

Food for Thought

June 2026

Add More Color to Your Grill

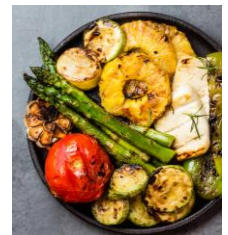
Summer is a great time to grill and add more fruit and vegetables to your meals. In the summer months many fruits & veggies are in season which usually means they are more budget friendly during these months. Fruits and vegetables add color, variety, and flavor to your meals as well as many vitamins and other nutrients.



Follow these tasty tips for grilling fruits & veggies:

- **Throw a kabob of color onto the grill** with marinated vegetables including red or yellow bell peppers, mushrooms, eggplant, cherry tomatoes and onions. Simply brush the vegetables with olive oil and your favorite spices and grill over medium heat. Cook until grill marked and tender (about 12 to 15 minutes and 8 to 10 minutes for cherry tomatoes and pre-boiled potatoes).
- **A grilled, marinated Portobello burger is a tasty alternative to meats.** Marinate and grill mushrooms, grill sides up, over medium-low heat with the grill covered until they are grill marked and softened (about 15 minutes). Flip and grill the grill side until cooked through (1 to 2 minutes). Be careful not to char the gills.
- **For a flavorful dessert, try fruit kabobs with pineapple slices or peach halves.** Grill on low heat until the fruit is hot and slightly golden. Serve them on top of low-fat frozen yogurt or angel food cake.
- **Another tasty option — grilled watermelon!** Since watermelon is primarily made up of water, when you put it on the grill some of the water evaporates, leaving an intense watermelon flavor. Grilling watermelon slices only takes about 30 seconds on each side.
- **If you are grilling meat, choose healthier options such as lean cuts of beef, pork, chicken or fish.** As you grill, keep raw meat and poultry (and raw meat juices) separate from ready-to-eat foods, including fruits and vegetables. This means using separate plates, cooking utensils and cutting boards.

Remember to always use a food thermometer when cooking meat, poultry, or fish to ensure it reaches a safe minimum internal temperature. Using a food thermometer is key to reducing your risk of food poisoning.



Type of Meat	Safe Internal Temperature
Hamburgers	160° F
Steaks & Roasts	145° F rest for at least 3 minutes
Ground Poultry & Poultry Parts	165° F
Fish	145° F

Pineapple Coconut Banana Boats

- 1 banana with peel
- 1 Tbsp crushed pineapple
- 1 Tbsp coconut flakes



1. Leave the peel on the banana and make a deep cut down the long side through the peel and into the banana. Do not cut all the way through.
2. Slightly pull the cut apart to make a pocket in the banana.
3. Fill the pocket with crushed pineapple and top with coconut flakes.
4. Wrap the banana in foil. Place on a grill or near the coals of a campfire.
5. Heat until warm, about 5 minutes at medium high heat.
6. Carefully remove the foil packet from the heat. Let cool slightly and remove foil. The peel may be black, but the inside will be warm and delicious.
7. Refrigerate leftovers within 2-3 hours.

Easy Meat & Veggie Marinade

- ¼ cup onion chopped
- 2 Tbsp parsley
- 2 Tbsp white vinegar
- 1 Tbsp prepared mustard
- ¼ tsp garlic powder
- ¼ tsp basil, dried



Mix onion, parsley, vinegar, mustard, garlic powder and basil. Place meat or veggies in a plastic bag and pour in marinade. Close the bag securely, place in a bowl and marinate in refrigerator for six to eight hours or overnight, turning at least once. Pour off marinade and discard. Broil or grill meat to a safe temperature.

If you would rather not make your own marinade, you can use oil and vinegar-based salad dressings such as a low-fat Italian dressing as a marinade.

Eat Smart Idaho can help you learn how to eat well for less. For Information on Eat Smart Idaho classes, contact the Eat Smart Idaho Administrator or Coordinator:

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Sources: <http://www.eatright.org>; <https://www.foodhero.org/sites/default/files/monthly-magazines/May%202012%20English%20for%20website.pdf>;
https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/marinades_make_grilling_easy retrieved 06/01/26

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