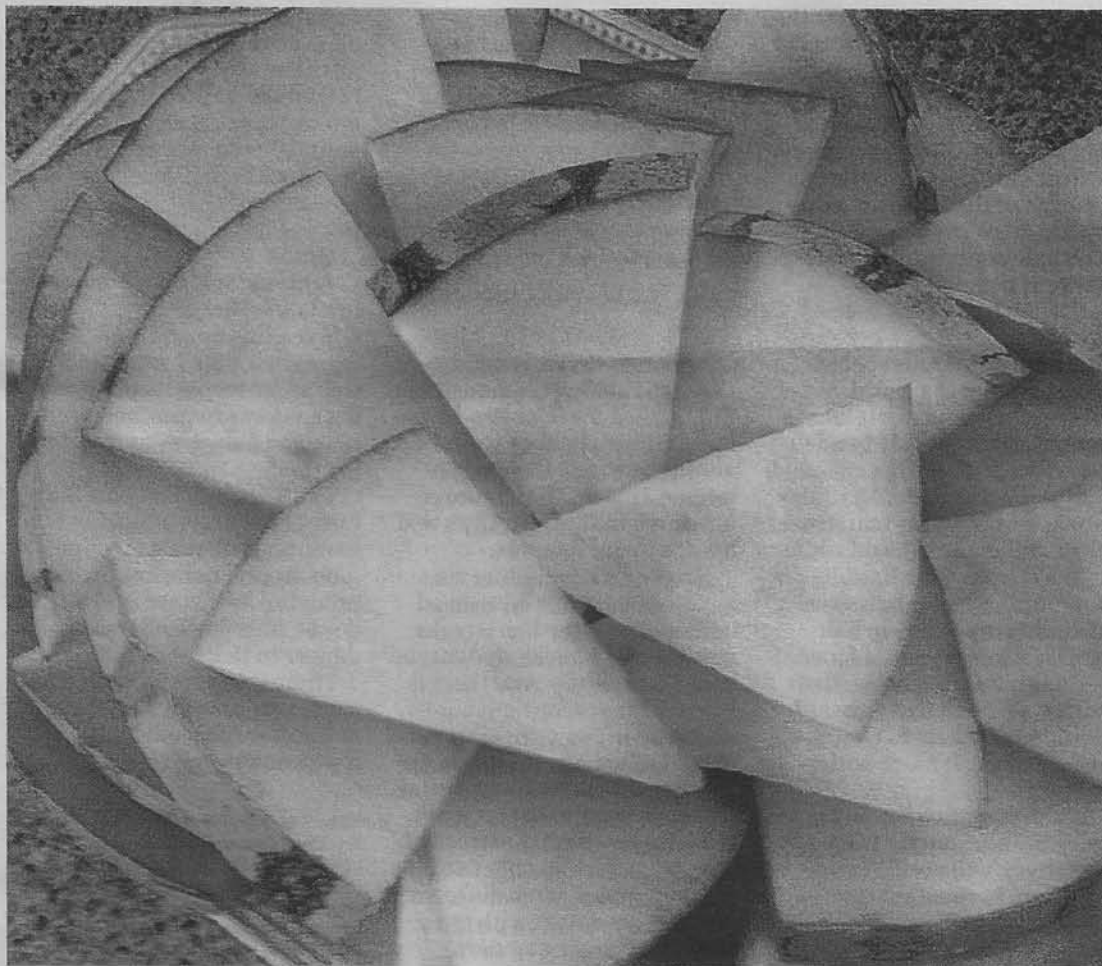




Strength in Plants *By Kate Murray*

Keep it cool with watermelon



Combining watermelon, ice, some lime and mint makes for a cool refreshment.

Yellow watermelon is slightly sweeter, with a thinner rind and fewer seeds.

WITH HOT weather upon us and summer camp in full swing, it's time to consider hydrating yourself with not only plenty of water, but other naturally sweet options such as watermelon.

Last summer I tasted yellow watermelon for the first time when it was delivered by my local CSA. Little did I know, this juicy gem was grown right here in our community. The yellow-fleshed watermelon is slightly smaller than the regular red watermelon (weighing in at about 5 to 7 pounds) with a thinner rind and fewer seeds. They are hardly distinguishable from their red counterparts on the outside, but when you slice in to them you see a gorgeous, welcoming shade of bright yellow. The flesh is juicy and just a bit sweeter than traditional watermelon.

Keep in mind, what grows together goes together. If you're bored with plain old cubed watermelon, combine it with chopped cucumber,

heirloom tomatoes, the juice of a lime, fresh mint, salt and pepper for a decadent watermelon salad sure to please any palette on a hot day.

FOR A HEALTHY SNACK in the afternoon, try this refreshing drink recipe with either yellow or red watermelon:

3-4 cups of cubed watermelon.

2 cups ice.

Juice of a lime.

A spring of mint.

Blend watermelon and ice to desired consistency and garnish with lime and mint. The watermelon is so ripe and sweet at this time of year you don't

need any other ingredients.

However, don't forget the most important rule about watermelon: It should always be eaten alone. It isn't a good idea to eat watermelon as a dessert, especially after consuming a meal. The melon family is the fastest digesting food on earth. If you eat melon after eating a meal, the gastric juices in your stomach will digest the melon first, even if you ate it last, and leave all the other food to digest slowly.

It is best to eat melon alone, and wait at least two hours before eating again. This goes for all melon, including honeydew and cantaloupe, making any fruit in the melon family a great snack at about 3 in the afternoon.

When eaten the right way, fruit will cleanse your body of toxins and help keep your digestive system in check. ☺

Kate Murray is certified in plant-based nutrition and the author of "A Silent Cure in My Back Yard." Find more recipes at: asilentcure.org.

SPECIAL TO THE READING EAGLE: KATE MURRAY