**Pickling Fruits and Vegetables**

The practice of pickling fruits and vegetables is an ancient preservation practice dating as far back as 4,000 years according to the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources. Quick pickling is an easy way to preserve fruits and vegetables in your own home. Not only does pickling preserve food that would normally spoil, pickled fruits and vegetables can also be very tasty! One of the best aspects of pickling (as opposed to canning) is that the nutritional content of pickled foods is generally the same as their fresh form. However, the vinegar from the pickling solution does add sodium to the food. For example, the average pickle (pickled cucumber) contains about 40% of your recommended sodium intake. If you have high blood pressure or need to watch your sodium, be mindful of how much of your fruit and vegetable intake is coming from pickled foods.

**How to Quick Pickle**

1. Pick your fruit or vegetable for pickling. Any fruit and vegetable can be pickled. Some common options are carrots, cucumbers, cabbage, peppers, onions, asparagus, radishes, cauliflower, beets, celery, and even apples!
2. Slice or dice your fruit or vegetable. For firm, root vegetables you will want them thinly sliced.
3. Fill container with your fruit or vegetable. Do not tightly pack the container.
4. Prepare your pickling solution. The amount of pickling solution you make should be about half of the volume of the container you are filling with your fruit or vegetable. The ratio for your pickling solution is:
* 2 parts vinegar (white, rice, or red wine vinegar, apple cider vinegar are good options)
* 2 parts sugar
* 1 part water
1. Bring solution to a rapid boil. When solution is at a rapid boil, pour over vegetables and let sit for at least an hour before refrigerating.
2. After an hour pickled fruit and vegetable is ready to be enjoyed. If not eaten right away, keep food in the pickled solution in a covered container in the fridge. The vinegar in the pickling solution will keep the food preserved. In general, pickled vegetables will last 4-6 months, while pickled fruits will last about 2-3 months.

Tip: You can add dried spices in small amounts to add flavor. Some options are dried chili, cumin, cinnamon, fennel, and anise.