Today on Across the Fence we're in the kitchen for a holiday meal featuring local foods. It's part of our series of programs with students in the Masters of Science and Dietetics Program at the University of Vermont. Good afternoon and thanks for joining us I'm Judy Simpson. As we've gone through the seasons of the year we've been pretty you programs that focus on seasonal local food. Our guiding experts along the way have been UVM graduate students in the field of nutrition. This afternoon the students are highlighting foods that are grown in Vermont during the late fall and early winter months. Most of these foods are available at winter farmers markets around the state. To begin we join the UVM students in Burlington.

[No Captioning available]

Jessica and Katie are with me now in the kitchen. Nice job in the video. I think a lot of people might be surprised to find out there are farmers markets in the wintertime.

Jessica.: There are in fact 12 out of 14 counties across the state have wintertime farmers markets. They've actually grown quite a bit in popularity in the past few years.

Judy.: There seems like there's a lot of variety too?

Jessica.: There's quite a bit of variety. There are so many vegetables available during the winter months and people just don't seem to think about that. Not only do we have some of the delicious items that we are preparing today but there's also beats available potatoes are available even cold storage apples left over from the fall.

Judy.: No kidding. I think when you think about the holidays you really don't think a lot about vegetarian meals. Why did you decide to focus on vegetables?

Katie.: Today we decided to do a vegetarian because some of the girls in our program are vegetarian and we wanted to do something different so we thought we would feature all recipes that can be used for vegetarians standpoints and also you could pair it with a meat like the pilaf that we made you can add that to any ham Turkey for the holidays as well.

Judy.: OK you pick up a lot of fresh local foods and you're going to demonstrate how to prepare them. What are we going to be doing first?

Jessica.: Our first dish today is right here. It's a quinoa butternut squash and it's our main entree. We chose to use a different grain quinoa it's a South American grain. It has a very basic flavor but it's very diverse just like rice or pasta. It's actually a little bit higher in protein than some of the other grains.
Judy.: No kidding.

Jessica.: Yes. So that gives it a little bit more nutritional benefit. Then we also used a butternut squash in here. Butternut squash is this beautiful orange wash and we've mixed it with a little bit of parsley as well as some seasonings and some garlic. Butternut squash is rich in vitamin A which is good for healthy skin and good vision. Also it's a very diverse vegetable you can use in so many different ways.

Judy.: How do you cook the quinoa?

Jessica.: The quinoa is very easy to cook. Basically it's on the stove with a little bit of water or you can add and some vegetable stock to give it extra kick. You bring it to a boil and let it simmer for about 20 minutes and it is ready to go.

Judy.: Tell me a little bit about what else you have.

Katie.: Our next item we prepared today is sautéed Kale with some garlic all of oil crushed red pepper flakes. This is very easy to make. Just put fresh Kayla after you've washed in a large saucepan on the stove at some water and put it on high heat for a few minutes and sauté it up then add salt pepper and garlic to taste.

Judy.: And that's it?

Katie.: That's it it's really easy and it's surprising sometimes people think kale can be a hard vegetable to cook.

Judy.: This is raw kale right?

Katie.: Right but its very simple task.

Judy.: What are some of the other choices that are out there? We talked a little bit about some of the things you found the farmers market but what are some of the other seasonal choices that people might find?

Jessica.: Beets are in season right now those are great choice to a holiday meal they would add a nice burst of pink color. Also during the winter months a lot of farmers grow lettuce is indoors. The farmers market had a rich variety of lettuce available which you wouldn't necessarily think of during winter months.

Judy.: We've talked a little bit about other ingredients in these? Are those nuts in there?

Katie.: That's garlic chopped garlic. It helps add more flavor. Kale is very high in vitamin C which helps your me and system to fight of cold this time of year.

Judy.: Always good. We touched on some of this on previous programs but remind us what is the definition of local food?

Jessica.: Local foods the definition varies depending on where you are but typically a means grown within the state or within about 30 miles of where you live. If you live on the border of a different state it could just be going a couple miles over the border and purchasing foods from their local Co OP such as the Middlebury coop or the hunger mountain coop in Montpelier. There's also the city market coop here in Burlington it could also be going to your local winters farmers market.
Judy.: I've noticed that even a lot of the local grocery stores have a lot more local products than they used to.

Katie.: Yes. For the cranberry is I used in our dessert today our local cranberries that I found at Hannaford’s.

Judy.: It's great to buy direct from the farmer but if someone cannot get to a farmers market what are some of the other options?

Jessica.: Some of the other options are available. Definitely the grocery store is a great option. Looking around the produce section and seeing what's available often they will feature an area that will say local and you can hone in on that area to pick up your ingredients. We do have another side dish over here Brussels sprouts. They are another local item. These Brussels Press can be found at the grocery store and they can be found from a local farmer or you can definitely find them at the farmers’ markets as well.

Judy.: How did you prepare these?

Jessica.: These are roasted breast sprouts and a lot of people think that they might shy away from Brussels sprouts because they do have a distinct flavor but they're very easy to prepare in the right delicious. These were roasted with a little bit of olive oil and some salt and pepper for about 45 minutes at 375.

Judy.: I think that's always the biggest challenge is to try to make these foods interesting to children.

Jessica.: Yes absolutely and if you can get your kids in the kitchen with you to help you prepare the meal there going to be a lot more interested in the food because they were a part of making it. Even all the way back to the summer months getting them involved in the garden with you and teaching them had a can or possibly teaching them how to make some of these delicious recipes.

Judy.: What are some of the nutritional value of Brussels sprouts?

Jessica.: Brussels sprouts have fiber in them which is great for healthy digestion. They also contain vitamin c and some vitamin a.

Judy.: Excellent what else do we have?

Katie.: Our last item is a delicious cranberry orange bar that I made. This is a very easy recipe. It takes a few minutes as the prep work of once you get it in the oven it's just mainly cooking. What I did is the crest is made out of whole foods and whole wheat flour with some brown sugar spices and the cranberry filling is just fresh Graham berries that you put in a large saucepan again. Bring them to a boil with sugar and orange juice orange zest to get flavor and there and some vanilla to bring down the tartness. Once that begins you just pour it on top and put on some boats for the crumble top then stick it in the oven at 354 about 30 minutes.

Judy.: It looks delicious.

Katie.: It's very good I taste tested earlier today.

Jessica.: The great thing about all of these recipes is that it's very easy to substitute different things that you might have at home. Say you don't have fresh cranberries at home but you do have cranberry jam. That's easy enough to substitute right into the desert. The same thing with the kale maybe you have spinach it home the kale can be substituted with spinach garlic and sautéed and even the basil
spreads you could easily exchange for a nice potato or something like that and it would make a delicious meal as well.

Judy.: Can you say the same thing when you're thinking about fruits substituting juices for food instead of eating an apple maybe have a glass of apple juice?

Jessica.: It's best to get your fruit from whole fruits up to about ½ C which is 4 ounces of 100% juice is an acceptable source of fruit.

Judy.: Let's talk a little bit about food safety around the holidays because a lot of times food is out for a long time. Can you give me some advice on that?

Katie.: it's best always make sure that your foods are never sitting out for more than 2 to 4 hours. 4 hours is the maximum. That we're keeping things safe and as soon as a dish is empty I would take it off the table and put in the dishwasher get it ready. Meets typically if you're having Turkey it should be around 165° before you serve it up and one way you can do that is by using a thermometer. I brought one along to show you guys what looks like. You can purchase these and any store Bed Bath &Beyond any grocery store has them and if you stick it in the center of the bird by the wing it will give you the best temperature reading. Just keeping things that are supposed to be cold like if you have a punch or a cold salad like macaroni salad keeping that on ice and hot foods keeping them in a warming holder or something like that would help keep them safe too.

Jessica.: It's important to consider that a lot of times you travel with your food. Maybe are going to a holiday party so you have to think about was that on my counter for an hour and then I brought it to the party sore really I only have about 3 hours of time that I can safely be out on the table before it can go back into the refrigerator.

Judy.: Any tapes for folks on how to not gain a lot of weight over the holidays with all the food?

Jessica.: That's a challenge for everybody and the holidays are really about enjoying food as is any day we should always enjoy your food but moderation is the key. Filling half your place with fruits and vegetables is a great idea. About 1/4 your play with a grain in another quarter with a lean protein. Also drinking water with your meals instead of having alcoholic beverages or in between alcoholic beverages can help fill your stomach a little bit and maybe you can eat a little bit less.

Judy.: We're just about out of time where can folks find the recipes that you showed us?

Jessica.: All of these recipes came from Vermont based company eating well dot com. They also have a magazine they offer fresh and delicious easy to make meals and we also want to let people know that there are a wide variety of other agencies that they can find through the agency of agriculture. You can find different places to purchase local and seasonal foods.

Judy.: Wonderful thank you so much for coming in today. Happy holidays. That's our program for today I'm Judy Simpson we'll see you again next time on Across the Fence.

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