

# FAMILY CONNECTIONS

## TASTEFUL HARVEST



# ASPARAGUS



20  
CALORIES

2.2G  
PROTEIN

✓Cholesterol-Free

✓Fat-Free

✓Low-Calorie

✓Low Sodium

Rich in vitamins and minerals, asparagus is a low-calorie, low-fat veggie that is a healthy addition to any meal



1.8G  
FIBER

0.2G  
FAT

3.7G  
CARBS

**Healthy Nutrition and Learning Success**  
Oklahoma farmers' markets offer a colorful variety of fresh fruits and vegetables. Eating fruits and vegetables every day can give your family the nutrients they need to grow strong and build healthy bodies and minds. This resource, Tasteful Harvest can help your family learn how to eat healthy and be physically active every day.

## HOW TO PICK THE BEST

- Look for firm, bright green spears with tightly closed tips. Avoid limp asparagus or spears.
- Stand stems up in a container with about one inch of water. Cover loosely with plastic bag.
- Store in the refrigerator until ready to use.

## HEALTHY SERVING SUGGESTIONS

- Bake, grill, boil, steam, microwave, or stir-fry asparagus spears.
- Dip raw or lightly cooked asparagus spears in low-fat dressing.
- Stir-fry chopped asparagus, sliced bell pepper, sliced onions, and strips of chicken. Serve with brown rice.
- Help your child find a healthy recipe with asparagus.
- Cook it together.

## ROASTED VEGETABLE MEDLEY

Makes 4 servings. 1 cup per serving. Cook time: 50 minutes

### Ingredients:

- nonstick cooking spray
- 1 cup chopped baby carrots
- 1 cup chopped eggplant
- 1 cup chopped asparagus
- 1 teaspoon vegetable oil
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 4 teaspoons dried basil
- 1 cup chopped mushrooms
- 1 small zucchini, chopped

### Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 450 F.
2. Spray roasting pan with nonstick cooking spray.
3. Add carrots, eggplant, and asparagus to pan. Drizzle with oil and toss until lightly coated. Bake for 20 minutes.



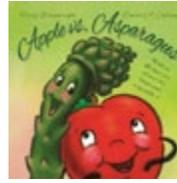
4. While baking, spray a large pan with nonstick cooking spray and heat over medium heat.
5. Sauté garlic and basil for about 2 minutes. Add zucchini and mushrooms; sauté until tender (about 5 minutes).
6. Add roasted vegetables to the pan and sauté 5 minutes more.

Adapted From: [https://harvestofthemonth.cdph.ca.gov/documents/Spring/Asparagus/Asparagus%20-%20Family%20News\\_Eng\\_Final.pdf](https://harvestofthemonth.cdph.ca.gov/documents/Spring/Asparagus/Asparagus%20-%20Family%20News_Eng_Final.pdf)

## ASPARAGUS FUN FACTS

- Asparagus grows well in Oklahoma gardens. In the spring, tiny asparagus tips poke their noses out of the ground. If you don't pick them right away, they grow into big lacy ferns.
- Peru is the world's leading asparagus exporter. In the US, about 90% of all asparagus you see in stores comes from Peru.
- Asparagus was first grown in Greece nearly 2,500 years ago! Ancient Greeks and Romans, who gave asparagus its name from the Greek root meaning "sprout," believed asparagus helped prevent bee stings and relieve toothaches.
- Asparagus contains absolutely no fat or cholesterol so it's pretty much the perfect diet food.
- Asparagus is awesome for you health because it's rich in saponins, which are a type of phytonutrient credited with reducing cancer risks and assisting in maintaining blood pressure, regulating blood sugar, and controlling blood lipid levels. Read: you should be eating more asparagus!
- It takes three years from seed to harvest.

## READING FUN



Apples Vs. Asparagus  
by Tracy Wainwright



The Mighty Asparagus  
by Vladimir Radunsky



Wally and His Amazing  
Asparagus by Tiffany N.  
Johnson-Largent, PhD

## ASPARAGUS ACTIVITY

- Students will create paintings using asparagus spears as their paintbrushes.
- Provide an assortment of paints and encourage students to be creative with painting subjects and color mixing.
- When pieces are complete, students make observations concerning other students' pieces. They should comment on color quality, meaning, brush stroke, etc.

Cheri - there was a note to include the activity page from the AITC website. Just wanted to clarify - the part you copied was about painting with asparagus and the activity pages on the website were for measuring asparagus. Wasn't sure if you wanted the whole lesson copied or just the painting part.