HEALTH BENEFITS: Avocados contain the “good” fats many of us don’t get enough of in our diets — heart-healthy monounsaturated fats, which promote blood sugar regulation and optimize absorption of other needed nutrients and antioxidants.

SELECTION / STORAGE: A ripe, ready-to-eat avocado is slightly soft but should have no dark sunken spots or cracks. Firmer, less mature avocados can be ripened at home on the counter. Once ripe, refrigerate for up to a week.

EATING / PREPARATION: Wash avocados under cool, running water. Cut the avocado in half lengthwise and gently twist the two halves in the opposite directions to split them. Remove the pit with a spoon or tip of a knife. Then peel the skin away from the flesh. Enjoy in soup, salad, or on top of crackers. Even try it as a replacement for mayo on a sandwich!

VEGETABLE » AVOCADO

HEALTH BENEFITS: Avocados contain the “good” fats many of us don’t get enough of in our diets — heart-healthy monounsaturated fats, which promote blood sugar regulation and optimize absorption of other needed nutrients and antioxidants.

SELECTION / STORAGE: A ripe, ready-to-eat avocado is slightly soft but should have no dark sunken spots or cracks. Firmer, less mature avocados can be ripened at home on the counter. Once ripe, refrigerate for up to a week.

EATING / PREPARATION: Wash avocados under cool, running water. Cut the avocado in half lengthwise and gently twist the two halves in the opposite directions to split them. Remove the pit with a spoon or tip of a knife. Then peel the skin away from the flesh. Enjoy in soup, salad, or on top of crackers. Even try it as a replacement for mayo on a sandwich!

ACTIVITY » HAPPY TRAILS

ACTIVITY: Did you know that April is National Stress Awareness Month? A great way to clear the mind of life’s stressors is to hit the trails! Hiking gives you a great cardio workout that can help lower blood pressure, improve balance, and build muscle. Heritage Trail is open to the public year round and costs only $2.10 for a day pass (with annual passes also available). Get details on other local trails by calling Dubuque Leisure Services at 563/589-4263. So grab your bikes, or just your walking shoes, and spend some time in the fresh air!