

# Crop mixes for good nutrition

## Good foods to keep you healthy



Drink lots of water.



Meat, chicken, fish, liver



Oranges, grapefruit, lemon and naartjies, guavas, mangoes, yellow peaches and apricots.



Tomatoes, avocado, potatoes, spinach, imifino, peas, pumpkin leaves, sweet potato, carrots, broccoli and fresh herbs.

### Herbs, spices and medicinal plants

Do you use herbs and spices? You probably don't use these ones . . . These herbs and spices make food tasty, and they are an easy way to add an extra bit of goodness to your food. Why don't you try some?



- Spices, especially sweet spices like cinnamon, can help to make food taste better. You can buy cinnamon sticks which you add to food while it is cooking.
- Eating parsley after you have eaten will help to freshen your mouth and it is good for you. Its easy to grow at home too.
- Ginger helps if you are feeling nauseous and for colds. You can make a ginger tea.
- Garlic helps to fight infections. Make a tea or add garlic while you are cooking.
- Thyme helps with digestion. You can add thyme leaves to food.
- Other good herbs to eat are sweet basil, coriander, oregano and fennel. They are all easy to grow and can be added to your food.





## Eat each day:

- **Grow foods** – three of the following:  
One cup of beans or peas (plus one tablespoon of uncooked sunflower oil); two eggs; a large piece of meat, chicken or fish; one tablespoon of sunflower seeds; nuts such as almonds or brazil nuts; one cup of milk or maas (sour milk); a big piece of cheese.
- **Glow foods**  
Three whole fruits and one and a half cups of vegetables. Eat more vegetables if you do not have fruit.
- **Go foods** – any or all of the following:  
Bread; half a cup of pasta, rice (preferably brown rice), potato, maize; a cup of cereal such as oats or sorghum porridge or maize meal.

## Make sure you keep the goodness in ...

Fresh fruit and vegetables have lots of vitamins and minerals in them. But these vitamins and minerals can disappear very quickly if you are not careful about how the food is prepared and cooked. Here are some tips to help you keep the goodness in:

- ✓ Eat raw fruit and vegetables whenever it is possible.
- ✓ Eat as much of the fruit or vegetable as possible – including the skin.
- ✓ Most of the vitamins are in the outside parts of the fruit and vegetables. Try not to peel.
- ✓ Try to buy and eat fruit and vegetables as fresh as possible.
- ✓ Cook the vegetables in big pieces. Small pieces will lose more vitamins.
- ✓ It is best to steam vegetables.
- ✓ Cook vegetables very slowly over a low heat until they are just cooked. Use the vegetable cooking water to cook other foods in or to make soup or gravy.
- ✓ Eat the vegetables as soon as they are cooked.



## Crop mixes

Generally we grow a limited range of vegetables which include tomatoes, onions, cabbages and spinach (Swiss chard). In some places we also have a habit of growing other vegetables such as beetroot, carrots, green peppers, chilies, peas and sometimes turnips.

## Some changes we can make

**FOR CONTINUITY:** We want to be able to have something in the garden to pick and eat throughout the year. (*We need to wait a long time for cabbages and onions*) We can include crops such as:

- Spring onions/ bunching onions
- Leeks
- Coriander
- Lettuce
- Mustard spinach
- Sweet potato (as well as orange fleshed for vitamin A)
- Brinjals
- Garlic chives
- Parsley
- Fennel
- Kale, broccoli, cauliflower (for leaves as well)
- Marrow (for leaves as well)

**FOR PROTEIN:** We want to grow crops that can add protein to our diets, especially for the young children (ages 1-5years). We can include crops such as:

- Turnip greens
- Cowpeas,
- Peas
- Sugar beans, jugo beans
- Peanuts

We also need to include small livestock such as chickens, ducks, rabbits, goats and pigs in our farming system.

**FOR VITAMIN C AND VITAMIN A:** We want to be able to eat fresh green and yellow fruit and vegetables every day. This is very important for children and sick people. We can include crops such as:

- Tree tomatoes (*picture on the right*)
- Granadilla, gooseberries
- Paw-paws, mango, banana, avocado
- Peaches, apricots, plums
- Oranges, naartjies, lemons
- Guavas
- Butternut, pumpkins of various types

We want to grow a range of fruit, so that there is fruit to eat throughout the year.



## Drying of fruit and vegetables

Processing of food in this way helps to ensure continuity of food supply.



A system of drying racks made with and covered with shade cloth/ hale netting is suitable. (see *picture on the right*) Drying of almost anything is possible!! (Pioneered at Dundee Agricultural Research Station)

Dried vegetables can be stored for two years or more before being used.

*Top Right: racks with tomatoes, brinjals, naartjies, green, red and yellow peppers drying. The vegetables and fruit are covered with a layer of netting for hygiene reasons*

*Bottom Right: Bottles of dried vegetables; including from left to right; Peppers, sweet potato, ground chillies and brinjals.*

