



By Peggy Crum, MA, RD, Health4U Nutritionist

Farro (also known as emmer) is an ancient grain often referred to as "the mother of all wheat." Farro has its roots firmly planted in Italy. A staple of the Roman legions, soldiers were given whole grain farro because it was more transportable and kept better than flour. The soldier could mill it for bread or cook the grains whole for porridge or soup.

Still important in Mediterranean cuisines, farro has only recently caught on in the United States. As you might expect, farro can be found in Italian delis and now, with its surging popularity, in many mainstream grocery stores. Farro is available as whole grain, semi-pearled, and pearled. This seems straightforward enough however some terminology (or lack thereof) on packages can be confusing. If the label only says "farro" look to the cooking times to identify the type:

- Whole or hulled: The whole grain is hulled in a way that leaves the germ and bran intact. Soak overnight then simmer for about 40 minutes, 60 minutes without soaking.
- Semi-pearled: Processing scours off part of the germ and bran. Cooks in about 30 minutes.
- Pearled: Processing removes all of the germ and bran. Cooks in 20-30 minutes.

Adjust cooking time depending on how you like it. Less time for a toothsome texture, more time for softer texture.

Your unopened package can be stored in the pantry. Once it's opened, put the package in a zip-lock bag and store it in the freezer for as long as you like. Cooked, it keeps in the fridge for 5 days. If you want to cook a larger batch, it freezes well.

With its dense, chewy texture and nutty flavor, farro offers a welcome change from rice and quinoa in salads, hearty soups and stews, risottos, and casseroles. A grain for your daily march and to strengthen you in battle—some things never change.

RECIPE for health

NOVEMBER 2016

featured food:

FARRO

Farro Salad with Grilled Vegetables

By Corporate Chef Kurt Kwiatkowski, Residential Dining Services

Serves 6-8

- 1 c. pearled or semi-pearled farro
- 3 c. vegetable broth
- 1 # (3 medium) sweet potatoes
- 8 oz. (1 medium) red onion
- 8 oz. (1-2 medium) zucchini
- 3 T. + $\frac{3}{4}$ c. canola oil
- Salt and Pepper
- 3 T. Dijon mustard
- $\frac{1}{4}$ c. cider vinegar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ c. taco seasoning
- $\frac{1}{2}$ t. cayenne pepper
- 1 t. ground cumin
- $\frac{1}{2}$ t. smoked paprika
- 1 t. chili powder
- 12 oz. romaine lettuce, rough chopped
- 8 oz. fresh tomatoes, medium diced
- $\frac{1}{4}$ c. chopped fresh cilantro

Cook farro in vegetable broth for 20 to 30 minutes. If all the liquid absorbs before farro is done, add a little more water. Remove cooked farro from pan and set aside to cool.

Cut sweet potatoes and onions into $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch thick disks; cut zucchini lengthwise. Boil potatoes for 5 minutes until slightly cooked; remove from water and cool. Drizzle 3 T. oil over potatoes, onions, and zucchini and season with salt and pepper.

Preheat grill. Grill vegetables for 5-8 minutes on each side or until well-marked and cooked through; remove from grill and cool. Cut into medium dice and set aside.

In a large bowl make dressing by mixing mustard, vinegar, taco seasoning, cayenne pepper, cumin, paprika, chili powder, and cumin then drizzle in remaining $\frac{3}{4}$ c. canola oil.

Add cooked and cooled farro and grilled vegetables, romaine lettuce, tomatoes, and cilantro to the bowl and mix well. Let flavors meld for 30 minutes before serving.

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