



# RECIPE DEMO TOOLKIT

## Introduction

Nutrition in the kitchen has never been more important, yet Americans struggle to find time to cook, let alone to sort through the mounds of confusing nutrition information online. As nutrition educators, we're the ideal resources for **helping home cooks understand the benefits of healthy foods** and **learn new culinary skills** to prepare those foods. Food demonstrations are a great way to accomplish just that.

This toolkit has everything you need to become a kitchen rockstar, performing engaging food demos in classrooms, conference rooms or even on broadcast networks:

- **Comprehensive guide** to plan, prepare and perform a food demo
- **Best practices and messaging tips**
- **Easy, tested recipes** that support MyPlate principles
- **Resources** to share with your audience



## Preparing for Your Demo

# 1

Wash and prep all ingredients. Each recipe in this kit lists enough ingredients to **prepare the dish twice**.

# 2

Use half the ingredients to prepare one dish beforehand as a sample visual during the demo.

# 3

Pack the remaining ingredients in zip-close bags or stackable plastic containers to prepare the second dish during the demo with your audience.

# 4

Arrange the tools, props and ingredients in the order you will be presenting the demo.



## Essentials Checklist for All Demos:

Always have these on hand. Each recipe also has an additional corresponding checklist.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cart with wheels                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Trash bags  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cooler with wheels                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Extension cord  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bags of ice (if using a cooler)       | <input type="checkbox"/> Surge protector   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Apron                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Duct tape for taping down your cords to prevent tripping (if in a studio, ask if this is permitted) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dish towels                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Makeup sponges to help angle the props for better view  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gloves                                | <input type="checkbox"/> First aid kit   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Plasticware and serveware for samples | <input type="checkbox"/> Copies of take-home materials (i.e., recipe cards)  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Extra zip-close bags for leftovers    |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hand sanitizer or wipes               |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> All-purpose cleaner                   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Paper towels                          |  |

# Demo Planning Template and Message Development

## Ingredients List

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<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>

## Grocery List

(double the ingredients)

<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>

## Equipment List

Does your recipe require anything special?

<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>

What will be provided?

<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>

What do you need to bring?

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<hr/>	<hr/>

## Before the Demo

Is there anything you need to prep or cook?

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## During the Demo

How will your demo flow from start to finish?

- |          |           |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 6. _____  |
| 2. _____ | 7. _____  |
| 3. _____ | 8. _____  |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____  |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |

## Key Messages

Pick the top 3 messages you want to share. These should reflect your theme and tone of the demo and help you tell your nutrition story.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

## Demo Messages

These support your key messages. Are there variations to the recipe you want to share? What about fun facts?

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## Nutrition Messages

Is your recipe diabetes friendly? Heart healthy? This is your chance to share nutrition nuggets on why the recipe is nutritious.

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## Resources to Share

What take-home materials do you want to provide? Recipe cards? Infographics? Business card?

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# GARDEN VEGGIE PIZZA



## Family-Friendly Recipe Spotlight

### Ingredients

2¾ cups fresh vegetables (bell peppers, mushrooms, red onion and spinach leaves), sliced  
½ cup marinara sauce  
4 pita flatbread rounds  
1 cup (4 ounces) shredded Italian cheese blend  
1 teaspoon Italian herb seasoning  
Cooking spray

### Grocery List (double the ingredients)

5½ cups fresh vegetables (bell peppers, mushrooms, red onion and spinach leaves), sliced  
1 cup marinara sauce  
8 pita flatbread rounds  
2 cups (8 ounces) shredded Italian cheese blend  
2 teaspoons Italian herb seasoning  
Cooking spray

### Equipment List

4 glass or clear bowls  
Spatula  
Large baking sheet  
Small plastic plates

### Demo Instructions

- 1 Coat vegetables with nonstick cooking spray and set aside.
- 2 Spread marinara sauce over flatbread rounds. Combine cheese with herb seasoning, then sprinkle half the mixture over the flatbreads. Add vegetables, then top with remaining cheese.
- 3 Place on a baking sheet and share that it will bake at 450°F for 10 minutes or until crust is golden brown and cheese is melted.

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**DEMO TIP:** *This pizza is a great way to showcase MyPlate, which serves as a wonderful visual to drive your messages home. Consider bringing a MyPlate graphic to reference during your demo.*

## Key Messages

- ▶ Some foods fall into a single MyPlate food group, while foods such as pizza combine several food groups into a single slice. Use the MyPlate concept to build a better-for-you pizza.
- ▶ Pizza is a canvas for a variety of toppings; it's easy to create a flavorful pizza that meets dietary needs and preferences. In fact, pizza serves as a delivery vehicle for important food groups such as dairy, whole grains, vegetables, fruit and protein.
- ▶ Getting your kids involved in the kitchen is a great way for the family to connect. While it may require extra time, cleanup and patience, the skills they'll learn are worth the added effort. Kids as young as 2 can be a part of the fun, and their involvement may keep them interested in trying new, healthy foods.

## Demo Messages

- ▶ **Opt for thin or whole-wheat crust.** Whether homemade crust, English muffin, pita, naan or sandwich rounds, pizza crust can provide essential nutrients and fiber when you choose a whole grain.
- ▶ **Get saucy with your spread.** Traditional tomato-based pizza sauces contain the phytochemical lycopene and contribute a small number of calories per slice. But if you're looking to spice up your pie, use a drizzle of BBQ sauce, buffalo sauce or balsamic. While alternative sauces can have more sugar and sodium than tomato sauce, a small amount can contribute big flavor, allowing you to reduce other less nutrient-rich ingredients without sacrificing taste.
- ▶ **Be creative with your cheese.** Try a handful of sharp, pungent or spiced cheese on your pizza or crust edge, like provolone, Asiago, cheddar or blue cheese.

- ▶ **Top it off with color.** Make a point to add at least three colorful fruits or veggies to your pizza. Ingredients like crisp bell peppers, fresh baby spinach and sweet-and-spicy cherry peppers add unique textures and tastes with fewer calories than some other toppings.

## Nutrition Messages

- ▶ We each need three servings of dairy every day to keep our bones healthy and strong. Cheese provides key nutrients like calcium, protein and phosphorus.
- ▶ This pizza recipe has almost 5 grams of fiber per serving. Fiber is associated with reduced risk of heart disease and diabetes. Fiber also promotes a healthy body weight and gastrointestinal health.
- ▶ The combination of dairy and a whole-grain crust in this recipe makes a good source of the four nutrients of concern as outlined by the Dietary Guidelines for Americans: calcium, vitamin D, potassium and fiber. These are nutrients that we aren't eating enough of in the United States.

## Other Family Friendly Recipe Suggestions

Visit [DairyDiscoveryZone.com](http://DairyDiscoveryZone.com) for more recipe ideas.

[Roasted Vegetable Quesadillas](#)

[Greek Yogurt Tuna Casserole](#)

[Easy Cheesy Chicken Enchiladas with Yogurt Sauce](#)



# BALSAMIC STRAWBERRIES

*with* **RICOTTA CREAM**



## No-Cook Recipe Spotlight

### Ingredients

1 cup part-skim ricotta cheese  
3 ounces cream cheese  
2 tablespoons powdered sugar  
½ teaspoon vanilla  
2 tablespoons store-bought balsamic reduction  
1 pound fresh strawberries, hulled and quartered  
1 tablespoon fresh basil leaves

### Grocery List *(double the ingredients)*

2 cups part-skim ricotta cheese  
6 ounces cream cheese  
4 tablespoons powdered sugar  
1 teaspoon vanilla  
¼ cup store-bought balsamic reduction  
2 pounds fresh strawberries, hulled and quartered  
2 tablespoons fresh basil leaves

### Equipment List

2 large glass mixing bowls  
Hand mixer  
3 spatulas  
3 glass ramekins or clear plastic cups  
2 glass serving bowls, mason jars or parfait glasses

Small cutting board  
Knife  
2-ounce plastic cups and spoons for sampling  
Extension cord  
Surge protector

### Demo Instructions

- 1** In a large bowl, whip ricotta cheese, cream cheese, powdered sugar and vanilla with an electric hand mixer.
- 2** In the second bowl, toss together balsamic reduction and strawberries.
- 3** Layer ricotta cream and strawberries in a serving glass.
- 4** Julienne basil and sprinkle on top.  
**Optional:** Develop knife skills! Teach how to julienne. You can also simply tear basil leaves.
- 5** Assemble and serve samples.

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**DEMO TIP:** *If you're demoing on TV, ask your reporter to help whip the ricotta or toss the strawberries. Be sure to detail the steps to the reporter before you go live for a seamless interview. If you're demoing for an audience, ask for volunteers to help assemble.*

## Key Messages

- ▶ This is a simple, no-cook recipe you can enjoy for breakfast or dessert.
- ▶ Nutrient-rich foods like low-fat dairy and colorful fruit help you get the nutrition your body needs.
- ▶ Ricotta is a protein powerhouse that will help you stay fuller longer. It's also low in lactose, making it easy for those with lactose intolerance to digest.

## Demo Messages

- ▶ You can use whole-milk, part-skim or fat-free ricotta for this recipe.
- ▶ You can use fresh, canned or frozen fruit. Berries, peaches, plums or nectarines would all work well.
- ▶ Using a store-bought balsamic reduction saves time. You can also make your own at home:
  - Heat 3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar and 2 tablespoons sugar in a small saucepan over medium-high heat.
  - Bring to a boil, then reduce heat.
  - Simmer 2 to 3 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the mixture lightly coats a spoon.
  - Cool completely and store in an airtight container.
- ▶ Fresh herbs add more flavor to any recipe! To julienne fresh basil, lay a basil leaf flat on your cutting board, layer more basil on top, roll into a log, then slice across the log with a sharp knife.

## Nutrition Messages

- ▶ Since it is made from milk, ricotta cheese has many of milk's nutrients, including calcium, phosphorus and protein.
- ▶ ½ cup of ricotta cheese contains almost a fourth of your daily calcium and 14 grams of high-quality protein.
- ▶ This recipe offers 18 grams of high-quality protein and 2 grams of fiber per serving

## Other No-Cook Recipe Suggestions

Visit [DairyDiscoveryZone.com](https://www.dairydiscoveryzone.com) for more recipe ideas.

[Blues Buster Smoothie](#)

[Overnight Oatmeal Trio](#)

[Breakfast Cheese and Fruit Kabobs](#)





# SALAD IN A JAR *with* GREEK YOGURT DRESSING



## Lactose Intolerance-Friendly Recipe Spotlight

### Ingredients

#### *For the salad:*

1 cup cherry or grape tomatoes  
¼ cup shredded carrots  
¼ cup cooked crumbled bacon  
1½ cups (6 ounces) shredded colby jack or cheddar jack cheese  
2 cups torn spinach

#### *For the dressing:*

¼ cup fresh parsley  
2 to 3 tablespoons fresh dill  
2 to 3 tablespoons fresh chives  
1 clove garlic  
1 cup Greek yogurt  
¾ cup mayonnaise  
1½ teaspoons Worcestershire sauce  
¾ cup lactose-free milk  
Salt and pepper

### Grocery List *(double the ingredients)*

#### *For the salad:*

2 cups cherry or grape tomatoes  
½ cup shredded carrots  
½ cup cooked crumbled bacon  
3 cups (12 ounces) shredded colby jack or cheddar jack cheese  
4 cups torn spinach

#### *For the dressing:*

½ cup fresh parsley  
4 to 6 tablespoons fresh dill  
4 to 6 tablespoons fresh chives  
2 cloves garlic  
2 cups Greek yogurt  
1 ½ cups mayonnaise  
3 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce  
1 ½ cups lactose-free milk  
Salt and pepper

### Equipment List

Liquid measuring cup  
1 large glass bowl  
Food processor  
3 spatulas  
Spoon

10 glass ramekins or clear plastic cups and forks for sampling  
4 large mason jars  
Extension cord  
Surge protector

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## Demo Instructions

- 1 Begin with salad dressing.
  - Combine the parsley, dill, chives and garlic in a food processor; blend until finely minced.
  - Add the yogurt, mayonnaise and Worcestershire sauce and blend. Slowly pour milk into the processor as it blends. Season with salt and pepper.
- 2 Prepare each serving of salad in a large mason jar.
  - Spoon in a couple tablespoons of Greek Yogurt Dressing
  - Layer tomatoes, then carrots, bacon and cheese, and top with spinach.

**DEMO TIP:** Use clear bowls (plastic or glass) to showcase all the colorful ingredients.

## Key Messages

- ▶ Lactose intolerance does not mean dairy avoidance. This recipe uses lactose-free milk and Greek yogurt – both easier to digest for those with lactose intolerance.
- ▶ Make MyPlate your plate when you build a salad. Focus on a variety of veggies, sprinkle in your favorite cheese and opt for lean proteins. Hard-boiled eggs, chicken or steak would all be great additions.
- ▶ With this dressing, use a minimal amount of salt. Herbs and spices are a great way to add flavor without additional salt.

## Demo Messages

- ▶ If you prefer a lighter consistency for salads, thin the dressing by adding more milk.
- ▶ You can also use the Greek Yogurt Dressing as a dip with crudité's or as a marinade for grilled chicken breasts. Simply add less milk for a thicker consistency.
- ▶ Assembly is important. Always put your dressing at the bottom, layer in your veggies and place your leafy greens at the top. Keeping the dressing and greens separate prevents wilting.
- ▶ You can assemble the salad ahead of time for an easy on-the-go meal. When you're ready to eat, simply shake the mason jar to mix.

## Nutrition Messages

- ▶ Nutrition experts recommend you keep dairy in your diet even if you have lactose intolerance. Here are some strategies:
  - Try lactose-free milk. It's real milk, just without the lactose.
  - Start with a small amount of regular milk daily and increase it slowly over several days or weeks to find out how much regular milk you can comfortably digest.
  - Mix milk with other foods, such as soups and cereal; blend it with fruit or drink it with meals. Solid foods help give your body more time to digest the lactose.
  - Try natural cheeses, such as cheddar, colby jack, Monterey Jack, mozzarella and Swiss, which are low in lactose.
  - Choose yogurt with live and active cultures. The cultures help your body digest lactose.

## Other Lactose Intolerance-Friendly Recipe Suggestions

Visit [DairyDiscoveryZone.com](http://DairyDiscoveryZone.com) for more recipe ideas.

[Black Bean Salsa Sliders](#)

[Funtastic Cheese Snacks](#)

[9 Creative Low-Lactose Recipes](#)

# LAYERED SPINACH SUPREME EGG CUPS



## Protein Power Recipe Spotlight

### Ingredients

1 cup buttermilk baking mix  
¼ cup milk  
½ cup finely chopped onion  
4 eggs  
1 (10-ounce) package frozen spinach, thawed and drained  
1½ cups (12 ounces) small curd cottage cheese  
½ cup grated Parmesan cheese  
4 ounces Monterey Jack cheese, cubed  
2 cloves garlic, crushed  
Cooking spray

### Grocery List (double the ingredients)

2 cups buttermilk baking mix  
½ cup milk  
1 cup finely chopped onion  
8 eggs  
2 (10-ounce) packages frozen spinach, thawed and drained  
3 cups (24 ounces) small curd cottage cheese  
1 cup grated Parmesan cheese  
8 ounces Monterey Jack cheese, cubed  
4 cloves garlic, crushed  
Cooking spray

### Equipment List

2 glass mixing bowls	Whisk	Glass ramekins or clear plastic cups
2 spatulas	Muffin tin	
Spoon	Muffin tin liners	

### Demo Instructions

- 1 Line the muffin tin and spray lightly with cooking spray.
- 2 Mix baking mix, milk, onion and 2 eggs (reserving the other 2 eggs for the cheese mixture) in one glass bowl; beat vigorously. Spoon into muffin tins.
- 3 Mix remaining ingredients and the 2 reserved eggs in the second glass bowl. Spoon batter evenly in each muffin cup.
- 4 When the audience makes these at home, they will then bake at 375°F until set, about 20-25 minutes until eggs are cooked through and cheese is golden brown on top. Let stand 5 minutes.

*continued on next page*



**DEMO TIP:** *Rely on the magic of television; always have a prepared plate to show at the end of your demo to ensure everything comes out perfect. See our prop tips in the Food Presentation & Photography section for styling ideas.*

## Key Messages

- ▶ Its time to build a better breakfast to help energize your day.
- ▶ Nutrition experts now recommend 25-30 grams of protein at every meal for optimal nutrition: *when* you get your protein is as important as *how much* protein you get.
- ▶ Most Americans load up on protein in the evening, but getting your protein in the morning leaves you feeling fuller longer and can also help build lean muscle and manage a healthy weight.

## Demo Messages

- ▶ This recipe makes a dozen egg muffins. For a breakfast that will help power your morning, eat two muffins with a glass of milk (30 grams of protein). Balance your meal with your favorite fruit.
- ▶ Make these muffins on the weekend for an easy breakfast to eat all week. From the oven, let muffins cool completely, wrap each muffin in cling wrap and foil and place in gallon freezer bags. When you're about to run out the door for work or school, grab a couple muffins from the freezer, unwrap and microwave for about 1 minute.
- ▶ Switch up the flavor with these other add-ins:
  - Chopped bell pepper, tomatoes, kale and/or mushrooms
  - Pepper jack, gouda, Swiss, mozzarella or sharp cheddar cheeses
  - Cooked breakfast sausage or ham

## Nutrition Messages

- ▶ Two muffins have 22 grams of protein.
- ▶ Cottage cheese is an excellent source of high-quality protein with relatively few calories.
- ▶ Research shows high-quality protein, such as protein from milk, keeps you fuller longer, helps with weight maintenance, leads to new muscle creation and aids in blood sugar control.
- ▶ Protein as the foundation of your morning will help you feel satisfied and ready to tackle the day!

**NOTE:** This protein-packed breakfast can also be made in a casserole dish and cut into rectangles. Follow the recipe instructions at [DairyDiscoveryZone.com](http://DairyDiscoveryZone.com).

## Other Protein Power Recipe Suggestions

Visit [DairyDiscoveryZone.com](http://DairyDiscoveryZone.com) for more recipe ideas.

[Ricotta Muffins with Lemon Spread](#)

[Basil Tomato Soup with Grilled Cheese Croutons](#)  
(add ½ cup of unflavored whey)

[Slow Cooker Chili](#)





#### Nutrition Facts

Calories:	340
Protein:	13 g
Carbohydrate:	45 g
Fiber:	4 g
Total Fat:	11 g
Saturated fat:	5 g
Cholesterol:	25 mg
Calcium:	30% DV
Sodium:	703 mg



## Garden Veggie Pizza

**Prep/cook Time:** 20 min

#### Ingredients

2¾ cups fresh vegetables (bell peppers, mushrooms, red onion and spinach leaves), sliced  
½ cup marinara sauce  
4 pita flatbread rounds  
1 cup (4 ounces) shredded Italian cheese blend  
1 teaspoon Italian herb seasoning

#### Instructions

Preheat oven to 450°F. Coat vegetables with nonstick cooking spray; reserve. Spread marinara sauce over flatbread rounds. Combine cheese with herb seasoning and sprinkle half over flatbreads. Add vegetables, then top with remaining cheese. Place on a baking sheet and bake for 10 minutes or until crust is golden brown and cheese is melted. Yields 4 servings.



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#### Nutrition Facts

Calories:	160
Protein:	6 g
Carbohydrate:	17 g
Fiber:	2 g
Total Fat:	8 g
Saturated fat:	5 g
Cholesterol:	30 mg
Calcium:	15% DV
Sodium:	100 mg



## Balsamic Strawberries with Ricotta Cream

**Prep/cook Time:** 28 min

#### Ingredients

- 1 cup part-skim ricotta cheese
- 3 ounces cream cheese
- 2 tablespoons powdered sugar
- ½ teaspoon vanilla
- ⅓ cup store-bought balsamic reduction
- 1 pound fresh strawberries, hulled and quartered
- 1 tablespoon julienned fresh basil leaves

#### Instructions

In medium bowl, whip ricotta cheese, cream cheese, powdered sugar and vanilla with an electric mixer. Divide into 6 serving dishes and chill. Toss strawberries with balsamic reduction, divide into each dish and sprinkle with basil. Serve immediately. Yields 6 servings.



#### Nutrition Facts

Calories:	160
Protein:	6 g
Carbohydrate:	17 g
Fiber:	2 g
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# SALAD IN A JAR *with* GREEK YOGURT DRESSING

## Nutrition Facts

Calories:	298
Protein:	13 g
Carbohydrate:	9 g
Fiber:	2 g
Total Fat:	22 g
Saturated fat:	9 g
Cholesterol:	50 mg
Calcium:	35% DV
Sodium:	441 mg

Reflects 1 serving of salad with 2.5 tablespoons of dressing.



**Dairy MAX**  
YOUR Local Dairy Council

## Salad in a Jar with Greek Yogurt Dressing

**Prep/cook Time:** 28 min

### Ingredients

#### Dressing:

¼ cup fresh parsley	¾ cup mayonnaise
2 to 3 tablespoons fresh dill	1½ teaspoons Worcestershire sauce
2 to 3 tablespoons fresh chives	¾ cup lactose-free milk
1 clove garlic	Salt and pepper
1 cup Greek yogurt	

#### Salad:

1 cup cherry or grape tomatoes	1½ cups (6 ounces) shredded colby jack/cheddar jack cheese
¼ cup shredded carrots	2 cups torn spinach
¼ cup cooked crumbled bacon	

### Instructions

**Dressing:** Chop parsley, dill, chives and garlic in food processor until finely minced. Blend in yogurt, mayonnaise and Worcestershire sauce. Slowly add milk. Season with salt and pepper. Store in an airtight container in refrigerator until serving. Yields 16 servings.

**Salad:** Spoon some dressing into four pint-size jars with lids. Layer tomatoes, carrots, bacon, cheese and spinach. Cover and refrigerate. Shake to coat salad before eating. Yields 4 servings.



# SALAD IN A JAR *with* GREEK YOGURT DRESSING

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1 cup Greek yogurt	

#### Salad:

1 cup cherry or grape tomatoes	1½ cups (6 ounces) shredded colby jack/cheddar jack cheese
¼ cup shredded carrots	2 cups torn spinach
¼ cup cooked crumbled bacon	

### Instructions

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#### Nutrition Facts

Calories:	294
Protein:	22 g
Carbohydrate:	18 g
Fiber:	1 g
Total Fat:	14 g
Saturated fat:	7 g
Cholesterol:	151 mg
Calcium:	36% DV
Sodium:	550 mg



## Layered Spinach Supreme Egg Cups

**Prep/cook Time:** 40 min

#### Ingredients

1 cup buttermilk baking mix  
¼ cup milk  
½ cup finely chopped onion  
4 eggs  
1 (10-ounce) package frozen spinach, thawed and drained  
½ cup (12 ounces) small curd cottage cheese  
½ cup grated Parmesan cheese  
4 ounces Monterey Jack cheese, cubed  
2 cloves garlic, crushed

#### Instructions

Preheat oven to 375°F. Line muffin tin and spray with cooking spray. Mix baking mix, milk, onion and 2 of the eggs; beat vigorously 20 strokes. Spoon into muffin liners. Mix remaining ingredients. Spoon evenly over batter in muffin liners. Bake until set, about 20-25 minutes. Let stand 5 minutes.

**To freeze,** wrap each muffin in cling wrap and foil, then store in freezer bags.  
**For a quick breakfast,** unwrap 2 egg cups and microwave for 1 minute. Yields 6 servings.



#### Nutrition Facts

Calories:	294
Protein:	22 g
Carbohydrate:	18 g
Fiber:	1 g
Total Fat:	14 g
Saturated fat:	7 g
Cholesterol:	151 mg
Calcium:	36% DV
Sodium:	550 mg



## Layered Spinach Supreme Egg Cups

**Prep/cook Time:** 40 min

#### Ingredients

1 cup buttermilk baking mix  
¼ cup milk  
½ cup finely chopped onion  
4 eggs  
1 (10-ounce) package frozen spinach, thawed and drained  
½ cup (12 ounces) small curd cottage cheese  
½ cup grated Parmesan cheese  
4 ounces Monterey Jack cheese, cubed  
2 cloves garlic, crushed

#### Instructions

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## Food Presentation & Photography

As nutrition educators, it's our job to communicate about food and nutrition. And what better way to share those messages than through beautiful-looking food? Whether it's during your live food demonstration or through photography on your social media channels, you can whet the appetites of your audiences with these simple tricks for delicious food presentation.

**BACKGROUNDS.** Keep it simple so your recipe is the center of attention – too busy or colorful, and the eye naturally goes to the background and not your food. Wooden cutting boards, a wood table or a wood-textured backdrop tend to look good with most foods. For photography, other cheap and easy backgrounds include tiles, an old baking sheet or wok, parchment paper, a chalkboard or even a black or white foam board.

**COMPOSITION.** Think of the food as a work of art, carefully arranging each element in a neat or unique way to create balance and pique interest. Put a little extra effort in the samples you pass around at your demonstration, too. During photo sessions, play with taking close-up photos of your food and taking photos farther away, leaving space around your subject – each provides a different perspective and emphasis.

**PHOTOGRAPHY LIGHTING.** Natural light is the best. Try positioning a table near a window and using the natural light to illuminate your food. Or take your photo shoot outside on a warm overcast day – the clouds act like a natural diffuser of the light, creating soft shadows and subtle depth. If you have to shoot at night, invest in a photography light.

**PHOTOGRAPHY ANGLES.** If the food is arranged on a plate or in a bowl, taking photos from above is often the best choice. Shooting from the side at eye level highlights details, such as layers on a cake, while shooting at an angle allows both the side and top to be visible, capturing the three-dimensional shape of the food. Play with angles, looking for the best way to capture the subject.

### PROPS.

Choose props that add interest to your food. In both live presentations and photography, try using white or clear dishes to draw attention to the food you are featuring. Add interest to your photos with additional items such as:

- cutlery
- cooking utensils
- measuring cups
- individual ingredients or spices,
- flowers or leaves
- a place mat, tablecloth or a cloth napkin.

Don't go overboard – often simple is better. Think about what props will help you create the story you are trying to tell.



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## Nutrition Education Resources

**What's MyPlate  
All About?**

**MyPlate & Pizza**

**Three Servings of  
Milk Deliver a Unique  
Nutrient Package**

**10 Dairy-Good  
Health Benefits**

**Fight Diabetes, Heart  
Disease and More  
with Dairy**

**9 Ways  
Milk Can Help  
Your Body**

**6 Ways  
Cheese Can Help  
Your Body**

**7 Ways  
Yogurt Can Help  
Your Body**

**Lactose Intolerant?  
Things You Need to  
Know**

**Dairy Myths vs. Dairy  
Truths: Farming and  
Cow Care**

**Dairy Myths vs. Dairy  
Truths:  
Nutrition**

**Fuel Your Morning  
with Protein**

**The Power of Yogurt  
and How to Use It**

**The Magic of Milk  
for Your Athletes**

**The Power of  
Whey Protein  
(Recipe Cards)**

For more downloadable resources designed for nutrition educators, visit [DairyMAX.org](http://DairyMAX.org).