

Fruit and Nuts as Food.

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Fruit and Nuts as Food.

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Introduction.

Fruits and nuts are nature's food. They are the food of primitive man, and are prepared by nature - as the Mexicans say, "Fruit and nuts are cooked by the sun". The more sunlight a food absorbs, the nearer that food reaches perfection. Fruit and nuts come first, then cereal, then vegetables, eggs and milk, and lastly flesh. One author says, "Fruit is the most perfect union of the useful and beautiful that the earth produces"; also, they are foods which are "pleasant to eye, delicate to the taste, and yet easy to prepare." Another says, "Fruit and nuts nourish not only the body, but the soul." The vitality or life force of a plant at its maturity is largely in its fruit or seed, which is really the life of the plant, preserving it from decomposition and decay. When this is gone, chemical action sets in, and is rendered unfit for food.

History.

The history of fruit and nuts is contemporaneous with that of civilization. In every case, we see its spread and cultivation following civilized man. The Indians

were not acquainted with our many delicious fruits, but our forefathers brought them over from the old world to the new, as they had years before, been transported from Asia to Europe. We have reference to the fig and vineyard in the Bible, and it is supposed that they have existed as long as the world. According to the Scandinavian legend, fruit was the favorite food of the Gods, who ate it when they felt themselves growing infirm either in body or mind.

The early Greeks and Romans, lived principally on bread and fruit, and we know they had great muscular power. Afterward, when conquest brought prosperity, luxuries, and indulgencies to these people, we learn of their downfall. These Roman conquerors introduced the apple, peach, cherry, plum and pear into Europe. When the public games of ancient Greece were first started, the athlete was trained entirely on vegetable food. Porters of Smyrna, lived on olives and other fruit, and walked rapidly under a burden of eight hundred pounds. The anti-deluvians, were largely fruit eaters, and were the longest lived people. Great men, as Plato, Newton, and

Franklin lived largely on fruit and other plant life. People of India, China, Japan and Siam, have always lived without flesh, because of poverty or religion. Thus it is not impossible and is doubtless beneficial to live upon plant food. The Arabs, when crossing the desert, live on a handful of dates per day. During five months of the year, the the southern part of Europe, figs constitute a large part of the diet.

Fruit and nuts were formerly used in the wild state, and are to a considerable extent at present. Systematic cultivation did not begin, till the eighteenth century, the monks had to some extent grown them in their gardens. The tomato was formerly grown for its beauty alone and called "Love Apple". It has only recently been appreciated as food, having formerly been considered poisonous.

Classification.

- 1' Albuminous Fruits (Nuts).
 - 1² Edible nuts.
 - 1³ almond
 - 2³ brazil.
 - 3³ coconut.
 - 4³ walnut.

5³ filbert

6³ chestnut

7³ acorn

8³ peanut.

9³ hasehnut.

10³ pecan.

11³ tamarind.

12³ beechnut.

2' Succulent Fruits (Juicy).

1² According to Composition.

1³ acid.

1⁴ lemon.

2⁴ orange.

3⁴ cranberry.

4⁴ gooseberry.

2³ sweet.

1⁴ dates

2⁴ figs.

3⁴ prunes.

3³ astringent.

1⁴ cranberry

2⁴ blackberry.

3⁴ raspberry.

4³ oily.

5³ mealy.

2^d According to medical use.

1st laxative.

1st oranges.

2^d dates

3^d figs

4th plums.

2^d astringent.

1st cranberry

2^d blackberry.

3^d - guinea

4th pomegranate.

3^d - diuretic.

1st peach

2^d - grape

3^d strawberry.

4th black currant

5th melons.

4th refrigerants.

1st gooseberry

2^d red currant

3^d black currant.

4th pumpkin.

5th stomach sedative.

1st lemons

2^d lemons

3^d apples.

Composition

Juicy fruits usually consist of the following constituents:

a quantity of water,
very little protein,
valuable salts,
almost no fat,
varying quantity of starch and water
volatile essence.

Nuts consist of the following:
small amount of water,
large percent of protein,
salts,
a quantity of fat,
little carbohydrate.

Nuts resemble in composition, animal albumen, or casein. The composition is from fifty to sixty five percent shell. The peanut, from forty to fifty percent oil, and the chestnut, forty percent carbohydrate being exceptions.

Use and Value

The vegetarians claim many benefits from this dietary, which are not without grounds - they rest on sound principles,

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and is no longer a fad or a fancy. It is, a well known fact, that there is a tendency for men to become to a certain extent, like what one feeds upon i.e. if one lives upon animal food, one will possess more of the animal spirit; if one eats of the tender vegetable life, one will possess a more gentle temperament, and better disposition. It is possible, if the children and even adults, would eat less of the stimulating animal food, that we would have less criminals, and less insane and impure persons. By experimenting, it has been found that dogs fed upon roots and other vegetable food, become more gentle, kind and intelligent animals. Then if so much can be done for the brute creation, what should we expect from man. Dr Hill says, "If people will have their morning and evening meals consist of grain and fruit and bread well baked, they will find it produce its effect - more good health, peace and contentment in the household."

Dr Gladstone, in a speech to parliament said, "It is pretty certain that the fruit stall is one of the best remedies against the public house" Charles Napier of England also,

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gives detailed account of twenty seven habitual-drunkards cured by vegetable and fruit diet. He also says that "persons using the fruit and nuts without meat, feel no inclination for alcoholic liquors."

"The food value of fruit" Dr Evans says, "can not be overestimated." From the composition, we find, due to the lack of nitrogenous matter that the succulent fruits are not so much for nutrition, but are to supply the needed acids and salaries, for the purification of the blood - are also valuable for the sugar. (They are thinning to the blood, therefore cooling, and are of greater value in the summer for this reason.) We enjoy eating apple sauce and cranberries with turkey and other meat, without realizing why; science tells us this - i.e., digestion depends upon the action of pepsin to a great extent, and the acid of the fruit assists the acid of the stomach, thus the pepsin may act to a better advantage. Acids and pectin assist especially in digesting fat. Fruit is toning - it stimulates digestion by causing greater flow of the digestive fluids, and by clearing the lining

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of the stomach, if taken at the first of a meal, of the mucus that has gathered during the period of inactivity. Thus the system is encouraged to correct itself without aid of drugs. Fruit and nuts afford every element needed for the nourishment of the human frame. A menu of nuts and fruits can be easily planned which will form a balance ration.

The nuts providing the protein and fat may be in various forms, and the different fruits provide water and carbohydrate and mineral.

A combination of the fruits and nuts in one dish, as in salad, may form a perfectly balanced food. The banana and date are the most nutritious fruits - what the cereals are to the people of the temperate zone, the banana is to those of the tropics. Dr. Hogen says that fruits and nuts are especially adapted to the nutriment of the brain and nervous system.

From the composition, it is known that nuts have a much higher nutritive value than the succulent fruits, but the dietetic value is not nearly so great. The nutriment is in a very concentrated form, therefore can not be eaten in quantity - they lack bulk. With them,

carbohydrates should be taken freely. Nuts are an excellent substitute for meats, procuring the same amount of nutriment in a different and more wholesome form. Nuts are very agreeable to the palate, and as the "natural liking has its origin in the physical want" they must be demanded by the system. In general, nuts contain fifty times as much fat, and less than one fifth as much carbohydrate as wheat flour. One pound of unshelled nuts will furnish about one half as much protein, and the same amount of energy, as a pound of flour. Nuts are valuable for the oils they contain, which are used as the nut butters, so popular with the strict vegetarians.

Some authorities prefer to not call fruit a medicine in itself, but say it encourages the natural process by which the remedy or action is brought about. It is nature's remedy as well as nature's food. Fruit and the vegetable diet in general, is valuable in disease especially, because toxins are not then formed in the intestinal tract, to the extent as when animal food is taken. Fruit drinks are good for fever patients especially.

as the germs grow less vigorously in the presence of acid. Oranges are excellent for invalids; the pulpy cells filled with juice are the only portions to give. This is often as refreshing a food as a patient can obtain. The juice of fruit is easily assimilated, and is more nutritious and wholesome than beef tea. Banana flour is used for the sick, being more easily digested than wheat flour.

The lemon is a fruit of great dietetic value. The London Lancet says lemon juice and sugar will relieve a cough. An eminent physician says it is suitable for all stomach disease, jaundice, liver complaint, inflammation of the bowels, and fever. Is a specific remedy for worms and skin complaint. It is effective to rub on neuralgia, is preventive of scurvy. The strawberry has been known to cure malarial fever. The cherry is said to be an absolute cure for rheumatism. Sour oranges and lemons are also excellent for this - the acids of the fruit combine with the salts of the blood, and form alkalines, thus preventing the system from being

saturated with uric acid. Dr. Parleau says he has asked rheumatics which they would rather have, a plate of fruit or meat - they invariably demand the former - the system craves and requires it. Watermelon is said to be good for epilepsy, and yellow fever; and cranberries for erysipelas. The blackberry and cherry are splendid tonics. The fig is an effective application for boils. It is said that no medicine is as valuable as grapes in case of nervous prostration. The pineapple is one of the most healthful fruits - is excellent in clearing the mouth, throat and stomach of morbid disorder. Strawberries and lemons remove tartar from the teeth. The green persimmon is effective in case of dysentery - is very astringent.

Fruit is especially good for children. For the laxative effect, Dr. Kellogg says it should be taken about a half hour before breakfast. Dr. Page says there are not many fruits that should be given to children in their second year except baked apple, and he advises that given slow.

The peach may be given at two and a half years. Dr. Hull says, sweet plums, pears and strawberries may be used the third or fourth year. Dates should not be given till the child can masticate thoroughly. The cherry and banana should be avoided until the fifth year at least. The juice of the fruit may be given before the whole. Those fruits containing large seeds should be avoided. An excessive amount of rich nuts are to be avoided in the nursery.

The most important values of fruit are the following:

- Gratifies the palate.
- Alleviates ravages of disease.
- Tempt's the appetite.
- Furnishes variety to the diet.
- Relieves thirst, and furnishes water.
- Furnishes nutriment.
- Supplies organic salts.
- Stimulates the kidneys.
- Acts as a laxative.
- Is the most attractive food we have.

The attractiveness of food, is a value which can not be represented by

dollars and cents. Food may be so arranged, that it is attractive to the sense of sight, taste and smell. In preparing food for a delicate or sick person, the attractiveness of it is a very important factor, as it should also be, in the daily preparation of meals. Many tempting dishes can be prepared from fruit or nuts, or a combination of the two. Fruit prepared with gelatin may be made very appetizing, and a sick person is apt to enjoy something solid after subsisting on a liquid diet. If only the juice were used, there would be nothing to insure the patient and would still tempt his appetite, and give him the satisfaction of eating solid food. The fruit essence and juice are used for flavoring and coloring, thus forming an attraction to the palate and the eye. The lemon and raspberry are most popular for this. Fruit is a convenient summer decoration for the table. A large and handsome dish filled with fresh fruit, in the center of the table serves as an appetizer for the whole meal.

Impurity of fruit and nuts.

One of the advantages of these

foods is that of its purity. As to adulteration, fruit is very hard to treat, except in case of jelly and canned fruit. The very fact that canned goods is cheaper than buying the material and preparing it, proves that it must be adulterated. It is almost impossible to adulterate nuts in any way.

These foods are also comparatively free from micro-organisms. Fruit is in fact, an enemy of bacteria. Over ripe fruit contains the germ of putrefaction, therefore should not be used as food. Poisoning rarely occurs from fruit, as the toxins or poisonous products of bacteria, are formed only from nitrogenous matter, which is scarce in fruits. Disease germs will not thrive in the presence of fruit, but may be scattered from places of infection to the outside of the fruit, and one may become contaminated in this way. One should be especially careful in traveling, of buying fruit on the train, as all kinds of diseased people travel, and it is usually they who are the most careless. Citric and malic acid kills cholera and typhoid germs, and as lemon juice is seven and one half percent citric acid, it is excellent to use in

case of emergency as in traveling, when it is impossible to boil suspected water. Fruits not only do not carry the germs into the body, but they do not produce a condition of the system, suitable for their growth. Micro-organisms are not present in nuts, only as decay takes place.

Selection and Condition of for Eating.

Fruit should not be eaten over or under ripe. If over ripe, the putrefactive bacteria are present; if under ripe, the starch is not yet changed to grape sugar, thus is less digestible. Thoroughly ripe fruit does not require cooking, as the salts, sugar and water, which are the important constituents, are already fit for digestion. If the fruit is not ripe, cooking and the addition of sugar or sugar makes it more suitable for digestion. Those at present advocating the uncooked food diet, would be at a loss, were it not for these two articles of food, for they are almost the only foods that are not bettered by cooking. By using a little thought and care, it is possible to have fruit in all seasons. By canning, and different methods of preserving, as drying or one may have a continual supply. The

date can be transported only in the dried state on account of rapid fermentation, but this is an exceptional case. A point in economy is observed by using canned fruit. The all food is best in its season, it is not always practical to procure it, and the canned fruit substitutes very well indeed.

Nuts may be obtained at all seasons of the year. Both fruit and nuts, to be in the best condition, should reach maturity before gathering. A juicy fruit or one that matures early, is not the best for winter keeping. The most favorable temperature for preserving fruit is thirty or forty degrees Fahrenheit.

Digestion of, and Time for Eating

Many people can not eat fruit, because they eat it at improper times. One must know perfectly, ones anatomy and physiology, to know how each kind of food will digest; and when and with what combinations to take it.

The digestion of fruits and nuts is simple. The sugar and water of the fruit is ready for absorption, and the salts being in solution with the liquid are absorbed with it. The starch is changed by the sun to grape sugar, the

process of ripening, and of digestion being similar. The albumen of the nuts is acted on by the gastric juice, and the fats, by the pancreatic juice and bile. The digestive fluids act readily on raw albumen, and raw fats are more easily digested than cooked fats, thus the cooking of nuts is not necessary. Nuts should be eaten with salt, which makes them more savory, thus causing a greater flow of the digestive fluids.

The acid of fruit is beneficial to digestion, unless there is present, starchy foods as cereal, then it prevents the action of saliva on the starch. It should not be eaten with, or just before or after starchy food - should be at least twenty minutes between the eating of cereal and fruit, as the action of saliva under normal conditions continues twenty minutes in the stomach, i.e. till till the alkaline of the saliva has been acidified by the hydrochloric acid of the stomach. Then there is no further action till it reaches the intestines, thus digestion is delayed much. The sweet fruits may be used with cereal with good results. Fruit and cheese does not make a good

combination, as the acid precipitates the casein.

Authorities differ as to the time for eating fruit, therefore one must make use of one's judgement. To be perfectly safe, is well to take it alone - is excellent for lunches.

The fruit is good, it cannot be taken at any time or under any condition. The ignorant use of fruit is perhaps more dangerous than that of most of the other foods.

The apple, which is the most easily digested fruit, requires an hour and a half. Others range from this to four hours, required by the pear. One authority says that digestion has the advantage with fruit, over meat, which is swallowed in lumps while the former is kept in the mouth for its delicious flavor, and is thoroughly masticated. Nuts are said to be hard of digestion, but this is chiefly due to the fact that they are difficult to masticate, and this process is seldom carried on properly.

Serving.

Much of the beauty of fruit, depends on the manner in which it is put on the table. One authority says, "cleanness in serving, makes the difference between

artistic and commonplace." Knowing the importance of making food attractive, it is possible to so devise many ways of serving fruit and nuts. The pineapple cut in thin slices or in cubes with powdered sugar is a very attractive way. Fruit salad forms an ornamental as well as useful food. For garnishing fruit preparations, flowers are most appropriate, the scarlet geranium being excellent. Strawberries may be arranged in a variety of ways - are served with sugar, having the stems attached, to be eaten from the fingers. Strawberries as most other fruits are excellent served as shortcake. There are numerous methods of serving oranges. In Italy, they eat them from the plate, using a sharp knife to remove the skin, and the fork to convey the pulp to the mouth. In Florida, they cut the orange in fourths or eighths, then take up a piece, holding it by each end, pull the rind away, and bite the pulp from it. In the north, we cut the orange in halves, and serve with a spoon. In this way sugar may be added. Another method is to cut the peel from the stem, nearly to the opposite end, in four places. Turn the peel of each quarter back, almost to

the bottom, making a holder of the rind. Take off a section, hold it with the left thumb, and finger by the inside edge, and slip the point of a fruit knife under the thin skin on each side, and lay it back; then still holding it by the membrane only, eat off the pulp. This method of serving is excellent for invalids, the object being to prevent the eating of cellulose. When preparing the orange sections to serve in a salad or cake, the cellulose should be removed from either side of it. If the membrane is tender may be cut across and served in slices. The orange is most appropriate served for breakfast or last course at dinner.

The banana may be served with cream and sugar, baked, or from the skin. The last method is sometimes convenient, as a lady may partake without removing her gloves. However this is not the best method, as the indigestible layer of cellulose next to the skin, is not then removed. Nuts also have a layer of cellulose on the outside, removed by the process of blanching. The apple, for serving, should have only a thin peeling removed, the more nutritious and aromatic portion of this fruit lies nearest the

surface, therefore the baked apple, or stewed with the skins on, has a more delicious taste and quality. The apple is said to grace the table in a greater variety of forms than any other food.

Fruits and nuts are served largely as confectionery in France. Some fruits as the olive are served largely or entirely as pickles. Hester Pool says, "Pickles are an appetizing relish, tho far from wholesome," But we are told that appetite is the best sauce, so we use pickles as appetizers largely.

Nuts as fruits, are served alone, in cake, desert, creams &c. The Gilbert is especially fitting for deserts. The pecan is a popular nut because of its thin shell. The peanut is served much as dressing for sandwiches, and served salted. The peanut is not in reality a nut, but the seed of a leguminous plant.

If fruits and nuts are always kept on hand, one would have material for lunches, and in case of emergency, i.e. if unexpected company arrived, would have something to serve them. Canned fruits and jellies are always useful in this way, then if a salad dressing is at hand, a nut dressing for sandwiches could be easily made,

and one would not be wholly at a loss to know what to serve. A lunch consisting of fruit and nuts, sandwiches would be far more wholesome for school children, than rich pastry, highly seasoned meats and confectionary often given.

Conclusion

Schlickeyson gives a unique relationship between some of our most useful fruits. He calls the apple the king of fruits; the grape, the queen; the berries members of the royal family; and peaches, pears, and plums, members of the cabinet; and tropical fruit, the foreign ministers.

The apple, or king of fruits, holds the same relation to fruit, that wheat does to grain. The strawberry is said to be the most perfect fruit. Sydney Smith said of it, "God doubtless could have made a better berry, but he never did." The banana yields a larger percent of nutriment than any other plant.

The value of fruits and nuts as food, is constantly being more fully realized, and their cultivation must be increased, in order to supply the increasing demand for them.

The end.