

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 13, 2000

NUTS ADD FLAVOR AND NUTRIENTS TO FALL DISHES

One of the world's favorite and most basic foods, nuts are a traditional part of many ethnic cuisines, providing rich flavors that complement herbs, spices, meats, cheese, fruits and vegetables. Tree nuts are an important part of world diets noted to be nutritionally beneficial—such as those eaten in the Mediterranean region of the world—and as Americans expand their knowledge of global fare, they are discovering that mixed tree nuts can add delicious flavor to healthful eating.

While nuts are relatively high in fat, it is important to distinguish that most of that fat is unsaturated. Saturated fats, found mainly in animal products, raise blood cholesterol levels, which can increase the risk of heart attack or stroke. But unsaturated fats, the monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats found mainly in plant foods like nuts, can actually decrease low-density lipoprotein (LDL or “bad” cholesterol) levels.

Nuts that grow on trees—almonds, Brazils, cashews, hazelnuts, macadamias, pecans, pine nuts, pistachios and walnuts—can be a part of an overall healthful diet, agrees nutrition researcher Kathy McManus, M.S., R.D. of Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston. In an 18-month study comparing the effect of moderate and low fat diets, McManus saw comparable weight loss with both diets, but after just six months, over half of those consuming a moderate fat diet were still a part of the study, while only 20 percent remained in the low fat group. “A moderate fat diet may contribute more flavor and variety, resulting in greater participation rates,” McManus said.

Portion control is key. Because tree nuts have such rich and complex flavors, a single one-ounce serving is satisfying and enough to add interest to just about any dish. So if you're entertaining this fall, or just want to give a new twist to a favorite dish, add a handful of mixed tree nuts to the menu for a taste that everyone will enjoy.

Our tasty fall salad, *Harvest Salad with Tree Nuts, Apples and Blue Cheese*, is refreshing either before or after the main course. The salad dressing is a tangy blend of orange juice, balsamic vinegar, garlic and Dijon mustard, tossed with fresh mixed greens such as arugula, radicchio, endive and watercress. Peel and slice a tart Granny Smith apple and sprinkle blue cheese over the greens for a delicious complement to the rich flavor of mixed tree nuts. Macadamias, pistachios, Brazils and walnuts add a particularly interesting taste to this salad.

Moroccan-Spiced Tree Nut Couscous is perfect with hearty meats served in the fall. This couscous, cooked with raisins, red bell pepper, fresh parsley and mint and spicy cinnamon and cumin, is baked in a casserole dish. Tree nuts such as chopped almonds, cashews, hazelnuts, pine nuts and pecans add a richness that works well with the exotic Mediterranean flavor of this dish.

ATTENTION EDITORS:

For more nutritional information and recipe and entertaining ideas using tree nuts, readers may obtain a free copy of the enclosed brochure "Go Nuts, Go Healthy." **Send self-addressed, stamped number 10 (long) envelope to:**

**International Tree Nut Council
2413 Anza Avenue
Davis, CA 95616**

HARVEST SALAD WITH TREE NUTS, APPLES AND BLUE CHEESE

Makes 4 Servings

6 tablespoons	fresh orange juice
1 tablespoon	balsamic vinegar
1 teaspoon	Dijon-style mustard
1 clove	garlic, minced
	salt and freshly ground
4 cups	mixed baby salad greens
1/2 cup	lightly toasted mixed tree nuts, halved (such as macadamias, pistachios and walnuts)
1	tart apple, cored and thinly sliced
1/2 cup	crumbled blue cheese

In medium bowl, whisk together orange juice, vinegar, mustard and garlic; season with salt and pepper. Add greens and toss gently to coat with dressing; divide equally among four salad plates. Sprinkle nuts, apple and cheese over greens. If desired, garnish with lightly toasted whole mixed tree nuts. Serve immediately.

Nutritional Information Per Serving:

220 calories; 14 g fat; 7 g monounsaturated fat; 2 g polyunsaturated fat; 5 g saturated fat; 8 g protein; 4 g fiber; 35% DV vitamin A; 40% DV vitamin C; 22% DV folate; 15% DV calcium

MOROCCAN-SPICED TREE NUT COUSCOUS

Makes 8 servings

1 tablespoon	olive oil
1 cup	couscous
2 cups	water
1 cup	lightly toasted mixed tree nuts (such as almonds, cashews, hazelnuts and pecans)
1 cup	raisins
1	bell pepper, chopped
1/2 cup each	chopped fresh Italian parsley and mint
1 tablespoon each	ground cinnamon and cumin
	salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste

Preheat oven to 325° F. Heat oil in large nonstick skillet over medium heat; sauté couscous, stirring occasionally, until golden, about 3 minutes. Add water, cover and cook over low heat for 5 to 10 minutes, stirring occasionally, until water is absorbed. Remove from heat; fluff with fork. Stir in tree nuts, raisins, bell pepper, parsley, mint, cinnamon and cumin; season with salt and pepper. Spoon prepared couscous into casserole dish and bake, covered, for 30 minutes. If desired, garnish with lightly toasted mixed tree nuts. Serve hot.

Nutritional Information Per Serving:

340 calories; 14 g fat; 9 g monounsaturated fat; 3 g polyunsaturated fat; 2 g saturated fat; 9 g protein; 6 g fiber; 30% DV vitamin A; 90% DV vitamin C; 10% DV iron