

# K-State Extension Connection

## Enjoying Plain Greek Yogurt

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**Whether you love it or whether you hate it, the truth is, plain Greek yogurt is a healthy product. But it tastes awful.** Sorry, plain Greek yogurt lovers. Unless you've trained your taste buds to embrace pungent sourness, you're not going to enjoy plain Greek yogurt. I join my friend and fellow Extension Agent, Crystal Futrell of Johnson County in proclaiming that personally, I love the stuff. But, that I rarely eat it like most people eat yogurt.



**To me, plain Greek yogurt is a wonderful, flexible and nutritious ingredient.** Please note, I did not say "snack". I said "ingredient". That's right. The secret to enjoying plain Greek yogurt is to view it less like a snack and more like a culinary accessory. Read on for more of how Crystal summed it up in her recent article about plain Greek yogurt.

### What is Greek yogurt?

**First, let's get down to basics. What is plain Greek yogurt, and why is it so special?** In its simplistic form, plain Greek yogurt is just strained regular yogurt. You can actually make your own version of Greek yogurt by simply straining regular yogurt through some form of fine-mesh filter. The thick remnants is Greek yogurt and contains almost double the amount protein than regular yogurt, and studies show that more protein in the diet can help keep you feeling fuller longer. Also, plain Greek yogurt has nearly half the carbs and calories of regular yogurt. Other nutritional benefits include: a good amount of probiotics which is great for healthy digestion, and it's an excellent source of vitamin B12 which is vital for healthy brain function.

### Greek yogurt similar to sour cream

**So now that you know why you should eat it, let's visit some ways you can actually tolerate the stuff.** As I mentioned, I am a huge fan of plain Greek yogurt mainly because I'm a huge fan

of sour cream. And plain Greek yogurt is a fantastic swap out for sour cream. They have the same consistency, the same look, the same mouth feel and probably the same flavor, but that's hard to say because I don't eat sour cream by itself, and I rarely eat plain Greek yogurt by itself, too, so to me they're essentially one in the same except when you compare them nutritionally. One tablespoon of sour cream contains 23 calories, 2.4 grams of fat, 1.4 grams of saturated fat, and 0.2 grams of protein. One tablespoon of plain, nonfat Greek yogurt contains 6.25 calories, 0 grams of fat, and 0.7 grams of protein. Enjoy it wherever you enjoy sour cream; on top nachos, quesadillas, baked potatoes, chili, etc.

### **Other Greek yogurt ideas to try:**

1. Instant Mango Frozen Yogurt ô Combine 4 1/2 cups diced frozen mangos (from a 16-ounce bag), 1 1/2 cups nonfat plain Greek yogurt and 1/3 cup confectioners' sugar or brown sugar in a food processor. Process until smooth.
2. Potato Salad ô Swap out the mayo with the yogurt.
3. Marinate Chicken ô Instead of soaking pieces in buttermilk, coat your chicken with plain Greek yogurt for tenderization and lots of flavor.
4. Guiltless Alfredo ô Cook pasta, reserving 1/2 cup of the cooking liquid. Sauté a little garlic in some butter then add the reserved pasta water and pasta and toss to combine. Off the heat, whisk in up to a cup of plain Greek yogurt, stir in Parmesan cheese and sprinkle with fresh parsley, a pinch of nutmeg and salt and pepper to taste.
5. Smoothies ô Swap out regular yogurt for the plain Greek yogurt. If too tart, may need to add a banana for a little boost of sweetness.
6. Creamy Veggie Dip ô Stir together 2 cups of plain Greek yogurt, 1 minced clove of garlic, juice and zest of 1 lemon, 1/2 cup of Parmesan cheese, and salt and pepper to taste.
7. Overnight Oatmeal ô Combine 3/4 cup vanilla-flavored Greek yogurt and 1/2 cup rolled oats. Cover and refrigerate for 8 to 24 hours. Stir in fresh fruit, top with chopped nuts and enjoy.

For more information about this topic or other topics, contact the Wildcat Extension District offices at: Crawford County, 620-724-8233; Labette County, 620-784-5337; Montgomery County, 620-331-2690; Pittsburg Office, Expanded Food and Nutrition Education (EFNEP), 620-232-1930. Wildcat District Extension is on the Web at <http://www.wildcatdistrict.ksu.edu>. Or, like our Facebook page at [facebook.com/wildcat.extension.district](https://www.facebook.com/wildcat.extension.district).

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