

RECIPE for health

SEPTEMBER 2009 In partnership with Health4U and Culinary Services

Featured Food:

CORN



By Peggy Crum, RD, Health4U Nutritionist

In the olden days, cooks put a pot of water on to boil before heading out to harvest their corn – and for good reason. Sweet corn starts to convert its sugar to starch immediately after it is removed from the stalk. The sooner you cook it, the sweeter the taste and more tender the bite.

The sugars in today's hybrid varieties of corn are slower to turn to starch, which buys you some time. No matter which variety you select, opt for freshness. Look for husks that are tight to the ear, moist and bright green with soft, golden silks. Peek under the husk to be sure the kernels are plump and packed tightly. Large kernels at the end of the ear are a sign of over-maturity.

Keep the husks on the ears and refrigerate until you are ready to cook your corn. Standard sweet corn should be eaten the same day it is harvested. Sugar-enhanced and super-sweets can be kept in the refrigerator for two to three days, wrapped in a moist paper bag.

To cook, heat a large pot of water. Do not salt the water as it toughens the kernels. When the water boils, add the shucked corn. Let the water return to a boil, then turn off the heat and enjoy your corn.

Preparation for grilling corn takes a little more effort. Peel back the husks, remove the silks and pull the husks back up. To keep the husks from burning, put the ears in a tub of water for a few minutes. Drain, and then grill over a medium-low fire for 10 to 15 minutes. For extra flavor, pull back the husks and return the corn to the grill for a few minutes of browning.

To turn an ear into kernels, use a sharp knife and a sawing motion to cut off the top half of the corn kernels. Next, turn the knife over to the dull side and scrape down the cob to get the full essence of corn.

This recipe will be served at The Gallery at Snyder/Phillips, Case, Holden, Holmes, Hubbard and Landon dining services on September 24. Visit www.eatatstate.com for hours and menus.

Sweet Corn Soup with Poblano Peppers

Recipe tested by Senior Executive Chef Kurt Kwiatkowski and featured in Residential Dining Services.

For Soup:

- 4 cups roasted corn stock (see recipe below)
- ¼ cup unsalted butter
- 1 tsp. salt
- Corn kernels, reserve ½ cup
- 2 Tbsp. fresh cilantro
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Garnish (see recipe below)

In a saucepan, melt butter. Add all of the corn kernels except for ½ cup and add the salt. Cover and cook until tender on medium-low heat for about 10 minutes. Add corn stock and simmer covered until kernels are very tender, about 30 minutes. Remove from the heat and transfer to a blender. Puree until smooth and strain through a fine mesh sieve. Season with fresh cilantro, salt and pepper. Serve warm with a spoonful of garnish atop each bowl.

For Roasted Corn Stock:

- 10 scraped corn cobs (after kernels have been removed)
- 2 Tbsp. canola oil
- ½ cup large diced white onion
- 6 cups water

Coat the corn cob pieces with oil and lay them on a baking sheet. Roast, turning occasionally for about 30 minutes or until browned. Sprinkle onion over the cobs, spray with vegetable oil cooking spray and roast for seven minutes or until onion softens.

In a large stockpot, combine the cobs, onion and water. Bring to a low simmer over medium-low heat and cook for one hour or until liquid is reduced to 4 1/2 cups. Strain the broth through a fine-mesh sieve. Let cool.

For Garnish:

- ½ cup corn stock
- ½ cup corn kernels
- 1 Tbsp. shallots, peeled and finely diced
- 1 ½ cups green poblano pepper, roasted, peeled, seeded and diced
- 1 cup red pepper, roasted, peeled, seeded and diced
- 1 Tbsp. minced chives
- 1 ½ Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- 1 ½ Tbsp. apple cider vinegar
- Salt and pepper to taste

Bring remaining corn stock to a boil. Add the reserved corn kernels and simmer for one minute. Remove from the heat and strain through a fine mesh sieve, discarding the stock. In a bowl, combine the corn kernels and remaining ingredients. Mix to combine and season with salt and pepper as needed.