



## THE VERSATILE

# bell pepper

One vine, three flavors! All bell peppers come from the same vine but offer a different flavor depending on when they are picked. A green bell pepper is picked before it's fully ripe. Left on the vine to ripen, a green pepper becomes an orange or yellow pepper with a fruitier flavor. If left on the vine even longer, the yellow bell pepper turns red and sweet!

### DID YOU KNOW?



- Today, most green bell peppers sold in the U.S. are grown in Florida—mostly in Collier, Hendry, Hillsborough, Manatee and Palm Beach counties.
- Green bell peppers have twice as much vitamin C as an orange, and red bell peppers have three times as much.
- Because bell peppers are mostly water, they provide very few calories.
- Bell peppers are available all year round.

### WELLNESS TIP

Keep a journal of what you eat and how long you exercise. This will help you figure out how you can improve your diet and exercise regimen.

### SHOPPING, PREPARING AND STORING



- Avoid buying peppers with cuts, bruises, spots or shriveled stems.
- Store bell peppers in the refrigerator crisper drawer for up to one week.
- Bell peppers that have been sliced can be frozen for later use.

### COOKING TIPS



- Cut the tops off of peppers and stuff with rice, cheese, meat or your filling of choice and bake for a quick and filling meal—try baking them in a muffin pan to help retain their shape.
- Try roasting bell peppers under high heat in the oven to help bring out their sweetness.

### STUFFED BELL PEPPERS

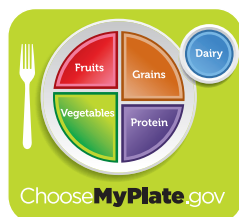
serves 6



- 1 1/4 pounds lean ground beef
  - 3 cloves garlic, minced
  - 1 onion, diced
  - 1 (15 1/2-ounce) can no-salt-added diced tomatoes
  - 1 cup reduced-fat cheddar cheese, shredded
  - 6 bell peppers
  - 1 1/2 cups low-sodium chicken broth
1. Preheat oven to 350° F.
  2. Heat a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Stir in the ground beef, and cook until brown and crumbly. Pour off excess grease.
  3. Stir in the garlic, onion and tomatoes. Cook and continue stirring until the onions soften just a bit, about 3 minutes. Stir the cheese into the mixture and set aside.
  4. Cut the tops off of the peppers, and remove the veins and seeds. Fill each pepper with the ground beef mixture and pour in some of the chicken broth. Place into the cups of a muffin tin, and replace the tops.
  5. Bake in the preheated oven for 30 minutes.

Recipe adapted from WIC, Florida Department of Health

Calories: 326; Total Fat: 14 g; Saturated Fat: 7 g; Total Carbohydrates: 18 g; Protein: 34 g; Sodium: 455 mg



### CHOOSE MYPLATE!

- Make at least half your plate fruits and vegetables.
- Switch to fat-free or low-fat (1%) dairy.
- Make at least half your grains whole grains.
- Go lean with protein.

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