MEALS on WHEELS WESTERN MICHIGAN

HEALTHY BITES

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October 10th



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AN APPLE A DAY

October is National Apple Month! Did you know that Michigan is the nation's second largest producer of apples? Only second to the state of Washington, Michigan has dedicated over 38,000 acres of land for commercial apple production with a whopping 17.6 million apple trees that supply a large part of our nation with delicious apples. Additionally, nutrient-dense soil and moisture-rich environment from our Great Lakes provides apple crops with an ideal environment.

One medium apple has about 100 calories and nearly 5 grams of fiber if eaten with the skin on. Apples contain a special type of soluble fiber called pectin. Pectin helps feed the good bacteria in your stomach and intestines. These beneficial bacteria help keep your body healthy and can support your immune system. Soluble fiber also help slow down digestion. This can help keep blood sugar from rising too quickly after eating. Soluble fiber can help lower levels of "bad" cholesterol, too.

Meals on Wheels Western Michigan provides fresh apples year-round as a fruit side with meals. Apples can also be found in some of our meals as a tasty applesauce. Follow along for ideas to make our apples even more enjoyable!



About Our Apples

Meals on Wheels Western Michigan is proud to offer locally sourced apples from Michigan farms. We know the importance of supporting local businesses as well as the nutrition-related benefits of eating locally, including increased freshness and, often, greater nutrient density. Eating apples whole can be challenging for some people. Here are some ideas to try out for yourself that can help make eating whole apples a bit easier:

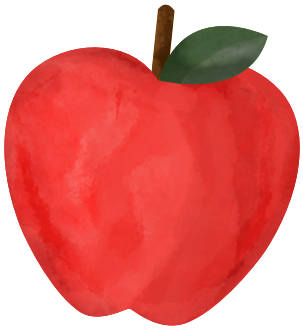
1. **Slice it up!** Sliced apples can be much easier to eat on both the teeth and jaws, which can cause some discomfort as we age. As a bonus, sliced apples can be easily dipped in sides like nut butter and yogurt for some additional nutrition in the form of healthy fats and protein.

2. **Get Soft.** Apples can quickly and easily be made much softer by using heat to release their juice. Cut an apple into bite-sized pieces and use the microwave, oven, or stovetop to heat them. A crockpot works well here, too. Stewed apples are a simple and comforting way to enjoy apples of any variety, particularly in the cold weather. Removing the skin will likely be helpful, but know that this is where much of an apple's fiber is found. Add a pinch of cinnamon or some raisins, if you'd like.

3. **Make homemade applesauce with minimal ingredients.** Applesauce can be made using only apples, water, acid, and spices. Acids like lemon juice or even apple cider vinegar can be helpful to reduce browning and enhance flavor. Stew apples for at least twenty minutes and then turn into a puree using either a blender or even a potato masher. Add some spices like cinnamon, clove or nutmeg.

Although many more can be found, Michigan grows about twelve key apple varieties, including:

- **Gala**
- **Honeycrisp**
- **McIntosh**
- **Red Delicious**
- **Fuji**
- **Jonagold**
- **Ambrosia**
- **& Evercrisp.**



Help us find these types of apples, here!

S	J	T	R	P	S	I	R	C	R	E	V	E	I	P
H	G	C	I	H	E	P	I	S	N	R	C	I	V	R
T	M	E	C	V	D	S	V	S	T	I	S	E	R	E
C	L	L	O	M	C	I	N	T	O	S	H	J	O	D
J	R	E	L	Y	I	U	P	F	L	S	H	I	A	D
R	G	O	S	G	B	P	S	A	A	E	J	L	L	E
A	A	L	I	A	O	P	S	I	M	U	A	O	D	L
V	M	O	D	L	I	R	A	D	F	H	U	L	A	I
D	G	B	J	A	R	S	A	E	J	I	O	S	A	C
P	S	I	R	C	Y	E	N	O	H	G	S	T	N	I
A	S	S	I	O	G	R	R	Y	A	U	O	C	F	O
G	J	S	R	G	S	R	A	N	D	V	I	P	J	U
I	L	P	C	R	I	I	O	L	L	O	P	O	R	S
O	O	G	L	E	F	J	A	R	E	O	N	A	N	I
L	M	A	R	R	S	R	I	H	C	P	G	E	G	A

Source and For More Information: https://www.michiganapples.com/about/facts/

Spotlight On:
World Mental Health Day

When was the last time someone asked, "How are you doing?" When was the last time you gave an honest answer? Life can be stressful, and many challenges are hard to avoid. Even when things are difficult, taking care of your mental health is an important part of staying healthy and living a balanced life. Too much stress for a long time can affect your mood, sleep, appetite, relationships, and overall health.

October 10 is Mental Health Awareness Day. It is a reminder to take a moment to check in with yourself and the people around you. It is also a chance to make sure others are doing okay, too.

What are some of the best ways to manage stress for our mental health?

Take Good Care of Your Body: Try your best to make sure that you are covering the basics of good sleep, hydration, nutrition, and movement. These simple habits can help both your body and your mind feel better. It doesn't have to be complicated. Sometimes a quick walk outside, a small stretch break, or some deep breathing can help reduce stress and improve your mood.

Make Time For Enjoyment: Life can be busy, but it is important to make time for activities you enjoy. Hobbies can help you relax and feel happy. You might enjoy reading, singing, painting, gardening, writing in a journal, listening to music, watching movies, or spending time outdoors. Keep doing activities you love and try new ones whenever you can.

Stay Connected With Others: Spending time with other people is important for mental health. Talking with friends, family, or others about your feelings can help you feel supported and less alone. Call or text a loved one, write a letter, volunteer, or attend a community event. Our Community Dining Sites are a great place to meet people and build friendships. Find one today by calling us at (616) 459 - 3111 or by visiting mealsonwheelswesternmichigan.org/community-dining-sites to find one near you. Always remember that you don't have to face challenges alone.





Home Delivered Meal
Blizzard Box Delivery

Do you get **Home Delivered Meals** from us? Get ready for our Annual Blizzard Box Delivery Days! These boxes are important because they contain five healthy meals that can be stored safely and eaten during emergencies. They can help during bad weather, power outages, or other unexpected events. The meals do not need to be kept in a refrigerator and can stay good for a long time. Be sure to check expiration dates as needed. If you have prior blizzard boxes available, please ensure to eat those meals first!

When? **Kent County Home Delivered Meal Clients** will have Blizzard Boxes delivered on **Saturday, October 17th. Allegan County Home Delivered Meal Clients** will receive their Blizzard Boxes **the following week (October 19th - 23rd)** with their regular meal deliveries.
Have questions? Please give us a call at (616) 459-3111.



AUTUMNAL APPLESAUCE

Prep Time: 10 min **Cook Time: Varies** **Total Time: Varies**

Ingredients

4 apples (any variety, or multiple!)
3/4 c of water
¾ Tbsp. of pumpkin pie spice or other seasonal, warming spices such as cinnamon, nutmeg, clove, ginger and/or allspice
Optional:

- Maple Syrup or Brown Sugar, to desired sweetness level
- A pinch of salt
- 1 tsp acid (lemon, apple cider vinegar) to preserve quality
- Pumpkin Pie Puree, to taste

Recipe Adapted From: Mix & Match Mama

Directions

Servings: 8 (1/2 cup servings)

1. Peel, core, and chop apples.
2. Combine all ingredients into a saucepan or a crockpot. If using a saucepan, cover and cook over medium heat until apples are soft. Stir as needed. This should take about 20 minutes.
3. If using a crockpot, let apples cook on high for four hours, or until visibly soft. Add optional ingredients.
4. Allow apple mixture to cool and pulse-blend or hand mash to a desired consistency. Serve warm or cold!
5. Of note, this recipe will stay good for up to five to seven days in the fridge.

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