

the  
rhodeahead

# Veg Out this Summer

THE RHODE AHEAD COOKBOOK



Blue Cross  
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# Veg Out this Summer



## Summer is a great time to lighten up your cooking.

Local farmers markets are filled with fresh vegetables and fruits, often picked the evening before so they are still packed with flavor and nutrition. Supermarket produce aisles are loaded with fresh veggies and fruit, much of it local in the summer. And it's the right time to try a fun little adventure. Take your kids to a pick-your-own farm where they can spend time outside and learn more about where their food comes from.

No matter where you find your veggies, the recipes in this first-ever Rhode Ahead cookbook will help them shine in delicious main dishes, salads, and sweet treats. They all come with the side benefit of being healthy and nutritious too. Ssh...don't tell your kids.



### Find Fresh Fruit and Veggies

Rhode Island is lucky to have so many places to find fresh, local food. You're never far from a farmers market, farm stand, or pick-your-own field, and you can find one that fits your schedule.

Where do you start? Visit [Farm Fresh Rhode Island](https://www.farmfreshrhodeisland.com), and you'll discover a great list of ways to get your hands on fresh, local food.

# Chickpea Garden Burgers

Chickpeas and garbanzo beans are two names for the same thing. If you feel ambitious, you can soak and cook dried chickpeas, but the canned version work very well.

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 15 MIN

COOK TIME: 10 MIN

1 15.5 oz. can garbanzo beans,  
no salt added, drained and rinsed

½ cup low-sodium bread crumbs

¼ cup sunflower seeds or nuts,  
no salt added, finely chopped

½ medium onion, finely chopped

1 stalk celery, finely chopped

1 carrot, grated

¼ cup fresh parsley, finely chopped

1 tsp. garlic powder

2 Tbsp. low-sodium soy sauce

1 egg, lightly beaten

¼ tsp. black pepper

2 Tbsp. canola oil

4 whole-wheat, low-sodium  
burger buns



Coarsely mash garbanzo beans with a fork or masher.

Add remaining ingredients, except oil and buns, and mix thoroughly. Form into four patties.

Meanwhile, heat oil in large skillet and cook over medium heat until brown. Flip over and brown other side.

Serve on a lightly toasted bun with your favorite burger toppings, such as lettuce, tomato, pickle, and avocado.

[Find it online](#)

Nutrition information: 292 calories, 13.3 g total fat (1.3 g saturated fat), 41 mg cholesterol, 596 mg sodium, 36.9 g total carbohydrate, 10.3 g protein

# Orzo with Vegetables, Blistered Cherry Tomatoes, and Goat Cheese

Orzo, a rice-shaped pasta, and edamame may sound exotic, but you should be able to find them at any supermarket.

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 5 MIN

COOK TIME: 20 MIN

- 1/2 lb. orzo
- 1/2 lb. sugar snap peas
- 1 1/2 cups shelled, thawed edamame
- 2 1/2 Tbsp. olive oil, divided
- 2 pints cherry or grape tomatoes, rinsed and dried
- 1 5-oz. container fresh baby spinach
- Zest of 1 lemon, plus 1 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- Kosher salt and ground pepper to taste
- 1/2 cup mint leaves
- Goat cheese, as needed

[Find it online](#)



Bring a medium pot of salted water to a boil over high heat. Add orzo and cook 8 minutes. Stir in sugar snap peas and edamame; let water return to a boil and then cook 2 additional minutes.

Drain in a colander, rinse briefly with cold water to stop the vegetables from cooking, and then transfer to a large serving bowl.

Meanwhile, in a large sauté pan, warm 1 Tbsp. olive oil over high heat. Add cherry/grape tomatoes; let sit in hot pan 2 minutes without moving to blister.

Using a spatula, flip tomatoes to other side, and let sit another 2 minutes. Stir in baby spinach until wilted, just a couple minutes.

Remove from the heat and stir into the reserved serving bowl with orzo. Add remaining 2 Tbsp. olive oil, lemon zest, lemon juice, salt, pepper, and mint leaves. Stir to combine.

Top with goat cheese pieces and serve.

**To complete the meal:** Serve with a fruit salad, like sliced peaches, blueberries, and basil slices.

Nutrition information: 444 calories, 15 g total fat (3.6 g saturated fat), 7 mg cholesterol, 88 mg sodium, 62 g total carbohydrate, 18.3 g protein

# Black Bean and Sweet Potato Quesadillas

To save time, cook the sweet potatoes up to three days ahead. To adjust the level of spiciness, use hot salsa or jalapeño Jack cheese to suit your taste.

SERVINGS: **6**

PREP TIME: **25 MIN**

COOK TIME: **20 MIN**

- 5 cups sweet potato, scrubbed and cubed
- ¼ tsp. salt
- 1 15 oz. can black beans, no salt added, drained and rinsed
- 6 oz. Monterey Jack cheese, grated
- 6 large whole-wheat tortillas
- 6 Tbsp. mild salsa
- 1 avocado, diced (optional)
- Fresh lime wedges (optional)



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Place sweet potato chunks in pan, cover them with water, and bring to a boil. Cover pot and simmer until tender, about 15 minutes. Drain pot, then mash sweet potatoes and combine with salt.

To assemble quesadillas, spread mashed sweet potato over each tortilla. Over half of tortilla, add a layer of black beans, salsa, and cheese. Fold tortillas in half and heat in a nonstick pan or griddle over medium heat until golden brown on each side, turning once. Keep quesadillas warm in the oven until ready to serve. Cut in half and top with salsa, avocado, and a squeeze of fresh lime juice.

**To complete the meal:** Serve with a green salad or fresh corn.

[Find it online](#)

Nutrition information: 420 calories, 13.6 g total fat (2.3 g saturated fat), 4 mg cholesterol, 434 mg sodium, 65.7 g total carbohydrate, 10.7 g protein

# Tofu and Green Bean Stir-Fry with Peanut Sauce

This recipe packs a quadruple punch of nutrition with four members of the legume family: green beans, tofu, peanuts, and bean sprouts.

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 15 MIN

COOK TIME: 20 MIN

## Sauce

- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tsp. fresh ginger, grated
- 2 Tbsp. low-sodium soy sauce
- 1 Tbsp. honey
- 3 Tbsp. peanut butter
- 2 tsp. lemon or lime juice
- 1 small tomato, diced
- ½ cup water
- Pinch red pepper flakes (optional)

## Stir-Fry

- 2 Tbsp. canola oil
- 8 oz. extra firm tofu, diced small
- 1 small onion, sliced
- ¾ lb. fresh green beans
- ½ lb. bean sprouts
- ½ red bell pepper, sliced thin
- 3 Tbsp. fresh basil, chopped (optional)

[Find it online](#)



Photo for illustration purposes only.

In a blender, combine all sauce ingredients and blend until smooth. Set aside.

In wok or large skillet, heat oil and stir-fry tofu cubes over high heat until golden brown, 5-7 minutes. Remove tofu and set aside.

Add onion and green beans to wok (add more oil if needed) and stir-fry until tender crisp, about 5 minutes.

Add half of the bean sprouts and red bell pepper and stir-fry 2 more minutes.

Add tofu.

Add sauce and stir-fry until heated, 1-2 minutes.

Top with remaining bean sprouts and fresh basil.

**To complete the meal:** Serve with steamed brown rice.

Nutrition information: 256 calories, 16 g total fat (2.4 g saturated fat), 0 mg cholesterol, 139 mg sodium, 21.4 g total carbohydrate, 12.7 g protein

# Potato and Vegetable Cakes

This recipe from Farm Fresh Rhode Island makes great use of vegetables you probably have around the house all summer.

SERVINGS: **4**

PREP TIME: **15 MIN**

COOK TIME: **10 MIN**

2 potatoes, grated  
1 zucchini, grated  
1 carrot, grated  
1 egg  
1 Tbsp. oat flour  
Olive oil for cooking  
Salt and pepper (to taste)



Wash vegetables and grate. Combine in a small mixing bowl with egg and oat flour.

After all ingredients are mixed, shape the mixture in small patties.

Place on a hot pan with oil and cook each one until each side is golden brown.

Serve warm and enjoy.

[Find it online](#)

Nutrition information: 169 calories, 8.4 g total fat (1.4 g saturated fat), 41 mg cholesterol, 37 mg sodium, 21 g total carbohydrate, 4.1 g protein

# Quinoa Salad with Lemon Tahini

Quinoa gives this salad an intriguing texture, while the lemon tahini and feta provide a bright spark.

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 20 MIN

COOK TIME: 25 MIN

## Salad

- 1 cup dry quinoa
- 2 cups water or broth
- 1 15-oz. can garbanzo beans, drained and rinsed
- ½ cup cucumber, diced
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, sliced in half
- 3 Tbsp. fresh parsley, chopped
- Mixed salad greens
- 2 Tbsp. feta cheese, crumbled (optional)

## Dressing

- 1 garlic clove, minced
- ¼ cup tahini (sesame seed paste)
- Zest of 1 lemon
- ¼ cup fresh lemon juice
- 2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 Tbsp. hot water
- Pinch sea salt



In a medium saucepan, combine quinoa and water or broth and bring to a boil.

Reduce heat and simmer about 15 minutes until quinoa fluffs up.

Meanwhile, whisk together garlic, tahini, lemon zest and juice, olive oil, and salt. Add hot water to thin as necessary. Set aside.

Toss cooled quinoa, garbanzo beans, cucumber, tomato, and parsley with the dressing. Serve over mixed salad greens with feta cheese on top.

[Find it online](#)

Nutrition information: 450 calories, 20.6 g total fat (3.3 g saturated fat), 4 mg cholesterol, 308 mg sodium, 54.3 g total carbohydrate, 16.9 g protein

# Spinach Salad with Cranberry Vinaigrette

Cranberries aren't just for Thanksgiving. They add flavor and nutrition to salads all year long.

SERVINGS: 4

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 5 MIN

## Vinaigrette

1 cup cranberry juice  
½ cup cranberries, fresh or frozen  
1 tsp. onion, minced  
1 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil  
1 Tbsp. red wine vinegar  
1 tsp. honey  
Salt and pepper to taste

## Salad

10-oz. bag baby spinach  
1 apple, cored and diced  
½ cup walnuts  
½ cup dried cranberries  
2 Tbsp. crumbled feta, goat, or blue cheese (optional)



In a small saucepan, combine cranberry juice, cranberries, and onion. Cook over medium heat for about 5 minutes, until berries pop. Let cool slightly.

Place in blender with remaining vinaigrette ingredients and blend until smooth. Chill in the refrigerator until ready to serve.

Place salad ingredients in a serving bowl and serve or toss with the vinaigrette.

[Find it online](#)

Nutrition information: 233 calories, 14.3 g total fat (1.9 g saturated fat), 3 mg cholesterol, 125 mg sodium, 23.1 g total carbohydrate, 6.9 g protein

# Roasted Sweet Potato Wedges

You can't get any simpler than this recipe, and the results are irresistible.

SERVINGS: **4**

PREP TIME: **10 MIN**

COOK TIME: **45 MIN**

3 medium sweet potatoes  
3 Tbsp. olive oil  
Salt and pepper



Preheat oven to 375 degrees.

Scrub sweet potatoes (or peel if you prefer) and cut into wedges.

Place sweet potatoes in a bowl and add olive oil, salt, and pepper. Toss until wedges are well coated.

Place on a baking sheet in a single layer. Roast for 40-45 minutes, turning them halfway through cooking time.

[Find it online](#)

Nutrition information: 223 calories, 10.7 g total fat (1.5 g saturated fat), 0 mg cholesterol, 10 mg sodium, 31.4 g total carbohydrate, 1.7 g protein

# Rainbow Fruit Salad

This recipe from The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute makes a delicious breakfast, salad, or dessert.

SERVINGS: **12**

PREP TIME: **20 MIN**

COOK TIME: **0 MIN**

## Fruit Salad

- 1 large mango, peeled and diced
- 2 cups fresh blueberries
- 2 bananas, sliced
- 2 cups fresh strawberries, halved
- 2 cups seedless grapes
- 2 nectarines, unpeeled and sliced
- 1 kiwi fruit, peeled and sliced



## Honey Orange Sauce

- 1/3 cup unsweetened orange juice
- 2 Tbsp. lemon juice
- 1 1/2 Tbsp. honey
- 1/4 tsp. ground ginger
- Dash of nutmeg

Prepare the fruit.

Combine all the ingredients for the sauce and mix.

Just before serving, pour honey orange sauce over the fruit.

[Find it online](#)

Nutrition information: 107 calories, 0.5 g total fat (0.1 g saturated fat), 0 mg cholesterol, 2 mg sodium, 27.1 g total carbohydrate, 1.2 g protein

# Kale Chips

This Farm Fresh Rhode Island recipe works best with Lacinato, or “Dinosaur Kale.” An olive oil mister is great for lightly coating the leaves of kale with oil. Instead of tossing the oil in a bowl with the leaves, just lightly spray the leaves before tossing with spices.

SERVINGS: **4**

PREP TIME: **10 MIN**

COOK TIME: **30 MIN**

2 teaspoons olive oil

1 bunch kale leaves, rinsed, dried  
with stem and center rib removed

Salt and pepper (to taste)

Garlic powder, crushed red pepper,  
or spice of your choice (to taste)



Preheat oven to 250°F.

Toss kale with oil in large bowl. Sprinkle with salt and pepper and optional spices.

Arrange leaves in single layer on 2 large baking sheets. Bake until crisp, about 30 minutes for flat leaves and up to 33 minutes for wrinkled leaves.

Transfer leaves to rack to cool. Break or cut with scissors in chip-sized pieces before serving.

[Find it online](#)

Nutrition information: 62 calories, 2.3 g total fat (0.3 g saturated fat), 0 mg cholesterol, 37 mg sodium, 8.9 g total carbohydrate, 2.5 g protein

# Dessert Crêpes with Berries

Make dessert more fun by letting each person around the table add their own toppings.

SERVINGS: **10**

PREP TIME: **5 MIN**

COOK TIME: **20 MIN**

## Crêpes

3 eggs  
 1¼ cup low-fat milk  
 ¼ tsp. gluten-free vanilla\*  
 ½ cup brown rice flour  
 3 Tbsp. potato starch  
 1½ Tbsp. tapioca starch  
 1 tsp. sugar  
 ¼ tsp. salt

## Fillings and Toppings

2 cups fresh blueberries, raspberries,  
 or strawberries  
 100% pure maple syrup\*  
 Gluten-free chocolate syrup\*  
 Gluten-free powdered sugar\*  
 Gluten-free vanilla frozen yogurt\*



Beat eggs well, then add milk and vanilla.

In a separate bowl, combine rice flour, potato starch, tapioca starch, sugar, and salt. Add to egg mixture and whisk until smooth.

Heat skillet to medium-high and grease with melted butter or cooking spray.

Add ¼ cup of batter and swirl to cover pan. Cook one minute or until golden brown, then flip.

Add fresh berries and roll or fold inside crêpe. Dust with powdered sugar, and serve with desired toppings.

\*Many varieties of these products are gluten-free, but not all. Be sure to check the ingredient list carefully.

[Find it online](#)

Nutrition information: 289 calories, 2.4 g total fat (0.9 g saturated fat), 52 mg cholesterol, 113 mg sodium, 63.7 g total carbohydrate, 4.7 g protein

# Oatmeal Yogurt Muffins

We call them dessert, but you can enjoy these muffins for breakfast or a mid-afternoon snack.

SERVINGS: **12**

PREP TIME: **20 MIN**

COOK TIME: **20 MIN**

1 cup rolled oats  
 1 cup plain yogurt  
 1 egg  
 2 Tbsp. vegetable oil  
 ¼ cup applesauce  
 ⅔ cup brown sugar  
 1 cup white whole-wheat flour  
 1 tsp. salt  
 ½ tsp. baking soda  
 1 tsp. baking powder  
 1 cup cranberries or blueberries  
 (fresh or frozen)



Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

Grease muffin tin or insert paper muffin cups.

Soak oats in the yogurt, set aside.

Using an electric mixer, beat the egg, oil, applesauce, and brown sugar.

In a medium bowl, sift flour, salt, baking soda, and baking powder. Add berries and toss.

Fold oats and yogurt and dry ingredients with berries into the wet mixture.

Spoon into muffin pan and bake for 20 minutes. Cool on a wire rack.

[Find it online](#)

Nutrition information: 137 calories, 3.5 g total fat (0.8 g saturated fat), 15 mg cholesterol, 268 mg sodium, 22.6 g total carbohydrate, 3.9 g protein

# Strawberry Oatmeal Smoothie

The oats have a soft, thick consistency when they are soaked in yogurt.

SERVINGS: 2

PREP TIME: 60 MIN

COOK TIME: 0 MIN

½ cup rolled oats  
1 cup yogurt  
1 cup strawberries (fresh or frozen)  
1 Tbsp. honey  
1 cup milk or juice



Soak oats in the yogurt for one hour or overnight in the refrigerator.

Place all ingredients in a blender or food processor and blend until smooth.

[Find it online](#)

Nutrition information: 281 calories, 5.6 g total fat (3 g saturated fat), 17 mg cholesterol, 146 mg sodium, 42.6 g total carbohydrate, 14.2 g protein

# Purple Blueberry Slushy

It's purple. It's frozen. This Farm Fresh Rhode Island recipe is a guaranteed hit for your kids, and you'll enjoy it too on a hot summer day.

SERVINGS: **4**

PREP TIME: **5 MIN**

COOK TIME: **0 MIN**

2 cups blueberries  
1 cup grapes  
½ cup grape juice  
3 ice cubes



Add all ingredients to the blender and blend until smooth.

Enjoy!

[Find it online](#)

Nutrition information: 69 calories, 0.4 g total fat (0 g saturated fat), 0 mg cholesterol, 3 mg sodium, 17.2 g total carbohydrate, 0.9 g protein

# Jammin' Blueberry Jam

To create a wild berry sauce, add raspberries and strawberries when adding blueberries. This jam recipe from Farm Fresh Rhode Island can be used on savory dishes and game or in baked sweets, and it's especially great as a syrup substitute for waffles and pancakes.

SERVINGS: 8

PREP TIME: 5 MIN

COOK TIME: 15 MIN

2 cups blueberries  
 ¼ cup water  
 1 cup orange juice  
 ¾ cup sugar  
 3 tablespoons cornstarch  
 ¼ cup cold water  
 ½ teaspoon vanilla extract  
 ⅛ teaspoon ground cinnamon



Photo for illustration purposes only.

In a saucepan over medium heat, combine the blueberries, ¼ cup water, orange juice, and sugar. Stir gently, and bring to a boil.

In a cup or small bowl, mix together the cornstarch and ¼ cup cold water. Gently stir the cornstarch mixture into the blueberries so as not to mash the berries.

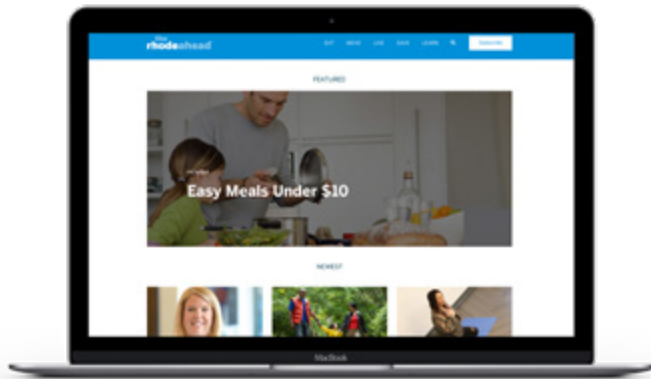
Simmer gently until thick enough to coat the back of a metal spoon, 3 to 4 minutes.

Remove from heat and stir in the vanilla extract and cinnamon. Thin with water if it is too thick for your liking.

Store jam in a clean jar for up to a week.

[Find it online](#)

Nutrition information: 117 calories, 0.2 g total fat (0 g saturated fat), 0 mg cholesterol, 1 mg sodium, 30 g total carbohydrate, 0.5 g protein



## Enjoy more recipes!

Head over to The Rhode Ahead to discover more recipes for every season. And while you're there, find new ideas for healthy living, saving money, and navigating the healthcare system.

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