



Now is a great time to take advantage of the abundance of local produce in Vermont. Farmers are busy picking squash, carrots, raspberries and much more! If feeding your family healthy foods is your goal, seek out Vermont produce to eat now and buy extra to freeze and enjoy this winter. See “preparing additions” in the article “Muffins — comforting, healthy and delicious!” for some tips on freezing fruits and vegetables.

If you still have Farm to Family coupons to use get to the Farmers’ Market soon to enjoy fall fruits and vegetables. The coupons expire on October 31st but many markets close before then so hurry!

Your WIC Fruit and Veggie Card is good all year round at authorized grocery stores which also have the best of fall’s harvest, some of which is grown locally.

Vermont is among the nation’s best for breastfeeding!

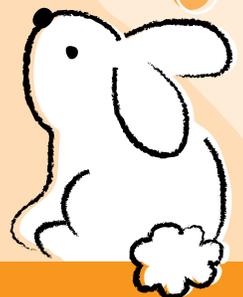
A recently published breastfeeding report by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) showed Vermont women breastfeed their babies at a rate well above the national average. Women are encouraged to exclusively breastfeed their baby for at least the first 6 months.

Currently, Vermont is the fourth highest in the nation at 25.9% still breastfeeding at 6 months.



Puzzle Corner

How many carrots can you find for the bunny?



Check out the back of this month’s insert for resources and more information to help you succeed with your breastfeeding goals.

Muffins — comforting, healthy and delicious!

by Caroline Homan

Autumn is the perfect time to turn our attention back to the kitchen. This is the baking season for me and my little ones, and one of the things we like to bake and eat is muffins (what mother doesn't know the clamor for muffins?). While our muffins take some planning ahead, we think they are worth every bite in flavor and nutrition, and we always make extra for the freezer.

Here's how we get there:

Soaking the grains

We follow a recipe where we mix up part of the muffin batter the night before so that the whole grains have a chance to soak in the buttermilk or yogurt. Soaking the flour and rolled oats in the acidic buttermilk will help to break down the phytic acid in the grains and make them more digestible and nutritious.

Making double

As long as we're making muffins, we plan a morning that doesn't require a fast start and make double the quantity. That way, we can eat some right away and put the rest in the freezer for other days. Wrap cooled muffins individually to store in the freezer. To reheat, simply pop unwrapped frozen muffins in the oven at 375° and heat for about 10–12 minutes, until they are warm all the way through. We think the muffins taste even better reheated!

Preparing additions

We like to add berries, pumpkin, zucchini, and applesauce in our muffins, so we prepare some of these foods ahead and freeze, then take out what we need on baking day.

Blueberries and raspberries: Put loose berries in zippered bags and freeze. It will be easy to measure what you need on baking day.

Zucchini: Grate zucchini and bring a pot of water to a boil. Put zucchini in boiling water for about 45 seconds then drain well in a strainer. When cool enough to handle measure ½ cup portions and freeze in individual freezer bags.

Pumpkin and butternut squash: Slice a pumpkin or butternut squash (or other variety of winter squash) in half and remove seeds. Place cut-side down on a greased baking sheet, prick with a fork, and bake at 350° for about 45 minutes–1 hour, or until the flesh is soft. Allow to cool and then scoop flesh away from the peel. Measure into ½ cup portions and freeze in individual freezer bags.

Applesauce: Slice peeled apples into quarters and remove stem and core. Place in a pan with a little water and cinnamon. Bring to a boil, reduce heat to low, and cook with a lid on for about 20–25 minutes, until apples are soft, stirring occasionally. Once cool measure into ½ cup portions and freeze in individual freezer bags.

Caroline Homan is the Food & Nutrition Education Coordinator for City Market/Onion River Co-op. She lives in Burlington with her two children, ages 7 and 4.



Soaked Buttermilk Oatmeal Muffins *Caroline Homan*

The muffins are a bit crumbly because they are so moist, so let them cool as long as you can wait before eating. Enjoy!

Makes 1 dozen

1 cup whole wheat pastry flour
1 cup rolled oats
1 cup buttermilk or yogurt
2 eggs
¼ to ⅓ cup brown sugar, or maple syrup
1 stick (8 Tbs.) butter, melted
¼ tsp. salt
1 tsp. baking powder
½ tsp. baking soda

Mix the flour, rolled oats, and buttermilk just until moistened and soak overnight in the refrigerator. Bring to room temperature and add in the remaining ingredients and stir well. It will be hard to stir at first, but will get easier once you start. Just before baking, choose your add-ins and stir just enough to incorporate. Bake in lined muffin pans at 375° for 12–15 minutes, or until they are golden. Remove from muffin pan and allow to cool.

Add-ins:

Berries:

1 cup blueberries or raspberries

Pumpkin or butternut squash:

½ cup cooked pumpkin or squash plus ¼ tsp. cinnamon

Zucchini:

½ cup grated zucchini plus 1 tsp. grated lemon rind

Applesauce:

½ cup applesauce plus ¼ tsp. cinnamon

Try various combinations, too:

Pumpkin-raspberry and zucchini-blueberry are two of our favorites!

Nutrient analysis per muffin: calories 167, protein 4 grams, carbohydrates 18 grams, fat 9 grams, sodium 146 milligrams, fiber 2 grams.

Ask Dr. Lewis First

Q: Are all the shots that my doctor wants to give my child safe and do they really make a difference?

Dr. First: Recently parents have been “needing me” about whether or not children really need all the vaccinations we give — so let me try to make a few sharp points about vaccines.

Vaccines help prevent infectious diseases and save lives. Thanks to vaccines, we have been able to eradicate childhood diseases like polio and diphtheria and are well on the way to reducing the amount of meningitis, pneumonia, and whooping cough in this country. But cases of these diseases have recently gone up for a variety of reasons, including more families deciding not to immunize their children.

If you are not immunizing your infant because you think they are protected at birth with immunity from breast milk, be aware that while breast milk has immune protection — it is not immunity to the serious diseases for which we vaccinate.

If you think that vaccines will be painful, your child's doctor has techniques and strategies to reduce the discomfort as much as possible. This discomfort is minor compared to what your unimmunized child will experience if they do get one of these life-threatening illnesses.

If you are worried about safety, nothing is 100% effective or safe. The minor side effects, if any, of vaccines pale in comparison to getting the disease that the vaccine is designed to prevent.

Finally, if your child is not immunized you reduce the effectiveness of the population's protection or what we call “herd immunity” that vaccines are designed to provide. We need to take care of each other — and vaccines are a great way to do that.

Hopefully tips like this (and I don't mean needle tips) will allow me to take my best shot at this topic and inject just the right attitude so that your child gets and stays fully immunized.

Dr. Lewis First is Chief of Pediatrics at Vermont Children's Hospital at Fletcher Allen Health Care.

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Autumn is a second spring
when every leaf is a flower.

~Albert Camus

WIC Newsletter • Fall

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