

Backpack Nutrition

CENTER FOR FAMILY DEVELOPMENT



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA | EXTENSION



ZESTY HERB SALAD DRESSING

Makes 5 servings

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 2 tablespoons vinegar
- 1/3 cup tomato or orange juice
- 1/2 teaspoon oregano
- 1/2 teaspoon basil
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon salt

Directions

1. With a child's help, measure all ingredients and place in a jar with a lid.
2. Seal the lid and ask the child to shake the jar to mix the ingredients.
3. Chill the mixture in the fridge for at least 1 hour before serving.
4. With a child's help, wash and tear greens for a salad. Ask the child to help wash other vegetables for the salad, too.
5. Remove the jar of dressing from the fridge and shake well. Pour the dressing over the salad and serve!

Source: Recipe adapted from What's Cooking? USDA Mixing Bowl, *Zesty herb salad dressing*. Retrieved from <https://www.preprod-whatscooking.fns.usda.gov/recipes/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap/zesty-herb-salad-dressing>.

Letting kids in the kitchen helps the whole family

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Letting children help you in the kitchen saves you time, once they're used to the routine. But doing so also benefits them.

First, they're more likely to eat healthy foods they help make. Second, doing things like measuring ingredients, reading recipes, and figuring out timing helps children develop math, reading, and problem solving skills.

Helping your children feel at home in the kitchen may require a little patience at first. But the effort will pay off for you and your family.

Here are some ways to give pre-school and nursery school-age children experience in the kitchen.

Let 2-year olds:

- Tear lettuce or other greens for salad.
- Turn pages of a recipe book.
- Make faces out of fruits and vegetables (that a teen or adult cuts).

Let 3-year olds:

- Rinse fruits and vegetables.
- Squeeze juice from citrus fruits.
- Help assemble and count out ingredients.
- Stir ingredients together.

Let 4-year olds:

- Peel fruits like bananas and oranges.
- Crack eggs into a bowl.
- Set and clear the table.
- Help measure dry ingredients.
- Toss salads.

Let 5-year olds:

- Measure liquids.
- Cut soft foods with a dull butter knife.
- Help clean dishes.
- Keep adding tasks.

Keep adding new tasks as children become more comfortable in the kitchen. Older children can help plan meals, and teens can even take over cooking one night a week. Set a challenge to include at least one food from each food group in every meal: lean protein, whole grain, fruit, vegetable, and low-fat dairy.

Physical Activity Corner

Try gardening to keep active

Gardening is a fun outdoor physical activity that keeps you moving rather than sitting all day. Bending down to plant, pull weeds, and harvest produce strengthens muscles and increases flexibility. Don't have room for a garden? Try planters on your patio or a small raised-bed garden. All you need is a spot of sun!

