 mL) vegetable oil
- 3 cups (750 mL) sliced fresh Ontario mushrooms
- 4 whole wheat pita bread
- 1 cup (250 mL) shredded Mozzarella cheese
- 2 cups (500 mL) chopped, Ontario tomatoes
- 1/4 cup (50 mL) grated Parmesan cheese
- Dried oregano or basil leaves
- Crushed red chili pepper

Heat oil in nonstick frying pan. Sauté mushrooms until tender and liquid has evaporated; set aside. Place pita bread on baking sheet; sprinkle mozzarella cheese over each. Top with mushrooms and tomatoes; sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. Add oregano or basil and red chili pepper to taste. Bake in 350°F (180°C) oven 15 minutes or until hot and bubbly. If mushrooms aren't for you, substitute with another favourite vegetable or fruit.

Serves 4

Source: Foodland Ontario

Remember:

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



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