

June 3, 2013

## **Living Well**

Chelsea Richmond, Family and Consumer Sciences Agent  
K-State Research and Extension, Flint Hills District

### **Baby Cut Carrots: Healthy or Harmful?**

Many people choose baby carrots as a snack. They are healthy, full of vitamins, and are easy to eat and feed to children. But are they safe?

There is an email rumor that states that baby carrots are dipped in a high concentration of chlorine and water to preserve them resulting in a white color on the outside of the carrots.

Baby cut carrots are cut from regular sized carrots. Next, they are put into a machine that peels the skin and forms them into their short, round shape. The carrots are then washed in a chlorine mixture to help reduce bacteria and foodborne illnesses. The amount of chlorine used is regulated and approved for food use at specific levels. Additionally, after the carrots are washed in the chlorine mixture they are rinsed in potable water.

The white color forms during storage over time due to lack of humidity in the refrigerator. Air can dry out the surface of carrots and other fresh produce. This results in the white color. It has nothing to do with the chlorine solution. The carrots may also shrivel due to the lack of moisture. Large carrots may also be susceptible to this problem.

Don't let a myth turn you away from an easy, healthy snack. Carrots are a brimming with beta carotene. Beta carotene is a substance that is converted to Vitamin A in the human body. Many studies indicate that carrots can help prevent cardiovascular disease, lower blood pressure, prevent some forms of cancer, improve vision, and decrease the risk for heart disease.

For more information, contact the Flint Hills Extension District office in Cottonwood Falls at (620) 273-6491 or the office in Council Grove at (620) 767-5136.

-30-

K-State Research and Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer.