

Seasonal Eating
Whitney Danhof, Extension Agent

Winter Fruits
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Fruit is not the first thing that comes to mind with thoughts of the holidays. But if we think about it, fruits have long been linked to this season. For me, it all began as a child when Santa always put an apple and an orange in my stocking as a special treat. The red felt boot with my name in white that my Mom had made would bulge with the biggest apples and oranges I had ever seen. Now the fruit treats come in several other forms. My Dad's favorite is the Old Fashioned Light Fruitcakes that my Mom makes each year (he can hardly wait for them to age before slicing one open). One of the most popular fruit treats at my Mom's house is the Winter Fruit Salad. Every Thanksgiving and Christmas my Mom makes her fruit salad. My nephews can eat mountains of this salad. In fact one of them, when quite young, told my sister-in-law that she couldn't make Grandma's fruit salad because she didn't have the right bowl – a large pottery bowl that we always use to make the salad. The good news is that any large bowl works just fine!



Six fruits and three chunkies, this is the way I make sure everything is in there. The fresh fruits are apples, bananas and grapes. As a child it was my duty to seed the grapes for the salad. Thank goodness for seedless grapes today. Next are the canned fruits of pineapple, mandarin oranges and maraschino cherries. Make sure that these are well drained so they don't make the salad soupy. You could use fresh oranges and supreme them (cut away all the membranes) but this takes a lot of time so we use the canned. The chunkies as we call them are pecans, dates and raisins. For my Dad, the more dates the better. All of this is folded into a bath of whipped cream. No – don't even think about using frozen whipped topping here. It just doesn't taste the same. Mom always adds vanilla and powdered sugar to her whipped cream but you can make it the way you prefer, just whip it well. Gently fold everything together, refrigerate and serve within a few hours. I do have one warning when making this salad – it looks terrible the next day – tastes good but turns a little brown and weepy so try to make just enough to enjoy fresh if you can. So even in the middle of the winter we can feast on fruits. It's the perfect time for apples and canned fruits extend the season.

For more ideas on using apples and pomegranates, visit the Bedford County Extension website Seasonal Eating page. The Seasonal Eating Cooking Demonstrations will continue next year so we hope you'll join us. Watch for the announcement of the classes early next year. Anyone interested in learning how to make home-

made, soft, parker house style rolls is welcome to attend a demonstration by Program Assistant, Gay Ervin on Wednesday, December 14 at 10:00 a.m. at the Extension Office. The demonstration is free, just call our office at 684-5971 if you plan on attending. Hope you have a happy holiday season and remember to eat your seasonal fruits and vegetables as you celebrate this month.

Mom's Winter Fruit Salad

- 3-4 medium apples, cored and cubed
- 1 banana, cut into chunks
- 20 red or green seedless grapes, halved
- 1 (20-ounce) can pineapple chunks, drained
- 1 (11-ounce) can mandarin orange segments, drained
- 1 (10-ounce) jar red maraschino cherries, drained
- 12 dates, cut into thirds
- 1/4 cup raisins
- 1/4 cup chopped pecans
- 1 pint heavy cream
- 1/4 cup powdered sugar or to taste
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Combine apples, banana, grapes, pineapple, oranges, cherries, dates, raisins and pecans in large bowl. In mixing bowl, whip cream until soft peaks form. Add powdered sugar and vanilla and continue whipping until stiff peaks form. Fold whipped cream into fruit mixture. Chill and serve.