



Tomato Basil Salad

- ¼ cup** fresh basil leaves
- 1** pint cherry, grape or other salad tomatoes, halved (2 cups)
- 1** large cucumber, chopped (2 cups)
- 3** green onions, chopped (½ cup)
- 1** small yellow bell pepper, seeded and diced
- 3 tablespoons** crumbled, fat free feta cheese
- 3 tablespoons** olive oil
- 2 tablespoons** white balsamic or white vinegar
- Salt and freshly ground pepper

Roll basil leaves lengthwise and **cut** across into ¼ inch strips. **Combine** basil, tomatoes, cucumber, green onions, bell pepper and cheese in large bowl. **Whisk** olive oil with vinegar. **Drizzle** over salad ingredients and lightly **toss** to cover. **Season** with salt and pepper to taste.

Yield: 4, 1 cup servings

Nutritional Analysis:
150 calories, 10 g fat, 1.5 g saturated fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 200 mg sodium, 11 g carbohydrate, 2 g fiber, 5 g sugars, 3 g protein.

Kentucky Fresh Basil

SEASON: Spring through summer

NUTRITION FACTS: A four teaspoon serving of fresh basil has 20 mg of potassium and 0 calories. Basil has a warm, spicy smell and a pungent flavor, similar to that of licorice and cloves. The most common variety is sweet basil. Other popular varieties include Italian, lemon, purple, Thai and dwarf basil.

USES: The flavor of many garden vegetables is enhanced by adding fresh basil. It adds zest to summer squash, eggplant, potatoes, cabbage, cauliflower and spinach. The most common use is in tomato recipes and is the main ingredient in pesto.

STORAGE: Basil may be harvested anytime and used fresh. To dry basil leaves, cut the stalks 6 inches above the ground. Strip the leaves and dry in a dehydrator or place on a screen and dry in a dark, well ventilated room. Basil can also be dried by hanging upside down in a well ventilated space, out of the sun. Store dried leaves in an air-tight container. Leaves can also be frozen. Frozen or dried basil should be used within a year.

GROWING: Basil is easy to grow from seed. Start seeds indoors 4-6 weeks before the last frost. It can grow 1 foot tall in a garden but is often grown indoors in containers. Basil plants require a lot of sunlight.

KENTUCKY FRESH BASIL

Kentucky Proud Project
County Extension Agents for Family and Consumer Sciences
University of Kentucky, Dietetics and Human Nutrition students
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Source: www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov

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<http://plateitup.ca.uky.edu>



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