

**Seasonal Eating**  
**Whitney Danhof, Extension Agent**

**Winter Citrus**  
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I like to think of citrus fruits and juices as liquid sunshine during the long winter months. Its tangy, perky flavor wakes up the taste buds and reminds us of sunny Florida or California. Citrus is so versatile it can be used in main dishes, salads, desserts and side dishes. It is also good for winter months since it is high in vitamin C which helps strengthen the immune system. So I encourage you to break into citrus fruits and juices this month.



I was talking to a friend and we both agreed that sometimes we don't eat as much fresh citrus as we should because it is messy and hard to get to the flesh. To help with this, there is a great tool called a citrus peeler. It has a little hook on one end that you poke into the peel and pull down to score the peel into wedges. Then you use the other end to loosen the peel from the flesh and then pull to remove the peel. Give this a try if you don't like getting the peel under your fingernails.

Also, there are two ways to make wedges of oranges or grapefruit to serve. The way most people cut an orange into wedges is to cut it in half from the blossom end to stem end lengthwise and then cut into wedges. To make easy eating wedges, try cutting the fruit in half crosswise, between the blossom end and stem end. Then cut into wedges and you will end up with little triangles in the wedge that are easy to eat without getting it all over your face. To make cartwheels for using in cooking, peel the fruit and then cut crosswise. You can also cut supremes out of the fruit by slicing a little off the blossom and stem ends, standing it upright and cutting down the curve of the fruit to remove the peel and the outer membrane. Now take a paring knife and cut between the membranes to free the flesh in little wedges. Squeeze the membranes to remove any juice and discard. These are really good for salads where you want pretty, membrane free sections.



To give a citrus flavor to a dish you can use the flesh, the juice or the zest of the fruit (or all three!). If using the zest, a handy tool is a microplane. This tool has tiny grater like openings on a long blade that takes just the outer colored part of the peel off. The white underneath is bitter so you don't want to get that in your zest. If you don't have a microplane, use the smallest side of your grater or remove just the top of the peel by paring knife and chop finely.

A good citrus dish for a cold day is chicken baked with oranges. This recipe for Curried Orange Chicken is a good one to pop into the oven. I made it the other day and served it with rice pilaf and a stir fry of red peppers, water chestnuts and cashews with Szechwan sauce for a fairly quick and easy meal. Get the chicken in the oven and while it bakes, start your rice and get everything ready for the stir fry. About 5 minutes before the chicken comes out, start your vegetables cooking and then make the sauce for the chicken when it comes out.

So in the winter months while there's not much fresh produce here, enjoy the seasonal citrus from Florida and California for a perky, fresh appeal to your meals.

### **Curried Orange Chicken Breasts**

- 4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- 1 tablespoon butter, softened
- 1 tablespoon honey
- Orange zest from 1/4 orange
- 1/2 teaspoon curry powder
- 1/4 cup plus 2 Tablespoons fresh orange juice, divided
- 1 orange, peeled and cut into half cartwheel slices
- 1 1/2 teaspoons cornstarch
- Salt to taste

Clean chicken breasts and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Place in a baking dish. In a small bowl, combine butter, honey, orange zest and curry powder. Spread over chicken breasts. Pour in 1/4 cup of the orange juice. Cover with foil and bake at 400 degrees for 15 minutes. Uncover and bake for another 10 minutes. Add the orange slices on top and cook just until chicken is cooked through and oranges are warm, about 10-15 minutes. When chicken is cooked through, remove with oranges to a platter and keep warm. Transfer pan juices to small saucepot. Combine cornstarch with remaining 2 tablespoons orange juice and stir into pan juices. Cook over high heat, stirring constantly, until thickened. Season with salt to taste. Serve over chicken and oranges.