

# Extension

**Seasonal Eating**  
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**Strawberries Meet the Heat**  
**May 2014**

The strawberries are here! As the first fruit to ripen in the spring, the sight of these bright red gems with their perky little green caps seems to bring in the warm weather and the beginning of the summer season. They are only here for a little while so get them while you can over the next month or so.

Over the years I have put strawberries in green salads, suspended them in gelatin, coated them with strawberry glaze in a pie crust, tossed them with whipped cream, stuffed them with creamed cheese, dipped them in chocolate, spooned them over shortcake and added them to chicken salad. But rarely have I actually cooked the strawberries. They are usually raw in these applications – all of which are delicious by the way.



So this year I took a little different path with the first strawberries - cooked. It started with a recipe I saw several years ago in a free magazine I picked up in Michigan while on vacation called “Western Michigan Food for Thought”. They roasted the strawberries with balsamic vinegar and sugar and then mashed them and used them in a sauce over chicken. Now that’s different. I have made a cooked peach sauce over chicken that is great, so why not strawberries? The roasted strawberries have an intense, jam like flavor. In this recipe they are combined with green onions, chicken broth and rosemary to make a really interesting savory/sweet sauce to pour over almond crusted, sautéed chicken breasts for a spring main dish.

So while the strawberries are here, take advantage of all their sides – from cooked jammy sauces and cakes to fresh strawberries on cereal and mixed into refreshing fruit salads. Not only are they delicious but are full of vitamin C and folate for nutritious snacks as well. See you at the strawberry patch!

For more ideas on using seasonal produce, visit the Bedford County Extension website (<https://utextension.tennessee.edu/bedford>) and click on Seasonal Eating. The Seasonal Eating Cooking Demonstration on “Springing Up with Goodness” will be held on May 21 at 12:00 noon at the Extension Office. Call the Office at 684-5971 to sign up and bring \$7.00 to class to cover the samples.

### **Strawberry Balsamic Chicken**

3-4 tablespoons olive oil  
4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, pounded 3/8" thick  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1/4 teaspoon black pepper  
1/3 cup finely chopped almonds  
1/4 cup green onion, minced  
1/2 cup chicken broth  
1/2 cup roasted strawberries, mashed (see below)  
1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar  
1 tablespoon fresh rosemary, chopped

In large skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Season chicken with salt and pepper and dredge in almonds. Place chicken in pan and cook 5-6 minutes on each side until no longer pink. Remove and keep warm. Reduce heat to medium and sauté green onions for 1 minute. Add chicken broth, strawberries, vinegar and rosemary. Simmer, uncovered until slightly thickened, about 3-5 minutes. Place chicken on serving dish and pour balsamic sauce over it.

### **Roasted Strawberries**

1 pound fresh strawberries  
2 tablespoons sugar  
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar

Toss ingredients together and spread on rimmed baking sheet lined with a silpat or parchment paper in a single layer. Roast at 250 degrees for about 1 hour until berries are soft, dark and concentrated in color and flavor. Stir gently 3-4 times to baste berries with accumulating juices.