

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

***Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association Offers Nine Tips to Put a Little Barbecue Flame on Your Fruits and Veggies This Fall***

**Arlington, Va. (Sept. 7, 2016)** – Peppers. Pears. Portabella mushrooms. They all taste amazing when prepared on the grill or smoker. Grilling intensifies the natural sweetness of these and other fruits and vegetables, while locking in flavor, which is why a majority (71%) of grill or smoker owners use the barbecue to improve the flavor of their food.\*

Whether tailgating or in the backyard, about half of those who grill still barbecue at least once a week in the fall.\* This harvest season, HPBA is encouraging all grill and smoker owners to **#BarbecueProduce**. Get fired up with these nine tips for barbecuing your produce:

1. **Know Your Veggies.** Some produce, like asparagus and tomatoes, take only a few minutes to grill, while denser vegetables, like potatoes, take longer to cook. To avoid burning your veggies, sear them over high heat, then move them the top rack of the grill to finish cooking. Or, precook them before tossing on the grill for a few minutes to get some color on the outside and that fresh-off-the-grill smoky flavor.
2. **Use the Right Accessories.** Smaller veggies, like cherry tomatoes, are delicious fresh off the grill, but they can be a little challenging to work with. Put them in a grill basket to keep them from rolling off or falling through the grate.
3. **Stick it.** A fun way to reduce barbecuing time is to thread small pieces of vegetables, fruit, and meat, poultry, or seafood on a stainless steel skewer. It's easy to get kids to eat their veggies when they make their own special grilled kabob.
4. **Move Over Bratwurst, Here Comes the Zucchini.** When grilling your evening meal, make room on the grill for at least one fruit or veggie. Or, let your meat rest while you quickly put some “flare” on your veggie sides. Why not make meal preparation easy while cooking everything in your backyard?
5. **Oil Up or Go Plain.** Before hitting the grill, brush or toss vegetables with a light coat of oil, marinade, or melted butter. A little goes a long way. Plus, the liquid helps your seasonings stick better. However, some fruits, like pears and pineapple, can go straight on the grill sans oil or any seasonings.

6. **Bring on the Flavor.** There's no better method to bring out the flavor of produce, like pineapple and broccoli, than by barbecuing them. When cooked over a charcoal, gas or wood pellet grill, the heat of the flame intensifies flavor components while adding a smoky taste. Upgrade to a high quality grill and add a few apple or cherry flavored chips to your flame to improve the taste and texture.

7. **Go Vegan.** Skip the meat and go straight to the veggies on a Meatless Monday. Grilling foods such as portabella mushrooms or watermelon slices, which have a thick and meaty texture just like steak, are not only good for you, they're delicious, too.

8. **Grill Up the Best of the Season.** During the harvest season, make a trip to your farmers' market to select some fresh-picked local produce. Challenge yourself to see if you can grill the recommended five to nine daily servings of produce!

9. **Leave Room for Dessert.** Because grilling brings out the natural sweetness of fruits, they make for healthy and fun desserts. Sprinkle some cinnamon on grilled peaches or mangoes, or top them with a scoop of vanilla ice cream.

Looking for more #BarbecueProduce inspiration? Visit [www.HPBA.org](http://www.HPBA.org) for produce recipes from commodity boards and food growers from around North America.

#### **About HPBA**

The Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association (HPBA), based in Arlington, Va., is the North American industry association for manufacturers, retailers, distributors, representatives, service firms and allied associates for all types of barbecue, patio and hearth appliances, fuels and accessories. The association provides professional member services and industry support in education, statistics, government relations, marketing, advertising, and consumer education.

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\*HPBA's most recent barbecue lifestyle, usage & attitude study was conducted online via Rockbridge Associates Inc. in July and August 2015. Rockbridge conducted a 20-minute online survey with 1,145 grillers in the United States who were at least 18 and the primary griller or shared grilling responsibilities. The margin of sampling error for aggregate results is +/- 3 percentage points. Use of the HPBA State of the Barbecue Industry Report findings should be credited to the Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association. Visit [hpba.org](http://hpba.org) for additional information.

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