

## FOOD SAFETY CORNER

How long can we keep  
canned goods?

Most canned foods have a long shelf life when stored in a clean, dry, cool (below 85°F) cabinet away from the stove. Do not use food from cans that are leaking, rusting, bulging, severely dented, or that emit a foul odor. They may contain harmful, tasteless organisms that can cause illness. Discard damaged cans without tasting foods.

Generally, high-acid canned foods such as tomatoes, grapefruit and pineapple can be stored on the shelf for 12 to 18 months; low-acid canned foods such as meat, poultry, fish and most vegetables will keep 2 to 5 years — if the can remains in good condition and has been stored properly.



## *THE AMAZING ARTICHOKE!*

Did you know that eating an artichoke was once off limits for women? In the sixteenth century, the artichoke was considered an aphrodisiac and thus was reserved for men only. This plant is relished for its edible leaves and stalks.

The artichoke's origin may be Arabic, from the word *al-qarshuf*. It is a perennial thistle believed to be a native of the Mediterranean and the Canary Islands. The "vegetable" that we eat is actually the plant's flower bud.

Abundant in nutrients while low in calories, the artichoke is surely a healthy choice at mealtime: one large artichoke has about 60 calories, 6 grams of fiber, and is a good source of vitamin C, folate, magnesium and potassium. It also contains a phytochemical called cynarin, which gives the artichoke a lingering sweet taste.

Most artichokes today are



grown in France, Italy, and Spain, while California provides nearly 100 percent of the United States' crop. California artichokes are available year-round with its peak seasons in the spring and fall.

For the best quality and flavor, choose deep green artichokes with tightly closed leaves that are heavy for their size. Avoid those with large black areas, or that are wilting, drying or have mold. Fall and winter

artichokes may be darker or have a whitish, blistered appearance due to exposure to light frost ("frost-kissed") and are the most tender with intense flavor. Refrigerate artichokes in a plastic bag up to one week. Cooked artichokes should be kept in the refrigerator for no more than 2 to 3 days. Enjoy them whole or in pasta and salads. Learn how to cook them with ease on the next page!

## *HEALTHY FISH FOR YOU AND THE OCEAN*

What are the best fish to eat these days? Some fish, such as the bluefin tuna and red snapper, are being depleted from overfishing. Others, like the king mackerel and swordfish, are high in mercury or PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyls). Prolonged exposure to small amounts of PCBs may cause neurological impairments in fetuses, infants and children.

Despite the risk of contaminants and potential harm to the environment, fish is a low-fat, high-protein food. Fish should be part of a well-balanced diet. Fish often contain immune-boosting omega-3 fatty acids, which may reduce the risk of heart disease, stroke, and cancer.

For fish-lovers, there are plenty of fish you can choose without

guilt! Monterey Bay Aquarium's Seafood Watch program has new recommendations for 2010, including "The Super Green List" which honors fish sources that are low in contaminants, rich in omega-3 fatty acids, and that are caught or farmed in ocean-friendly ways. Check out the list on the next page...



**Kitchen  
Tip!**

## VERSATILE YOGURT

Yogurt is great as a snack and a versatile ingredient in the kitchen. For breakfast, you can pour yogurt over granola instead of milk. If you crave dessert, have a cup of low-fat flavored yogurt. In a recipe calling for sour cream, you can substitute plain yogurt.

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## THE ART OF COOKING AND EATING AN ARTICHOKE

2 *OPTIONS:*

### Boil

Stand artichoke in a deep saucepan or pot with 3 inches of boiling water. (If desired, add oil, lemon juice and seasonings to cooking water.) Cover and boil gently 25 to 40 minutes, depending on size, or until a petal near the center pulls out easily. Stand artichoke upside down on a rack to drain.

### Steam

Place artichoke on a rack above an inch or two of boiling water. Cover and steam 25 to 45 minutes, depending on size, or until a petal near the center pulls out easily. Avoid cooking artichokes in aluminum or cast iron pans - they will turn an unpleasant, dark grayish green color.

### Eating the artichoke

Pull off outer petals one at a time. Dip base of petal into sauce or melted butter, pull through teeth to remove soft, pulpy area of petal. Discard remaining petal. Continue with the rest of the petals. Spoon out fuzzy center at base and discard. The bottom, or heart, is edible. Cut into small pieces and dip into sauce.

## ***CONTINUED: HEALTHY FISH FOR YOU AND THE OCEAN***

- Albacore Tuna (*troll- or pole-caught, U.S. or British Columbia*)
- Freshwater Coho Salmon (*farmed in tank systems, U.S.*)
- Mussels (*farmed*)
- Oysters (*farmed*)
- Pacific Sardines (*wild-caught*)
- Pink Shrimp (*wild-caught, Oregon*)
- Rainbow Trout (*farmed*)
- Salmon (*wild-caught, Alaska*)
- Spot Prawns (*wild-caught, British Columbia*)

Check out [www.montereybayaquarium.org](http://www.montereybayaquarium.org) for more seafood recommendations and a free downloadable pocket guide or iPhone application.



### **Northwestern Baked Salmon with Artichoke Hearts**

- 1 6-oz jar of marinated artichoke hearts, drained and chopped
- 1/2 cup minced red onion
- 1/2 cup minced celery
- 4 4-oz. salmon filets, skin removed
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 2 Tbsp. reduced fat sour cream
- 1/2 Tbsp. Dijon mustard
- 1 1/2 Tbsp. dried parsley

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. In medium bowl, mix together artichoke hearts, red onion and celery. Set aside. Place salmon filets on 4 individual sheets of aluminum foil. Sprinkle each filet with salt and pepper. In small bowl, mix sour cream with mustard. Spread equal amounts on top of each filet. Sprinkle each filet with equal amounts of parsley. Fold edges and crimp to seal. Place fish packets on cookie sheet. Bake for 12-15 minutes, or until cooked through. Garnish baked fish with the artichoke mixture. Makes 4 servings.

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