

# Vegetable of the Month

## CELERY AND FENNEL



Celery, a household staple to some, an appetizer or snack to others, either way, this beloved vegetable has made its way into millions of households over the years. Celery has its roots in sixteenth century northern European history. Celery is related to anise, carrots, parsley and parsnips.

Celery is often sold in loose stalks and also pre-packaged celery hearts. Celery hearts are the inner ribs of the celery. Today celery is predominately grown domestically in California and Florida with many different varieties on the market, the most common being Pascal. A member of the carrot family, celery was first recorded as a plant in France in 1623 and was probably developed either there or in Italy.

Its seed was brought to Kalamazoo, Michigan, in the 1850s from Scotland, and it became a commercial crop there.

### Nutrition Facts

Serving Size (60g)  
Servings Per Container

Amount Per Serving

**Calories 10**      **Calories from Fat 0**  
% Daily Value\*

**Total Fat 0g**      **0%**  
Saturated Fat 0g      **0%**

**Cholesterol 0mg**      **0%**

**Sodium 50mg**      **2%**

**Total Carbohydrate 2g**      **1%**

Dietary Fiber 1g      **4%**

Sugars 1g

**Protein 0g**

Vitamin A 2%      • Vitamin C 6%

Calcium 2%      • Iron 2%

\*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

		Calories: 2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Saturated Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Calories per gram:  
Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4

## Availability and Selection

Celery is available year round. Select celery that is compact in shape where the ribs feel firm and crisp and the leaves are green. Avoid celery that is bruised or discolored.

## Storage and Preparation

Celery should be refrigerated in a plastic bag and placed in the crisper for up to two weeks. If the ribs are wilted, separate the ribs and place them in a bowl of ice water for several minutes before use.

Separate celery ribs and rinse thoroughly as dirt is often lodged between the ribs. To serve raw or in cooked dishes, simply cut to desire length.



### Make Celery Part of Your 5 A Day Plan

- Eat celery raw or fill with some natural peanut butter for a crunchy snack.
- Add sliced celery to your favorite green salads for an added crunch.
- Celery makes a great addition to any vegetable platter.
- Serve celery alone with a squeeze of lemon juice or vinaigrette dressing.
- Cooked celery is excellent as a vegetable side dish or in stuffing.
- Add celery ribs to all your soups and stews for a different texture.
- Sauté celery in your stir-fry dishes.

# Fennel

Often mistaken for celery, this vegetable has a different taste that is quite similar to anise or licorice. Fennel is often grown for its seeds and oil from the leaves and used for various food flavorings.



## Nutrition Facts

Serving Size (44g)

Servings Per Container

Amount Per Serving

**Calories 15**      Calories from Fat 0

% Daily Value\*

**Total Fat 0g**      **0%**

Saturated Fat --g      --%

**Cholesterol 0mg**      **0%**

**Sodium 25mg**      **1%**

**Total Carbohydrate 3g**      **1%**

Dietary Fiber 1g      **4%**

Sugars 0g

**Protein 1g**

Vitamin A 2%      • Vitamin C 8%

Calcium 2%      • Iron 2%

\*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Saturated Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg

Fennel is native to southern Europe and the Mediterranean area. The name fennel originates from the Greek word for "marathon" which is the famous battle at Marathon in 490 B.C. where the Greeks fought against the Persians who fought on a field of Fennel.

### Availability and Selection

Fennel is available year round, with a peak season in fall and winter. Select fennel that are firm, have straight stalks, and green leaves. The bulbs should be compact in shape with the stalks fairly close and not too spread out. Avoid fennel that is discolored or show signs of splitting.

## Storage and Preparation

Fennel is more delicate than celery and will dry out quickly. Before storing, cut the stalks off, wrap the stalks separately from the bulb in plastic bags, and store in the crisper section of the refrigerator. Fennel should keep for three to four days, but it is best to use it as soon as possible.

Wash fennel stalks thoroughly and use in soups and stews. The feathery leaves can be used as an herb or garnish. The fennel bulb must be washed, trimmed at the base, and then can be sliced as called for in the recipes.



### Make Fennel Part of Your 5 A Day Plan

- Slice or dice for stews, soups, and stuffing.
- Add to salads. A traditional salad combines sliced fennel with peeled, sliced oranges; drizzle with olive oil and salt and pepper to taste.
- Quarter bulbs, then boil or steam until tender. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese and breadcrumbs and bake. Or top with light cream sauce and low-fat cheese, and then bake casserole-style.

## Recipes

### Celery Mashed Potatoes

Makes 4 servings

Each serving equals one 5 A Day serving

Source: Produce for Better Health/American Celery Council

#### *Ingredients*

2 lbs red potatoes (unpeeled), cut in 1½ inch chunks (about 4 cups)

2 cups celery, diced

½ cup low-fat milk

2 Tbsp butter

½ tsp celery seeds

½ tsp salt

1/8 tsp ground black pepper

In a medium saucepan place potatoes, celery, and enough water to cover; bring to a boil; reduce heat and simmer covered, until potatoes are tender, about 15 minutes. Drain; place vegetables in a large bowl; using a potato masher or electric mixer, mash until potatoes are nearly smooth. In a saucepan heat milk and butter until butter is melted; add to vegetables with celery seeds, salt, if desired, and black pepper; mix until combined. Serve immediately.

Nutritional analysis per serving: Calories 220, Protein 6g, Fat 5g, Calories From Fat 18%, Cholesterol 10mg, Carbohydrates 40g, Fiber 5g, Sodium 318mg.

### **Celery and Apple Steam-Fry with Honey-Mustard Sauce**

Makes 4 servings

Each serving equals one 5 A Day serving

Source: Produce for Better Health/American Celery Council

#### *Ingredients*

1 cup water  
4 cup celery, diagonally sliced  $\frac{1}{2}$ " thick  
2 cup sweet red apples (approx. 2 medium) diced  
2 Tbsp Dijon-style mustard  
1 Tbsp honey  
1 tsp cornstarch  
1/8 tsp ground black pepper  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  cup walnuts, chopped toasted

In a large skillet bring water to a boil. Add celery and apples; cook and stir until crisp-tender, about 8 minutes. In a small bowl combine mustard, honey, cornstarch and black pepper with 2 Tbsp. water. Add to celery mixture, stirring constantly; cook and stir until clear and thickened, about 1 minute. Stir in walnuts, if desired.

Nutritional analysis per serving: Calories 104, Protein 2g, Fat 3g, Calories From Fat 27%, Cholesterol 0mg, Carbohydrates 19g, Fiber 4g, Sodium 296mg.

## **Roast Celery with Apples**

Makes 4 servings

Each serving equals one 5 A Day serving

Source: Produce for Better Health/American Celery Council

### *Ingredients*

- 1 large clove garlic, crushed
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 stalk celery, about 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  lbs
- 2 Golden Delicious apples, peeled, cored, and quartered
- 1 cup apple juice
- $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp ground cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp salt
- $\frac{1}{8}$  tsp ground black pepper
- 4 slices toasted Italian bread

Preheat oven to 375°F. Place garlic and oil in a 13 x 9 x 2-inch baking pan; bake until oil is hot, about 5 minutes. Meanwhile trim base of celery; cut celery stalk crosswise, about 7 inches from base (save top for soups, stews, etc); cut stalk lengthwise into 4 wedges. Place celery, apples, apple juice, cinnamon, salt and pepper in baking pan; bake, uncovered, until celery is crisp-tender, about 40 minutes, basting with pan juices every 10 to 15 minutes; discard garlic. Serve immediately over Italian bread.

Nutritional analysis per serving: Calories 237, Protein 5g, Fat 8g, Calories From Fat 29%, Cholesterol 0mg, Carbohydrates 39g, Fiber 5g, Sodium 455mg.

## Apple Fennel Soup

Makes 4 servings

Each serving equals one and one half 5 A Day serving

Source: Produce for Better Health/Washington Apple Commission

### *Ingredients*

- 2 cup low sodium chicken broth
- 2 cup water
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup white wine
- 2 Golden Delicious apples, peeled, cored and chopped
- 1 cup carrots, thinly sliced
- 1 small onion, thinly sliced
- 1 cup fennel, chopped
- 1 Bay leaf
- $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp dried thyme leaves
- 6 Peppercorns
- 4 tsp non-fat plain yogurt



In large pot, combine broth, water, wine, apples, carrots, onion, fennel, bay leaf, thyme and peppercorns; bring to boil. Reduce heat and simmer, covered, 20 minutes. Strain soup, reserving liquid. Remove bay leaf from apple-vegetable mixture in strainer. In blender or food processor, puree mixture; add reserved liquid and blend well. Reheat soup, if necessary, ladle into soup bowls and serve with a dollop of yogurt if desired.

Nutritional analysis per serving: Calories 85, Protein 3g, Fat 1g, Calories From Fat 9%, Cholesterol 2mg, Carbohydrates 18g, Fiber 3g, Sodium 119mg.

## **Braised Fennel with Shallots & Mushrooms**

Makes 4 servings

Each serving equals one 5 A Day serving

Source: Frieda's Inc.

### *Ingredients*

- 1 fennel bulb, scrubbed
- 2 cups low sodium chicken broth
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 4 oz portabella mushrooms, sliced
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup fresh brown mushrooms, sliced
- 2 shallots, peeled and sliced
- 1 clove garlic, minced

Trim stems of fennel bulb to within 1/4-inch of bulb. Reserve some leaves for garnish. Cut fennel into quarters; slice crosswise. Place in saucepan with broth or water to cover. Bring to boiling; reduce heat. Simmer, partially covered, for 15 minutes, or till tender. Drain; remove. In same pan, heat oil; sauté portabella and brown mushrooms with shallots and garlic until tender. Toss with fennel. Garnish with some of the reserved fennel leaves.

Nutritional analysis per serving: Calories 76, Protein 4g, Fat 2g, Calories From Fat 24%, Cholesterol 2mg, Carbohydrates 11g, Fiber 3g, Sodium 90mg.

## **Fennel & Mushroom Stuffing**

Makes 6 servings

Each serving equals one 5 A Day serving

Source: Wegmans Food Markets

### *Ingredients*

2 Tbsp vegetable oil

1 large clove garlic, finely chopped

4 oz sliced portabella mushrooms

4 oz sliced shiitake mushrooms

1 large (1 lb) fennel bulb, washed, trimmed and thinly sliced

1/3 cup finely chopped fennel leaves

2 cups dried bread cubes

1/2 cup low sodium chicken broth

Heat oil in skillet. Add garlic and mushrooms and cook on MEDIUM heat until mushrooms are browned. Add fennel and sauté until tender, but slightly crunchy. Stir in fennel leaves and bread cubes. Add chicken broth to moisten stuffing.

Nutritional analysis per serving: Calories 95, Protein 3g, Fat 3g, Calories From Fat 28%, Cholesterol 0mg, Carbohydrates 15g, Fiber 3g, Sodium 56mg.

## **Fennel Citrus Salad**

Makes 4 servings

Each serving equals one 5 A Day serving

Source: Wegmans Food Markets

### *Ingredients*

1 medium, about 1½ lbs, fennel bulb, thinly sliced

4 medium navel oranges, peeled and sliced

¼ cup thinly sliced red onion

¼ cup Kalamata olives, pitted

2 tsp olive oil

2 Tbsp fresh lemon juice

Combine fennel, oranges, red onion and olives. Drizzle with olive oil and lemon juice. Toss gently and serve.

Nutritional analysis per serving: Calories 130, Protein 3g, Fat 3g, Calories From Fat 26%, Cholesterol 0mg, Carbohydrates 26g, Fiber 7g, Sodium 90mg.