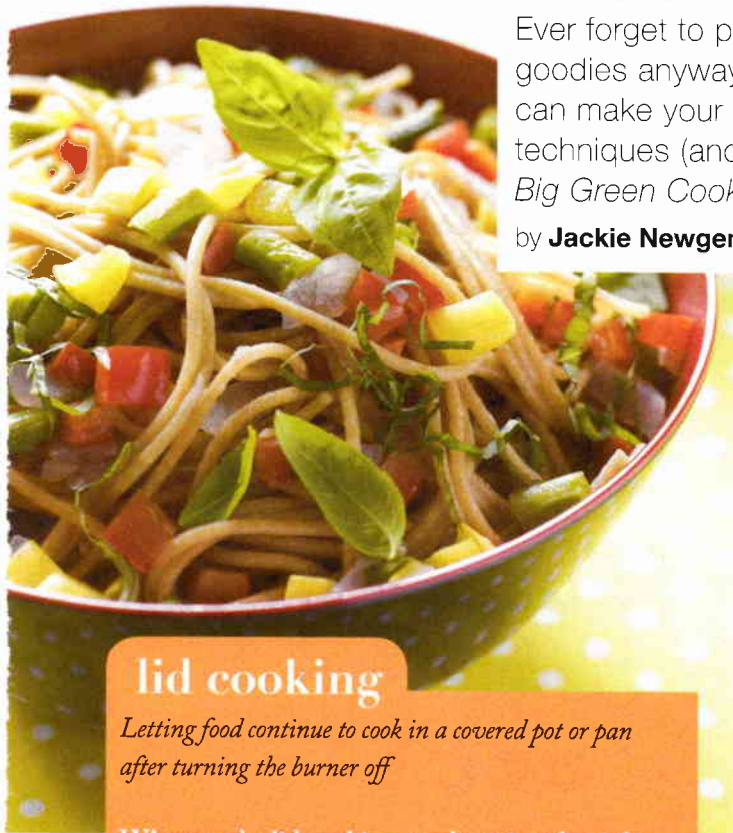


# Green your cuisine

Ever forget to preheat the oven but gone ahead and baked your goodies anyway? You weren't frazzled—you were eco-friendly! You can make your palate *and* the planet happy with three easy cooking techniques (and delicious recipes to go with them) from the author of *Big Green Cookbook*. Try them out to reduce your carbon "foodprint"!

by **Jackie Newgent, R.D.**



## lid cooking

*Letting food continue to cook in a covered pot or pan after turning the burner off*

When you're lid cooking, you're using the tight-fitting lid of a pot or pan to trap heat, which will gently finish the cooking process so you don't need to use excess energy from the burner itself. Give this technique a try when the food on the stovetop is being simmered, sautéed, or boiled. It'll save several minutes of cooking time along with the accompanying electricity or gas. Test for doneness after a recipe's normal cooking time, and if your food isn't quite there, quickly re-cover the pot and test again in a few minutes. Try lid cooking for food that requires no more than 20 minutes of standard cooking time.

## Spaghetti with Confetti Veggies

**Prep time:** 20 minutes

**Cook time:** 10 minutes

- 1½ teaspoons sea salt, or to taste
- 12 ounces whole wheat or other whole grain spaghetti
- 10 medium spears asparagus, ends removed and sliced into ¼-inch thick circles
- 1 large red bell pepper, finely diced
- 1 medium yellow summer squash, finely diced
- 1 small or ½ medium red onion, finely diced
- 3 large cloves garlic, minced
- 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
- ¼ cup grated domestic Parmesan cheese, optional
- ⅓ cup thinly sliced fresh basil

1. Bring 2 quarts (8 cups) fresh water to a boil in a large saucepan over high heat. Add 1 teaspoon of the salt, stir in the spaghetti, and then stir in the asparagus, bell pepper, squash, onion, and garlic. Return to a boil.
2. Cover the saucepan, turn off the heat, and lid cook (cook covered while the burner is off) for the time suggested on the pasta package, about 7 minutes, or until the pasta and vegetables are fully cooked. Drain the liquid into a heatproof container, reserving it for later.
3. Pour the spaghetti and veggies into a large serving bowl or platter. Drizzle with the olive oil, lemon juice, and ½ cup of the reserved cooking liquid and toss using long tongs. (Refrigerate the remaining cooking liquid for other use, such as veggie broth for soup.) Add the remaining ½ teaspoon of salt, or to taste. Sprinkle with the cheese, if desired, and the basil, and serve while warm. ▶

### Serves 4

Per serving: calories 430, fat 12 g, protein 15 g, carbohydrates 72 g, dietary fiber 13 g

## micro-roasting

*Cooking or "roasting" a savory food in a microwave oven*

The microwave oven uses at least two-thirds less energy than the conventional oven. That's partly due to shorter cooking time. Plus, the energy in the microwave oven heats only the food, not the entire oven, so there's no wasted energy.

Are there drawbacks? One stands out in particular: Micro-roasting doesn't provide oven-baked crispness or brownness. If crispness is important, consider sprinkling on nuts, cereal, or whole grain cracker crumbs to add the crunchiness and texture of a baked coating. If brownness (or caramelization) is key, lightly brown the top of a micro-roasted delight for a few seconds using a small (refillable) butane torch—like chefs use for *crème brûlée*.

## Green Nuggets

**Prep time:** 5 minutes

**Cook time:** 5 minutes

- 3 medium zucchini squash, ends trimmed
- 2 teaspoons canola oil
- ½ teaspoon sea salt, or to taste

1. Cut each zucchini in half lengthwise. Cut each in half lengthwise again. Then cut each zucchini strip into 5 "nuggets" crosswise.
2. Toss the zucchini cubes with the oil and salt in a large microwave-safe bowl or dish.
3. Loosely cover the bowl with unbleached parchment paper and micro-roast (cook in the microwave) on high for 5 minutes or until just cooked through. Let the bowl sit covered for 1 minute to allow the zucchini to steam.
4. Once cool enough to handle, place the nuggets on bamboo or reusable skewers or picks. Serve warm or cool. Enjoy with the Cool Ranch-Style Dip (below), if desired.

### Serves 4

Per serving: calories 45, fat 2.5 g, protein 2 g, carbohydrates 5 g, dietary fiber 2 g

## Cool Ranch-Style Dip

**Prep time:** 3 minutes

**Make time:** 2 minutes

- ½ cup organic low-fat sour cream or soy "sour cream"
- 2 scallions, green and white parts, minced
- 2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- ¼ teaspoon vegetarian Worcestershire sauce
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- ⅓ teaspoon sea salt, or to taste

Stir all ingredients together in a small bowl. Cover and chill in the refrigerator until ready to serve.

### Serves 4

Per serving: calories 52, fat 4 g, protein 2 g, carbohydrates 3 g, dietary fiber 0 g

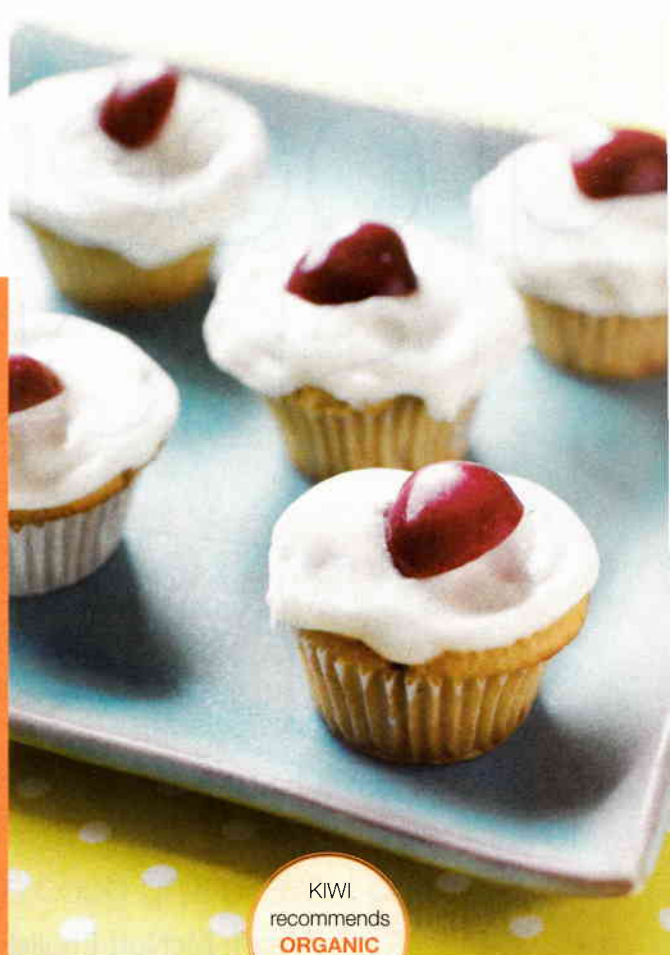


## hyperbaking

*Baking in an oven without preheating it, and using the residual (remaining) heat after turning it off*

When you bake, you're mostly cooking the oven, not the food. It's been estimated that just 6 percent of the energy output of a conventional oven is used for cooking foods. So take advantage of that hot air by hyperbaking. It's a technique based on the principles of hypermiling, where you take every opportunity to save gas while driving.

How to do it? Simply don't preheat: Place your dish in the oven, turn it on the recommended temperature, and bake until the food is nearly done (for instance, balls of cookie dough turn into a cookie shape, but don't look fully baked). Then turn off the oven for the last 5 to 10 minutes. The total time food stays in the oven might be a little longer than what a regular recipe calls for, but you're still saving energy. This technique works well with most foods, though you might consider steering clear of hyperbaking a temperature-sensitive dish, such as poultry, or a delicate dessert, such as soufflé. Also, try not to peek! The oven temperature can drop 25° every time you open it.



KIWI  
recommends  
**ORGANIC**  
ingredients

## Cherry Vanilla Mini Cupcakes

**Prep time:** 25 minutes

**Cook time:** 26 minutes

### CUPCAKES

- 1½ cups whole wheat pastry flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- ¾ teaspoon sea salt
- ¼ cup unsalted butter, softened
- 1 cup turbinado sugar
- 2 large eggs, at room temperature
- 1½ teaspoons vanilla extract
- ½ cup low-fat milk or plain soy milk
- 18 fresh Bing (sweet) cherries, pitted and diced

### FROSTING

- 1½ cups powdered sugar
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened
- 2 tablespoons low-fat milk or plain soy milk, at room temperature
- ¾ teaspoon vanilla extract
- ⅛ teaspoon sea salt
- 18 fresh Bing (sweet) cherries, pitted and halved, patted dry, for garnish

1. Line 36 mini-muffin tins with recyclable paper wrappers; set aside.
2. Combine the flour, baking powder, and salt in a medium bowl; set

aside. Beat the butter in a large bowl with an electric mixer on medium speed until smooth, about 30 seconds. Add the sugar and beat until well combined, about 2 minutes. Add the eggs and vanilla and beat until smooth. On low speed, mix in half of the dry ingredients, then half the milk; repeat and blend until just combined. Fold in the diced cherries and spoon the batter into the prepared muffin tins.

3. Place the tray into the non-preheated oven. Turn the oven to 325° and bake until shaped fully into cupcakes, but not set, about 18 minutes, rotating the tray halfway through baking. Turn the oven off. Hyperbake (finish cooking by residual heat) in the oven until the cupcakes are golden and the centers are spongy or a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean, about 8 to 10 more minutes. Remove from the oven, cool in their tins for 15 minutes, then remove and let cool completely on a wire rack before icing.

4. To prepare the frosting, beat the powdered sugar with the butter, milk, vanilla, and salt in a medium bowl with an electric mixer until smooth. Adjust the ingredient amounts, if necessary, for desired consistency. Spread equal amounts over each cupcake. Garnish each with a cherry half.

### Makes 36 mini cupcakes

Per cupcake: calories 90, fat 2.5 g, protein 1 g, carbohydrates 16 g, dietary fiber 1 g

*Jackie Newgent, R.D., is a chef, a dietitian, and author of Big Green Cookbook and The All-Natural Diabetes Cookbook.*