

# Immune Boosting Foods

## with Chef Derek Bugge

Harbor Foodservice Chef Derek Bugge has compiled a list of some immune boosting foods that you can either incorporate into your menu, or highlight as part of your existing menu.

Many of these foods can be used in conjunction with current recipes, or used as a side dish.



## MUSHROOMS



Mushrooms are high in selenium and B vitamins like riboflavin and niacin. These minerals and vitamins are necessary for the immune system to work in tip top form. Mushrooms are also high in polysaccharides, sugar-like molecules that boost immune function.

### **CHEF TIP:**

Mushrooms will store for a long time if held in proper, cool conditions. Only cook what you are planning to use in the next 48 hours.

Pureeing cooked mushrooms is a great way to incorporate mushrooms into almost any dish.

### **Stocked:**

Large portabella: 249072

Oyster: 552259

Button: 112577

Shiitake: 10383

Crimini: 249670

Small button: 248955

# WATERMELON



## CHEF TIP:

Although uncommon to serve watermelon during this time of year, it is not unheard of. Create a relevant dish by grilling or smoking the watermelon to give it a unique flavor and twist.

Watermelon is an immune boosting fruit. One 2-cup serving of watermelon has 270 mg of potassium, 30% of the daily value of vitamin A, and 25% of the value of vitamin C. Calories in watermelon aren't much at all. One 2-cup serving of watermelon has just 8 calories.

Watermelon also provides vitamins B6 and glutathione. The body needs these vitamins, nutrients, and compounds like glutathione for proper immune function.

## Stocked:

Seedless: 770475

# SPINACH



## CHEF TIP:

When cooking ahead of time, gently press spinach into a colander to remove as much moisture as possible so the excess water does not over saturate your dish.

Spinach is also great to puree and add to foods. Risotto anyone?!

Spinach gets top billing as a superfood thanks to its high content of folate, vitamin A, vitamin C, fiber, magnesium, and iron. The nutrients in spinach boost immune function and provide the body with necessary nutrients for cell division and DNA repair. Reap maximum benefits from spinach by eating it raw or lightly cooked to preserve nutrients.

## Stocked:

Cut spinach leaf: 818763  
(100% yield; labor saving)

Spinach cello stemless: 182893

Baby spinach: 714259

Chopped/Frozen: 818615

# TEA



## CHEF TIP:

Making a tea “stock” is a great way to infuse tea flavor into foods. Use tea stock to cook rice or other starches, use as your base for braising or boiling pasta. Excellent way to introduce a new depth of flavor while elevating your dish!

Antioxidants in tea called polyphenols and flavonoids are credited with boosting immune function. These compounds may also reduce the risk of heart disease. Drinking green tea favorably affects blood lipids, increasing good HDL cholesterol and decreasing LDL bad cholesterol, triglycerides, and total cholesterol.

## Stocked:

We currently stock over 60 varieties of tea. Contact your territory sales associate to find one that fits your demand. Some of my favorites to use in cooking are:

Chamomile: 596515

Green tea: 157409

Black tea: 73597

Jasmine Blossom: 596477

Earl Gray: 596469

# SWEET POTATO



## CHEF TIP:

Sweet potatoes are a great replacement for wherever you use regular potatoes. In soups, mashed, or purees, sweet potatoes add a little sweet and a lot of healthy vitamins!

One medium sweet potato packs a whopping 120% of the daily value of vitamin A and 30% of the daily value of vitamin C, all for just 100 calories. These vitamins are crucial for immune function and great for your skin. Sweet potatoes are a cholesterol-free and fat-free food, so you get all the helpful, immune-boosting vitamins without the guilt. Sweet potatoes serve up a healthy portion of fiber, too.

## Stocked:

Sweet potato “tots”: 750364

Crinkle cut sweet potato fries: 544083

Whole sweet potatoes: 486841

# BROCCOLI



## CHEF TIP:

Steaming broccoli as opposed to other methods allows the broccoli to retain more of its vitamins and antioxidants.

Broccoli is a nutrient-packed powerhouse to support your immune system. One cup of broccoli provides as much vitamin C as an orange. The veggie is also high in beta-carotene, potassium, magnesium, zinc, and iron. Broccoli supplies an array of B vitamins (B1, B2, B3, and B6). Together, these vitamins and minerals help the immune system to run in top form. Another healthy compound: glutathione, the master antioxidant in the body.

## Stocked:

Florets: 607797

Broccoli bunch: 312135

Frozen spears: 64270

Crowns: 309028

# GARLIC



## CHEF TIP:

The uses of garlic are abundant. When using garlic, be sure to cook over medium heat as to not burn it and leave your dish with a bitter flavor.

People have praised garlic for ages for its immune boosting properties. Garlic has antibacterial, antiviral, and anti-fungal properties. The bulbs are rich in antioxidants that quench free radicals that play a role in Alzheimer's disease, heart disease, cancers, and other conditions. The antiviral properties may be helpful in reducing the severity of colds, flu or COVID-19 infections. In one study, people who took garlic supplements during cold season caught fewer colds than those who took placebo pills. If you do catch a cold, garlic can shorten the duration of it.

## Stocked:

Garlic minced in oil: 454593

Roasted garlic paste: 698466

Garlic chopped in water: 454580

Whole peeled garlic: 464559



## GINGER



### CHEF TIP:

Don't let ginger intimidate you. Peel well and add to any dish like you would garlic for a new and unique twist. Steeping ginger in hot water with a little honey has been proven to soothe an upset stomach.

Antioxidant compounds in ginger root have potent anti-inflammatory and immune-boosting properties. Normal metabolic processes in the body, infections, and toxins all contribute to the production of free radicals resulting in oxidative stress. Antioxidants in foods like ginger quench free radicals and help guard against arthritis, cancer, neurodegenerative disorders, and many other conditions.

### Stocked:

Ginger root: 109096  
Dry ground ginger: 19955  
Pickled ginger: 940217  
Chopped ginger in oil: 415184  
Carrot ginger soup: 695882

## CITRUS FRUITS



### CHEF TIP:

When using citrus juice, don't forget about the peels! There is so much flavor packed into the skin. While the juice is acidic, we refer to the peel as "floral". Use a microplane to extract all that flavor without getting the pith and add to almost any dish as another component.

Feeding your body certain foods may help keep your immune system strong. If you're looking for ways to prevent winter colds and the flu, add a little citrus to in your life. Most people turn to vitamin C after they've caught a cold. That's because it helps build up your immune system. Vitamin C is thought to increase the production of white blood cells. These are key to fighting infections.

### Stocked:

Lemons: 282944  
Limes: 109371  
Orange: 323519  
Grapefruit: 150753

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## RED BELL PEPPERS



### CHEF TIP:

When cooking bell peppers, undercook them slightly, as the carry-over cooking will finish them perfectly.

Ounce for ounce, red bell peppers contain twice as much vitamin C as citrus. They're also a rich source of beta carotene.

Besides boosting your immune system, vitamin C may help maintain healthy skin. Beta carotene helps keep your eyes and skin healthy.

### Stocked:

Red bell pepper pesto: 490356

Whole red bell peppers: 251633

Fired roasted red bell peppers: 327018

Diced red bell peppers (JIT): 886726

Sliced red bell peppers: 886401

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## ALMONDS



### CHEF TIP:

Almonds are great for a quick healthy snack, but their uses are so much more versatile. A great thickener for gluten free sauces, spiced for a salad topper, sweetened and roasted for desserts, or pureed for a savory garnish.

When it comes to preventing and fighting off colds, vitamin E tends to take a backseat to vitamin C. However, vitamin E is key to a healthy immune system. It's a fat-soluble vitamin, meaning it requires the presence of fat to be absorbed properly. Nuts, such as almonds, are packed with the vitamin and also have healthy fats. A half-cup serving, which is about 46 whole, shelled almonds, provides nearly 100% of the recommended daily amount of vitamin E.

### Stocked:

Whole raw almonds: 719944

Sliced blanched almonds: 349405

Slivered almonds: 656284