

Michigan Harvest of the Month



Michigan Nutrition Network at™

Michigan Fitness Foundation

The Michigan Harvest of the Month™ featured vegetable is

peppers



Health and Learning Success Go Hand-in-Hand

Eating fruits and vegetables and being physically active are simple ways to make your family healthier. Healthy habits can help students concentrate and do better in school. Use *Michigan Harvest of the Month™* to learn how to eat more fruits and vegetables and be more active.

Produce Tips

- Look for firm peppers that have thick, shiny, smooth skin and green stems.
- Choose sweet peppers with a solid color—green, yellow-orange, or red.
- Choose hot (or “chili”) peppers with a solid color—red, yellow, orange, green, purple, or brown.
- Store whole peppers in a sealed plastic bag in the refrigerator for up to one week. Wrap cut peppers in plastic and store in refrigerator for up to three days.
- **Helpful Hint:** Use rubber gloves when handling hot peppers. Be careful to never touch or rub your eyes.

Recommended Daily Amounts of Fruits and Vegetables*

	Kids, Ages 5-12	Teens and Adults, Ages 13 and up
Males	2½ - 5 cups per day	4½ - 6½ cups per day
Females	2½ - 5 cups per day	3½ - 5 cups per day

*If you are active, eat the higher number of cups per day. Visit www.choosemyplate.gov to learn more.

VEGETABLE QUESADILLAS

Makes 4 servings. 1 quesadilla each.

Cook time: 15 minutes

Ingredients:

- nonstick cooking spray
- ½ cup chopped green bell pepper
- ½ cup frozen corn, thawed
- ½ cup sliced green onion
- ½ cup chopped tomato
- 2 tablespoons chopped cilantro
- 4 (6-inch) flour tortillas
- ½ cup shredded lowfat cheese

1. Coat medium skillet with nonstick cooking spray. Sauté bell pepper and corn over medium heat until softened, about 5 minutes.
2. Add green onion and tomato. Cook until heated, then stir in cilantro.
3. Heat tortillas in a separate skillet over high heat. Place equal amounts of cheese and sautéed vegetables on each tortilla. Fold in half and continue to cook until cheese is melted. Serve hot.

Nutrition information per serving:

Calories 134, Carbohydrate 20 g, Dietary Fiber 2 g, Protein 7 g, Total Fat 3 g, Saturated Fat 1 g, Trans Fat 0 g, Cholesterol 3 mg, Sodium 302 mg

Adapted from: *Healthy Latino Recipes Made With Love, Network for a Healthy California*, 2008.



Let's Get Physical!

- **At home:** Do sit-ups and push-ups during TV commercials.
- **At work:** Go for a one-mile walk (about 25 minutes) during lunch.
- **With the family:** Visit a local or state park and go for a hike.

To find a park in your area, visit: www.michigan.org/nature-parks/

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size: ½ cup chopped sweet green pepper (74g)	
Calories 15	Calories from Fat 1
% Daily Value	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 2mg	0%
Total Carbohydrate 3g	1%
Dietary Fiber 1g	5%
Sugars 2g	
Protein 1g	
Vitamin A 5%	Calcium 1%
Vitamin C 99%	Iron 1%

How Much Do I Need?

- A ½ cup of chopped peppers is about one small pepper.
- A ½ cup of sweet peppers (green, yellow, and red) is an excellent source of vitamin C.
- A ½ cup of sweet red peppers is also a good source of vitamin B₆, which helps your body build healthy blood cells.

The amount of fruits and vegetables you need depends on your age, gender, and physical activity level. Choose all forms of fruits and vegetables—fresh, frozen, canned, dried, and 100% juice. They all count towards your daily amount!

Healthy Serving Ideas

- Slice raw sweet peppers and serve with lowfat dip for a snack.
- Top homemade pizza with sliced bell peppers—red, green, and yellow. Or, use chili peppers for a spicy kick!
- Use chopped hot peppers to make spicy salsa. (Hint: For less spice, remove seeds and inner membranes.)
- Add chopped sweet peppers to salads or stir into soups and pasta sauces.
- Try a new pepper variety each week.

What's in Season?

Michigan grown peppers are usually available July through October. They are usually available from May through November. Local grown varieties may be fresher and cost less than varieties shipped from other states or countries.

Try these other good sources of vitamin B₆: avocados, bananas, and potatoes.