



## Helpful Hints

**Broccoli Bob says:**

**Always remember to wash your hands before handling and preparing food!**

### **Bases**

Don't get trapped in the sliced bread routine. Vary bases, breads, etc for serving cold and/or hot options. E.g. crumpets, muffins, pitta breads, halved rolls, slices of baguette, tortilla wraps can all be used as savoury and sweet bases. Use fresh or toasted for open sandwiches, filled wraps, stuffed pitta breads, add toppings for individual pizzas, or to serve as bases for poached or scrambled eggs etc.

### **Fillings/toppings**

Vary toppings and fillings too, introduce some new flavours such as apple with cheese and celery and low cal mayonnaise or yoghurt.

Tuna, hard and soft style cheeses, eggs, pulses, such as chickpeas puréed into a dip, peanut butter, a better quality wafer thin ham or chicken will be better value and more nutritionally sound in the long run than value or processed sliced meats.

Use seasonal vegetables, salads and fruit. This will give better quality, nutrition and value, as well as teaching pupils the seasons of produce e.g. grated carrots, sliced cucumber, tomatoes, celery. Also introduce less well-known products such as red cabbage, with diced apples or raw grated beetroot into coleslaw type salads, add texture and nutrients with seeds such as sunflower, pumpkin or pine nuts.

Pasta with a simple tomato sauce is easy and cheap for a winter warmer.

Try the healthy Pot noodle, with dry egg or rice noodles, which you simply soak or the straight to wok kind. These can be served with a light stock in which fresh vegetables cut finely such as carrot, celery, onion, a variety of herbs and flavorings such as fresh ginger are cooked. Add some pulses, chickpeas, kidney etc for protein.

New potatoes are popular, and good value in the height of season. Serve warm as kebabs with other vegetables, cubes of cheese and cherry tomatoes, or cold potato salad with a light yoghurt and herb dressing or a honey sweetened vinaigrette, with seasonal raw vegetables.

Bulgar wheat and cous cous also need only soaking and make great salad bases for summer and early autumn light meals with different seasonal vegetables and salad ingredients. Pulses, seeds, and/or items such as ham, cheese, flaked smoked mackerel to make it complete. They can also be served hot as an alternative to rice as a pilaff with other ingredients.

Variety, use of seasonal ingredients and imagination can keep costs low, increase nutrition, introduce new foods, and educate and widen children's palates.