

News Column

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Pumpkin Spice and Everything Nice

Fall is officially here and with that comes the frequent sightings of pumpkins. More than likely, you have seen them at the store or lining the porches of many homes around town.

Did you know that pumpkins have more to offer outside of being a seasonal decoration?

Pumpkins are a type of gourd that are very nutrient-dense. They are made up of roughly 90% water and are packed with Vitamin A, Vitamin C, and potassium. These nutrients help boost the immune system, heal wounds, and keep cells and tissues healthy.

When looking at recipes that are popular in the fall season, you will likely find many that have pumpkin puree or spice in the list of ingredients. To make pumpkin puree all you need to do is clean out the inside, wash, chop a pumpkin and then place it in an oven to bake until the flesh pulls away from the skin. After it has cooled, blend the chunks until smooth in a food processor or blender. Adding pumpkin puree to bread, soups, or pies is a great way to enhance their nutritional value.

Try this fall recipe from the Home Baking Association for a delicious pumpkin-packed treat:

Pumpkin Party Muffins

2 c. all-purpose flour	½ c. sugar
2 tsp. baking powder	1/3 c. low-fat milk
½ tsp. baking soda	¼ c. vegetable oil
½ tsp. salt	1 large egg
¾ tsp pumpkin pie spice	½ tsp. grated orange peel
1 c. pumpkin puree	½ c. raisins

Directions: Preheat oven to 400 degrees Fahrenheit and spray a muffin pan with non-stick cooking spray. In a large bowl, combine flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, and pie spice. In another bowl, whisk pumpkin, sugar, milk, oil, egg, and orange peel until smooth. Add raisins. Stir the pumpkin mixture into dry ingredients just until combined. Spoon into muffin pan and bake for 20 minutes or until done. Remove from the pan and cool on a wire rack.

For more information about 4-H Youth Development, Family and Community Wellness, or K-State Research and Extension, contact the office at 620-583-7455, email me at celutz@ksu.edu, or stop by the office. Visit the K-State Research and Extension - Greenwood County Facebook page and www.greenwood.k-state.edu for more up-to-date information on programming.