

# Foods For Thought

From the Vegetable Garden Team of Eden Mill Nature Center

Volume 3 | Issue 3



Featuring:

CUCUMBER



Presented by  
Harford County  
Master  
Gardeners  
and  
Family &  
Consumer  
Sciences  
Educator

## Garden Tomato Salad

### Ingredients

3 large washed tomatoes, cut into wedges  
1 large sweet onion, peeled and cut into thin slices

1 large cucumber, washed/sliced

### Dressing:

1/4 cup olive oil  
2 tablespoons cider vinegar  
1 garlic clove, minced  
1 teaspoon minced fresh basil  
1/2 teaspoon salt



### Directions

In a large bowl, combine tomatoes, onion and cucumber. In a small bowl, whisk dressing ingredients until blended. Drizzle over salad; toss to coat. In place of the recipe dressing, you may use your own favorite bottled dressing.

*Nutrition info per 1 cup serving:  
Calories 92; Fat 7g; Sodium 155mg;  
Carbs 7g; Protein 1g.*

## Cucumber Basil Chicken Salad

### Ingredients

1 cup cooked and shredded chicken breast  
1/4 cup washed, diced cucumber  
2 teaspoons fresh basil, chopped  
1 tablespoon sour cream  
1 teaspoon white wine vinegar



### Directions

Mix all ingredients together in a bowl. Place in the refrigerator for at least 10 minutes to let flavors combine. Serve cold.

*Nutrition info per 1 cup serving:  
Calories 202; Total Fat 6.4g;  
Saturated Fat 2.6g; Sodium 93mg;  
Carbs 8g; Protein 32g*

## Cucumber Sandwiches

### Ingredients

8 ounces softened cream cheese  
2 tablespoons low fat mayonnaise  
2 teaspoons fresh dill chopped,  
or 1 teaspoon dried dill herb  
1/4 teaspoon garlic powder  
Salt and pepper to taste  
1 long cucumber washed and sliced  
1 loaf sliced whole grain bread,  
with crusts removed (if desired)



Stir in dill, garlic powder, salt and pepper to taste. Spread the cream cheese mixture onto one side of each piece of bread. Thinly slice cucumbers and layer over half of the bread slices. Top with another bread slice, remove crusts if you like and cut each sandwich into 3 pieces.

*Nutrition info per sandwich: Calories 202; Total Fat 11g; Saturated Fat 4.7g; Cholesterol 22mg; Carbs 20g; Sodium 213mg; Protein 5g.*

### Directions

With a hand mixer, mix cream cheese and mayonnaise in a small bowl until smooth.

*Recipes courtesy of Harford County Master Gardeners (MGs)  
Images from allrecipe.com and MGs*



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## Who said this?

*In chess, you should be as cool as a cucumber.*

- Yuliya Snigir, Russian Actress

*In the last analysis, a pickle is a cucumber with experience.*

- Irene Chalmers, Cookbook Author and Food Commentator

*The cucumber is fit only for consumption by cows. (This is where the cucumber got the name, cowcumber.)*

- Samuel Pepys, English Diarist

### Cucumber Jokes:

- 1. Where do cucumbers go on dates?**  
*The salad bar!*
- 2. Why are cucumbers so confident?**  
*They're kind of a big dill!*
- 3. What's the most adorable vegetable?**  
*A cute-cumber.*

## Believe It or Not!

1. Cucumbers can cool the body and the blood; therefore bringing about the phrase "cool as a cucumber".
2. Sliced or pureed cucumbers can give almost instant relief to sunburnt skin.
3. Cucumbers are made up of 95% water!
4. The waxy coating of a cucumber can actually remove ink, rubbing the skin over the writing will slowly remove it. Unlike the school erasers that were said to remove pen marks, these actually do!
5. Cucumbers cannot be cooked. They turn to mush!!
6. Cucumbers give you energy because they are full of B vitamins and carbohydrates.
7. China produces 76% of cucumbers in the world.
8. Cucumber slices can be rubbed on noisy hinges to lubricate them!



**MASTER  
GARDENER** 

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## What is a... cucumber?

A cucumber is considered a vegetable because of its culinary uses. Botanically, because it grows from flowers and contains seeds, it is a fruit. There are many ways to enjoy cucumbers in recipes. Cucumbers are most commonly known for their long cylindrical shape and bright green color. But with nearly 100 varieties, cucumbers can vary widely in shape, size, and color. The cucumber originated in India and has been cultivated for at least 3000 years in Western Asia. This creeping vine prefers to grow up trellises or other supporting frames. The Emperor Tiberius had the cucumber on his table daily during summer and winter.

The most common ways to prepare cucumbers include slicing for a salad or layering on a sandwich or pickling with fresh herbs like dill. There are so many food pairings with cucumbers. Fruits and vegetables: strawberry, watermelon, tomato, lettuce, kohlrabi, cabbage, grapes, spinach, onion, bell pepper, potato. Herbs, nuts, and spices: parsley, basil, thyme, oregano, dill, walnut, cashews, raisins. Protein and dairy: chickpeas, feta cheese, cream cheese, yogurt, fish, crab, chicken, tuna, pork, beans. Other: Soy sauce, vinegar, olive oil, mayonnaise, olives. (From fitmealideas.com)

## Health Benefits

Cucumbers are low in calories but high in water and several important vitamins such as C and K and minerals such as magnesium and potassium. Eating cucumbers with the peel provides the maximum amount of nutrients. Cucumbers contain antioxidants, including flavonoids and tannins, which prevent the accumulation of harmful free radicals and may reduce the risk of chronic disease.

Cucumbers are composed of approximately 95% water, which may increase hydration and help you meet your daily fluid needs. Cucumbers are also low in calories and high in fiber, which may aid in weight loss. Cucumbers can be eaten fresh or pickled. They can be enjoyed as a low-calorie snack or used to add flavor in a variety of dishes. (healthline.com)



**University of Maryland Extension | Harford County**

3525 Conowingo Rd. Street, MD 21154 | 410-638-3255

[www.extension.umd.edu/Harford-county](http://www.extension.umd.edu/Harford-county)

Joyce Browning, Master Gardener Coordinator [jbrowni3@umd.edu](mailto:jbrowni3@umd.edu)

Jennifer Dixon Cravens, Family & Consumer Sciences /Nutrition Educator

[jdixoncr@umd.edu](mailto:jdixoncr@umd.edu)

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