

Extension

Seasonal Eating
Whitney Danhof, Extension Agent

Apples are Falling All Around **September 2012**

I love fall. A new school year, crisp air, the colorful leaves and all of the fall flavors. My Mom taught elementary school so September was always apples. We cut them out of construction paper and used them for all kinds of things in her classroom – students names on their desks, bulletin boards, spelling words, etc. And then there were the apples that started showing up at the farm markets. Red, yellow, green. Sweet, tart, juicy, spicy. They all screamed fall.

The past couple of weeks the apples started showing up at the Bedford County Farmers' Market. My mother always loved McIntosh so I picked up several of these. Crisp and firm, they have a quite tart and intense, spicy flavor. They don't hold their shape as well for cooking, but they're great in salads. Especially when combined with sweeter ingredients for a mix of the tart and sweet. Today I made caramel apple salad (although I'm more inclined to call it a dessert!). The base is a sweet mixture of cream cheese, marshmallow crème, whipped topping and caramel ice cream syrup. Then you fold in the apples and chopped up Payday candy bars. I don't peel my apples as it makes for better color, more flavor and more nutrition. For a real treat, spoon it into an ice cream dish and drizzle with the caramel topping for dessert! The creamy caramel base with the tart crisp apples and the salty peanuts makes for a deliciously decadent fall dish.



The market also had Golden Delicious apples. Sweet and firm, these big, pretty apples are a good all purpose variety. These are my choice for cooking as they hold their shape well. Their thin skin doesn't need to be peeled, just core and slice and they're ready to go. Try them with pork tenderloins for a classic combination that brings fall to the table.

Another variety showing up at the market is Mutsu which is a sweet/tart variety that is crisp and very juicy. This variety was developed in Japan and then came to the U.S. where it is also called Crispin. These are good for baking and making applesauce as well as fresh eating. Try hollowing them out and filling with mincemeat and baking for a great side dish.

There are so many varieties of apples that it is fun to try the different kinds and decide which ones you prefer for eating and cooking. No matter what apple you choose, they're low in calories and a good source of fiber and vitamin C. So get your apple a day this fall with the many varieties available.

The Bedford County Farmers' Market is open Thursdays at 3:00 p.m. at the Celebration Pavilion. For more ideas on using seasonal produce, visit the Bedford County Extension website (<https://utextension.tennessee.edu/bedford>). The Seasonal Eating Cooking Demonstration on Legumes will be held on Wednesday, September 19 at 12:00 noon at the Extension Office. Call the Office at 684-5971 to sign up and bring \$5.00 to cover the samples.

Caramel Apple Salad

- 8 ounces cream cheese, softened
- 2 tablespoons caramel ice cream topping (or syrup)
- 1 (7-ounce) jar marshmallow crème
- 1 (8-ounce) container frozen whipped topping, thawed
- 4 tart apples, cored and chopped
- 4 Payday candy bars

With an electric mixer, beat the cream cheese and caramel topping together until creamy. Add marshmallow crème and beat until combined and smooth. Fold in whipped topping just until combined. Add apples and candy bars and fold together. Chill until ready to serve. Drizzle with additional caramel just before serving, if desired.