



## April

Here on the prairie, we are being tempted with the first timid steps of spring, but winter doesn't usually give up its hold until May. We can think about starting to plant some hardy seeds at the end of this month. When trying to make sure that we are eating fruits and veggies year 'round, it's good to remember that all forms of fruits and veggies, including dried, can play a healthy part in your diet.

### Dried fruits

Dried fruits are available all year long, and provide great taste and nutrition in small packages. Recommended serving sizes are half those of fresh fruits. Dates, dried figs, plums and raisins are sources of fiber and potassium. Figs and raisins provide a source of iron, an essential mineral for maintaining the delivery of oxygen throughout the body. Figs, plums and raisins are sources of calcium, Vitamin A, Vitamin C, B-complex vitamins and magnesium. Wow!

Dried fruits give a sweet flavor to trail mix, a great on-the-go or at-work snack. A recipe for *Time Out Trail Mix*

[http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/?page\\_id=35&iRID=547](http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/?page_id=35&iRID=547)

Other ideas for dried fruits: take some to work for a quick and handy snack; place into single-serving snack bags and they'll be ready for kids as a great after school snack; stir into breakfast cereals, hot or cold; and use in recipes for a sweet and savory flavor.

### Lettuce & Greens

Leafy greens grow quickly so are foods that will mature in spring! Celebrate spring by sampling a new type of lettuce or greens with your family. Go for color; generally the darker the green, the more nutritious the leaf! Look and read about varieties of greens and find a recipe for *Sweet and Sour Salad* which also features dried plums

<http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov/month/lettuce.html>

### **Grow Your Own**

Itching to get your fingers in the soil? Now is the time to plan and purchase seeds. Seeds can also be started indoors in April. Look to NDSU Extension for information on vegetable gardening in North Dakota:

<http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/pubs/vegetable.html>

### **Get Some Space**

No space for your own garden? Look for a community garden space in your own area. Bismarck, Fargo, Dunseith and New Town all have community gardens. No community garden in your own area? Much of what you need to know or consider to get one started is provided by *Going Local North Dakota*:

<http://www.agdepartment.com/Programs/LocalFoodsInfo.htm>

### **Share - Plant a Row for the Hungry**

Plan to share the bounty of your harvest with others who are less fortunate. *Plant a Row for the Hungry* encourages people to plant an extra plant or row in their gardens. Then donate your produce to a local soup kitchen or food bank. Over 1.5 million pounds of food have been donated in each of the past years through this program. Think of what gardeners can do by growing together.