Farm fresh fruits and vegetables displayed at every market; the aroma of BBQ on the breeze from your neighbors grill - these sights and smells make summer one of our favorite seasons. Summer can also be one of the healthiest times of the year. The season when it’s easiest and least expensive to buy farm fresh produce. Summer’s bounty makes eating more fruits and vegetables something to look forward to. Here are a few ideas to help you enjoy the colors of summer.

### Make Fruits & Veggies the Main Event

**Start with Veggies on the Grill:** Vegetables are great on the grill. Try them in Kabobs or grill them in slices to serve right next to your fish, chicken or meat. Grilled veggies add excitement, freshness and flavor to any meal. Try grilling two or three for every main dish.

**Pair Fruits with Entrées:** Fruit is no longer just a snack or dessert. The sweet flavors of summer fruits help to enhance your favorite grilled seafood, chicken, or beef. Replacing other side dishes with fresh fruit is also a great way to add flavor with fewer calories. Add fruit to your plate and see the colors of summer in a whole new light.

**Add Even More Flavor:** Summer fruits and vegetables are the most flavorful of the year. But adding even more flavor can make them exciting at every meal. For vegetables, add flavor with lighter marinades and fat free spices. For fruits, add flavor with yogurt dips or by combining different fruits together to keep the flavors fresh and exciting.

**Try Something New:** Try making summer produce a leading ingredient in any of your favorite meals. Top your pizzas, fajitas, chopped salads, grilled sandwiches or omelets – so many of our summer favorites taste even fresher and more flavorful when you add sliced or diced summer produce.

Full of flavor and low in fat and calories, summer produce is a great way to add a fresh and healthy twist to your everyday summer meals.

### Tasty Summer Produce Ideas

**Celebrate the Grill:**
Mushrooms, zucchini, onions, peppers, tomatoes and pineapple are wonderful when grilled on a skewer. Asparagus, eggplant and even red bliss potatoes are also popular on the grill. To add flavor use marinades with healthier ingredients such as olive oil, lemon juice, vinegar, honey, garlic, dried mustard and other spices. For perfect grilled vegetables remember to use medium heat and cook until tender crisp.

**Color Your Plate:**
Color your plate and satisfy your palate by adding fruit. Papaya slaw, melon and berry salad or sliced peaches are perfect with strips of pan seared chicken or fish. Try mixing sliced or finely chopped mangoes with any green vegetable for a burst of flavor and color. Try pineapples and carrots for a naturally sweet and tart boost to any meal.

**Surprise Them with Flavor:**
Don’t just steam veggies and serve them plain. Sauté them in a little olive oil with onions and dill or garlic and cilantro. Top them with a tasty mix of chopped olives, peppers, tomatoes and onions. Lightly steam then chill and toss them in a chunky pineapple ginger vinaigrette or low fat ranch & salsa mix. Add these tasty flavors and you and your family will all enjoy your veggies.

**Bring Out the Blender:**
Whole fresh summer fruits make the very best smoothies. Full of flavor and packed with vitamins and antioxidants, a refreshing homemade iced smoothie is perfect for the hottest days of the year. So pull out your blender and mix up a fresh summer treat.
Beat the Heat
During the heat of summer staying hydrated is one of the most important things you can do for performance and health. Experts recommend that we all drink around 9-12 glasses of liquid every day. During the summer months most of us need even more.

Water, Water Everywhere
Whether it’s purified, sparkling, mineral, spring or tap, it’s a good idea to keep a water bottle in tow. Water is one of the best ways to hydrate. During the heat of summer it’s more important than ever - especially during exercise. For moderate summer workouts that last less than an hour, water is best. A glass of water both before and during your workout is a good idea to stay hydrated.

Sports Drinks
Sports drinks are popular with athletes. They are helpful for people who plan to exercise at high intensity for more than an hour. Since sports drinks contain sodium and other electrolytes they can help to replace what we lose through sweat during exercise. However, the full calorie versions are not best for everyone. Low calorie sports drinks are now also available and are a better choice for those of us who exercise for less than an hour at low to moderate levels of intensity.

Vitamin Waters
With so many people focused on better health and good-for-you ingredients; flavored, fortified waters are becoming a popular way to hydrate. A new generation of drinks that contain added vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and even herbs are available. Keep in mind that while these can be a tasty way to hydrate, they can be high in calories and they should not replace a balanced diet as your main source of vitamins.

While sticking to a healthy diet can sometimes be a challenge for all of us, staying hydrated is an easy step you can take towards good health.

Since everyone’s health history and nutritional needs are so different, please make sure that you talk with your doctor and a registered dietitian to get advice about the diet and exercise plan that’s right for you.

Blueberry, Raspberry Yogurt Parfait

Serves 4

Ingredients:
1 cup raspberries
1 cup blueberries
1 ½ cups low fat vanilla yogurt
1 cup low fat granola without raisins

Preparation:
In each 8 oz. clear glass, layer the following:
¼ cup raspberries
¼ cup blueberries
½ cup yogurt

Top with:
¼ cup granola

NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION per serving
Calories: 200 Protein: 7g Cholesterol: less than 5mg
Sodium: 115mg Carbohydrates: 40g Saturated Fat: 1mg
Total Fat: 3g Calcium: 185 mg