



HealthiestWeight

Morning Announcement
April 2015

Food for Thought

Healthy Food of the Month

Bell Peppers

The bell pepper, also called a sweet pepper, is a beautiful bell-shaped vegetable which comes in many colors. A green bell pepper is picked from the plant before it is completely ripe. If a bell pepper is left on the plant to ripen, however, it will change from green to red, yellow, orange, or even purple depending on the variety of bell pepper, and it will taste much sweeter.

April is the month in which bell peppers are in peak production on South Florida farms. To grow bell peppers the home gardener does not need much space, the plant can even be grown in a container. Six to eight hours of sunlight and well-drained soil is what is needed to grow a bell pepper plant.

The bell pepper is very nutritious containing as much Vitamin C as an orange. Vitamin C supports your immune system, and helps strengthen your bones and teeth. Peppers also contain Vitamin A, an antioxidant that protects your skin and eyes and improves cholesterol. With plenty of fiber, the bell pepper is beneficial to the digestive system.

To prepare a bell pepper for eating, wash under running water and remove the stem, the seeds and ribs in the inner cavity. It's the perfect healthy snack sliced and eaten raw, or chopped in smaller pieces and used in salads. Bell pepper is a great addition to many cooked dishes such as meatloaf, soups or stews adding taste and texture. Roasted on the grill or in the oven, or stuffed with ground meat and rice, the bell pepper is a vegetable you won't want to overlook.

Remember: Make 5-2-1-0 your goal every day.

- 5** - Fruits and vegetables a day (including bell peppers)
- 2** - Only 2 hours or less of screen time a day (TV, computers, video games)
- 1** - One hour of physical activity a day
- 0** - Sugar-sweetened drinks (drink more water and non-fat milk)

References:

www.freshfromflorida.com/farmtoschool, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
www.fitday.com