

# The UConn Buzz



## ASK BE WELL

### This Month's Question:

“Should I only buy organic fruits and vegetables?”

**Answer:** The benefits to buying organic produce is a hot topic right now! Research indicates that organically grown produce does not necessarily have more nutrients or a better nutrient profile compared to conventionally grown fruits and vegetables. However, there are concerns of pesticide use negatively affecting agricultural workers' health, damaging longevity of our soil and potentially harming the environment with abundant use. More research is needed to determine if the potential long term affects of organic grown produce significantly outweigh conventional methods for our bodies and the world around us.



So where does that leave us?? Don't avoid produce because it is not organic! All fruits and vegetables boast amazing nutritional

## Find your Healthy Routine this Fall with Meal Planning

September can be a hectic month as summer winds down, kids go back to school, people sneak in the last of warm weather activities, and the days seem shorter as the sun sets sooner. Don't let this change in season and routine cause you to put eating healthy dinners on a backburner. Instead, embrace the change with a stress-free structured meal planning schedule that makes the infamous “What's for Dinner?” question seem less daunting. Create a healthy weekday menu that you and your family will enjoy and stick to by choosing general types of meals to have on the same night each week. For example, every Monday night you plan to have a crockpot dinner, while every Wednesday

benefits by providing easy to absorb vitamins and minerals for our bodies and lots of fiber essential for healthy digestive tracts. If you have the choice, opt for organic produce with help of the Environmental Working Group's 2016 [dirty dozen](#) and the [clean fifteen](#) lists based on pesticide residue analysis of popular items. More information to help you make an informed decision as a consumer [here](#).

day night you will have fish. Get creative by making “breakfast for dinner” every Thursday or “homemade pizza” with varying toppings every Friday. Once you establish your standard weekday meal schedule you can narrow down what to buy in advance and make fewer trips to the grocery store. It's much easier to make healthy choices and waste less food if you have a recipe and plan to use specific ingredients as well as save money by avoiding spontaneous take-out dinners. Plus with general meal ideas like stir-frys or soups

you can switch up the vegetables, protein sources, and marinades or sauces so you won't get bored of the same dishes each week! Post the meal outline on your refrigerator so your family will know what's coming each night of the week! More [meal planning tips for beginner's!](#)

**Involve the family! September 13th is National “Kids Take Over the Kitchen Day” to encourage planning, preparation and cooking.**

### MEAL SCHEDULE SAMPLE

<b>Meatless Monday</b>	<a href="#">Vegetarian Entrees</a>	
<b>Taco Tuesday</b>	Mexican inspired dinners like taco salads, quesadillas, and fajitas	
<b>One-pot Wednesday</b>	<a href="#">Five ideas for easy one-pot dishes</a>	
<b>Fishy Thursday</b>	Grilled or baked fish with vegetables and whole grains can provide a balanced meal	
<b>Stir-fry Friday</b>	So <a href="#">many options</a> for this Fryday favorite by trying different vegetables, grains, meats and sauces	

## HAPPENINGS AROUND TOWN

### Celebrate Mansfield Festival

September 18th  
12pm-4pm  
Storrs Center

### WHAT'S IN SEASON IN CT?

Look for local: garlic, turnips winter squash, broccoli, potatoes, onions, carrots, cantaloupe and watermelon even as the cold weather approaches!

#### Sources for this issue of The

**Buzz include:** Ready.gov, Environmental Working Group, Mayo Clinic, Turnip the Oven Food Blog

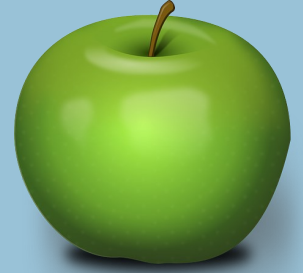


## Apple and Butternut Squash Soup

*Adapted from Turnip the Oven*

### Ingredients

- ◆ 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- ◆ 1 medium onion
- ◆ 1 jalapeno, seeded and chopped
- ◆ 1 large granny smith apple
- ◆ 1 1/2 lbs butternut squash, peeled and diced
- ◆ 1 1/2 teaspoon sea salt
- ◆ 1 1/2 teaspoon curry powder
- ◆ 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
- ◆ 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- ◆ 4 cups vegetable broth
- ◆ 1 cup coconut milk
- ◆ Chopped fresh mint, optional garnish



[Check out the pick-your-own apple orchards in Eastern, CT.](#)

### Instructions

1. Heat the oil in a large pot over medium-high heat. Add the onion and jalapeño and cook until softened and the onion is translucent, about 5 minutes.
2. Add the apple and butternut squash and cook until slightly softened, about 5 minutes. Add the salt, curry, cumin, and pepper and cook until fragrant, about 2 minutes. Add the vegetable broth and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer, partially covered, until the squash is tender, 25 to 30 minutes.
3. Puree the soup with an immersion blender (or in batches in a regular blender). Stir in the coconut milk. Garnish with chopped mint.

## September is National Emergency Preparedness Month!

National Emergency Preparedness Month is a great reminder to prepare now and during the year for emergencies that could affect us at any time asking the sometimes difficult “What if?” questions. This year’s “Don’t wait, Communicate. Make your Emergency Plan Today” emphasizes the importance of having a plan of action whether at home, work or in our community. Discussing potential situations and solutions in advance with your family and loved ones is always a good idea. Start with

these easy steps for your tailored emergency communication plan. 1. Understand how to receive emergency alerts and warnings. 2. Discuss household plans for disasters that may affect your area and plan where to go. 3. Collect information like phone numbers for family members, school, and medical providers. 4. Identify information and pick an emergency meeting place. 5. Share information and make sure everyone has an accessible

copy. 6. Practice and review your plan regularly with your household. Throughout September get more information on topics like how to prepare with family and friends, ways to assist in your community and potential plans [available here!](#) Check out [FEMA's informative handout](#) with printable plans. And watch this [60 second video](#) on the importance of emergency preparedness.



Be Well is an employee wellness program provided through the Eastern Highlands Health District with funding from CT Department of Public Health. The goal of the program is to make the healthy choice the easy choice.

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