

Integrating Gender and Nutrition within Agricultural Extension Services

Info Sheet
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Cucumber

Nutritional Information

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Audience:

Extension Field Agents

Purpose:

To describe the nutritional properties of cucumbers



Cucumbers are primarily consumed as raw vegetables, but they can also be pickled or used in soups. Since cucumbers are often eaten raw it is very important to wash them well before peeling, cutting, or eating them. Even the healthiest and most delicious foods can become unhealthy if they are dirty or washed in dirty water full of bacteria.

Cucumbers do not have many vitamins and minerals, but they do have a lot of water. Depending on the variety of the cucumber, it may contain up to 98% of its weight as water. Therefore, if you are thirsty and have nothing to drink, cucumbers can be used as a substitute for a beverage. Although we can get water from many sources, it is critical for our health and survival. In general, an adult should drink about 2 liters of water a day. More water may be needed depending on the temperature (very hot or cold) and the level of activity (manual labor, working outside) of a person. However, keep in mind that this water intake includes not only plain water, but also beverages such as juice or milk, liquid food such as soup, and watery fruits and vegetables such as cucumbers.

In addition to cucumber's hydrating properties, it provides a good source of vitamin K and has small amounts of minerals (USDA, 2017). Vitamin K helps the body with blood clotting, which is important for wound healing. Vitamin K also helps the body build healthy bones (National Institute of Health, 2017). The minerals that are in the cucumbers make the water in that vegetable easier to absorb by our body. Therefore, the cucumbers are almost perfect as a "nature grown" water canteen. The minerals in cucumbers include potassium, magnesium, and manganese.

Finally, the cucumber is a good source of phytonutrients, which are the plant chemicals that have protective or disease preventive properties. The phytonutrients, such as flavonoids, lignanes and triterpenes, offer antioxidant, anti-inflammatory and anti-cancer benefits (Szalay, 2017).

References

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