

Zucchini

1. Define micronutrients and describe their role in the human body. Create a grid with food sources for micronutrients.

Micronutrients are minerals that are required in small amounts and required for the healthy functioning of the body. Micronutrients or trace elements include iron, chromium, copper, iodine, manganese, selenium, and zinc.

- Iron: part of hemoglobin, helps brain development and supports the immune system.
 - Food sources: a) heme iron is found in animal foods which include meats, fish, and poultry; b) non-heme iron is found in plant foods which include beans and lentils.
 - Foods containing heme iron are better absorbed by the body compared to non-heme iron—which absorption could be influenced by other food components.
- Chromium: works with insulin to help body use glucose or blood sugar.
 - Food sources: American cheese, liver, shredded wheat, peas, and eggs.
- Copper: helps the body manufacture hemoglobin, which carries oxygen in red blood cells, helps develop connective tissue and helps the body produce energy in cells.
 - Food sources: beef liver, clams, sunflower seeds, peanuts and mushrooms.
- Fluoride: hardens tooth enamel and protects against decay and may help strengthen bones.
 - Food sources: fluorinated water and fish with small bones.

- Iodine: helps the body regulate the rate we use energy and is part of the thyroid hormones.
 - Food sources: cod, table salt, potato, navy beans
- Manganese – part of many enzymes, supports bone formation, aids in metabolism of energy from fats, proteins and carbohydrates.
 - Food sources: pineapple, whole wheat pasta, tea, whole wheat bread lentils
- Selenium – acts as an antioxidant with vitamin E and aids in cell protection, boost immune function and aids cell growth.
 - Food sources: chicken, eggs, brown rice whole wheat bread, peanuts
- Zinc – promotes cell reproduction and tissue growth, part of many enzymes helps the body use carbohydrate, protein and fats.
 - Food sources: beef, crab, wheat bran, almonds, milk, tuna

2. Zucchini is commonly known as a vegetable. However, it is actually a fruit of the Cucurbit family. What other fruits are in the Cucurbit family? Why is zucchini botanically a fruit? Make a list of other “fruits” we call vegetables.

Fruits of the Cucurbit family include: the gourd family, pumpkin family and cucumber family. Zucchini is a fruit, but in the culinary world, it is treated as a vegetable. Botanically it is a fruit since it comes from the swollen ovary of the female zucchini flower. Other fruits we call vegetables include: tomatoes, pumpkins, squash, and eggplant.

3. Zucchini is a type of summer squash. Unlike their counterpart winter squash, summer squash are eaten when they are still immature and small. Make a chart comparing summer squash and winter squash, including size, color, shell, skin, flesh, seeds, how they grow, and at what stage they are harvested.

Refer to the *Winter Squash* and *Zucchini* educator newsletters for information.



Sources:

www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov/month/squash.html
<http://ucanr.org/freepubs/docs/7245.pdf>
<http://hort-devel-nwrec.hort.oregonstate.edu/zuc.html>
<http://ods.od.nih.gov/index.aspx>

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