



# nutmeg

## Baby's First Bites

BY NOURA BOUKMIHA



**WANT YOUR  
BABY TO EAT  
VEGGIES LATER?  
START LIKE THIS.**





# Your baby's first bites shape everything

SO YOUR BABY'S READY TO START SOLIDS—AND IT'S JUNE. THAT MEANS FRESH, SEASONAL INGREDIENTS ARE EVERYWHERE. BUT HOW DO YOU MAKE THOSE FIRST MEALS BOTH NOURISHING AND DEVELOPMENTALLY SMART?

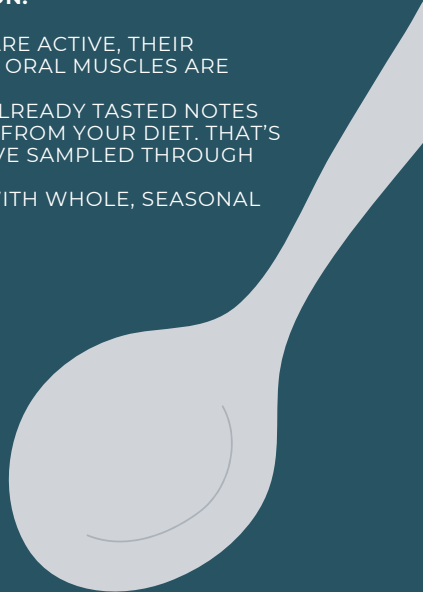
HERE'S A GUIDE THAT SKIPS THE COMMON APPLE-BANANA MASH AND GIVES YOU RECIPES THAT ACTUALLY SUPPORT SENSORY LEARNING, GUT DEVELOPMENT, AND LONG-TERM FOOD ACCEPTANCE—BASED ON WHAT WE NOW KNOW FROM EARLY TASTE EXPOSURE SCIENCE.

## **SOLET'S TALK STRATEGY BEFORE THE SPOON.**

BY SIX MONTHS, YOUR BABY'S TASTE BUDS ARE ACTIVE, THEIR DIGESTIVE SYSTEM IS MATURING, AND THEIR ORAL MUSCLES ARE READY TO PRACTICE CHEWING.

IF YOU'VE BEEN BREASTFEEDING, THEY'VE ALREADY TASTED NOTES OF GARLIC, CINNAMON, CUMIN, OR BERRIES FROM YOUR DIET. THAT'S A GIFT—BECAUSE THE MORE VARIETY THEY'VE SAMPLED THROUGH YOU, THE EASIER SOLIDS BECOME.

YOUR JOB NOW? BUILD ON THAT VARIETY WITH WHOLE, SEASONAL INGREDIENTS.



# Feeding ability and other developmental capacities according to the age of the infant.

Capacities	0-2 / 3 mo	3-6 / 7 mo	7-10 / 11 mo	11-15 / 16 mo	16-24 mo and more
Feeding (oral motricity)	Head movement	Suck/bite	Chew	Masticate	Masticate well
Food texture (sensory responsiveness)	Liquid	Purée	Mashed with soft lumps	Chopped into pieces	Table food
Instruments	Chest/infant bottle	Spoon	Cup/fingers	Eat alone	Fork
Language	Cooing	Babbles	Detached sounds	Detached words	Associated words
Fine motor skills	Arm wiggle	Captures/holds	Transfers	Releases/throws	Runs/hops
General motricity	Head up	Rolls	Sitting no support	Standing walking	Runs/hops

## Seasonal Produce in June: What's Best for Babies?

Ingredient	Why It's Great for Baby	Key Nutrients
<b>Zucchini</b>	Soft, low-allergen, easy to digest	Vitamin C, water, fiber
<b>Green beans</b>	Mild, slightly earthy, blends well	Iron, folate, fiber
<b>Peas</b>	Sweet, soft, iron-rich	Plant protein, iron, zinc
<b>Apricots</b>	Soft, tangy-sweet, blends to smooth texture	Vitamin A, potassium
<b>Cantaloupe</b>	Juicy, sweet, easy to mash or puree	Vitamin C, hydration
<b>Carrots</b>	Safe starter, naturally sweet	Beta-carotene, fiber
<b>New potatoes</b>	Soft when steamed, good with breastmilk	Potassium, carbs, B6
<b>Chard/spinach</b>	Best steamed, use in mix with other foods	Iron, calcium, vitamin K





These purées help  
prevent picky  
eating later

## STEWED APRICOT & MILLET BLEND

**Why it works:** Apricots bring a gentle tartness. Millet provides a soft grain texture to support chewing skills.

**Nutrition:** Iron, B vitamins, beta-carotene.

**Case note:** Babies exposed to whole grains early show better satiety and less food rejection later



# BLUEBERRY, CHIA & PEAR BLEND

**Why it works:** Antioxidants meet texture. Chia thickens naturally and supports digestion.

**Nutrition:** Omega-3s, fiber, vitamin C.

**Tip:** This doubles as a fun frozen summer treat in mesh feeders.



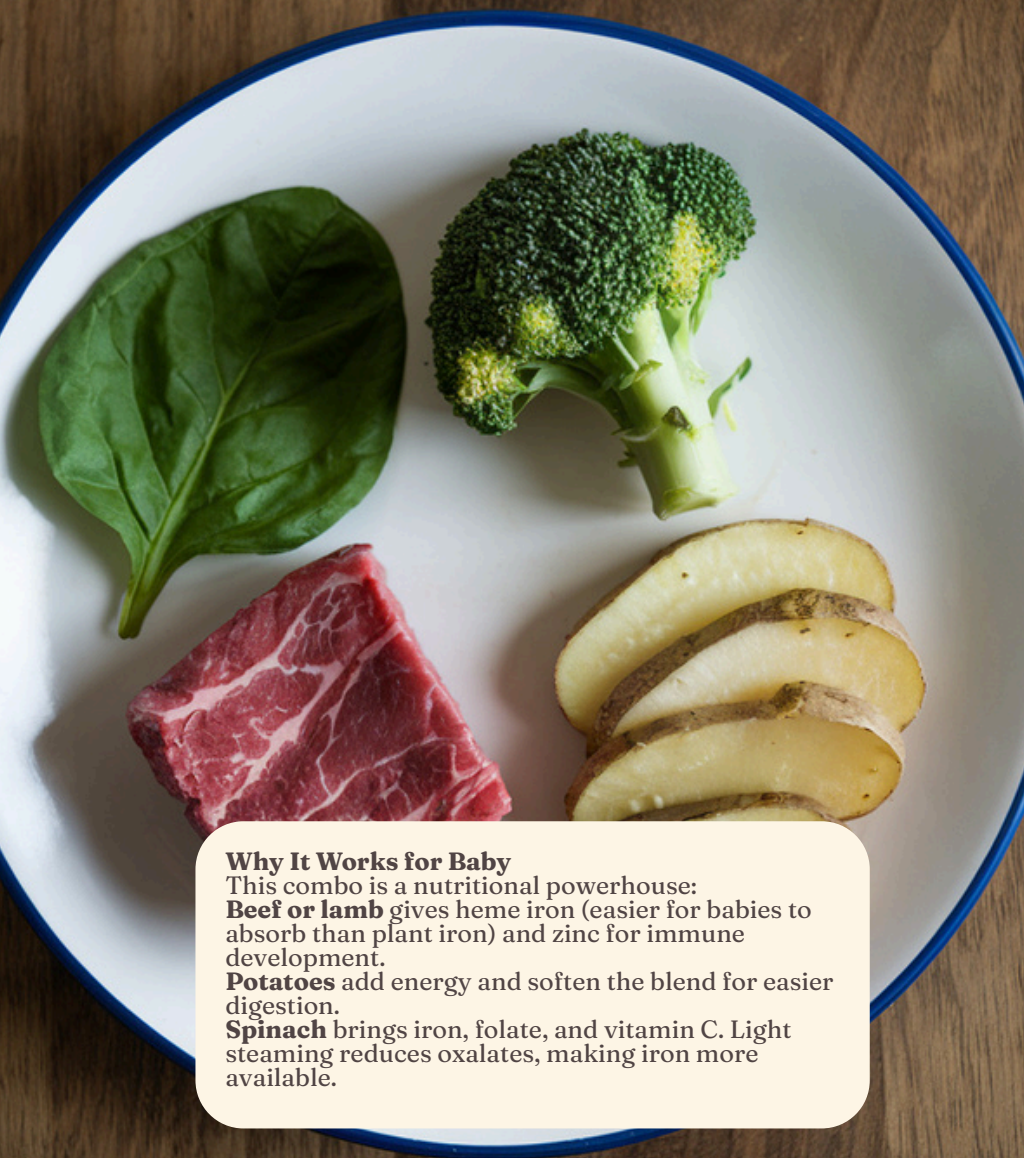
# BANANA BUCKWHEAT PUREE

**Why it works:** Buckwheat is a gluten-free grain rich in minerals and easy on baby's digestion. Banana adds natural sweetness and creamy texture—perfect for easing into solids.

**Nutrition:** Magnesium, manganese, iron, vitamin B6, and prebiotic fiber.

**Case note:** Babies introduced to grain-legume blends early tend to develop better satiety signals and show higher acceptance of whole foods at 12 months.





### Why It Works for Baby

This combo is a nutritional powerhouse:

**Beef or lamb** gives heme iron (easier for babies to absorb than plant iron) and zinc for immune development.

**Potatoes** add energy and soften the blend for easier digestion.

**Spinach** brings iron, folate, and vitamin C. Light steaming reduces oxalates, making iron more available.



# ROASTED RED PEPPER & WHITE BEAN PURÉE

## Why It Works for Baby

This is more than just a pretty color on the spoon:

**Beets** support blood building (folate + iron) and digestion (natural prebiotics).

**Chickpeas** are a great source of plant-based protein and fiber.

**Tahini** (optional) adds calcium and healthy fat for brain support.

**Lemon** (just a drop) boosts iron absorption and brightens flavor.

This combo gently introduces savory, earthy flavors while still being sweet enough to please a baby's developing palate.



# APPLE, SPINACH + BROCCOLI

## Why It Works for Baby

This recipe supports your baby's gut, immune system, and iron needs:

**Apple** adds natural sweetness and pectin (a gut-friendly fiber).

**Spinach** brings folate and plant-based iron.

**Broccoli** supports detox pathways and is rich in vitamin C, which helps absorb spinach's iron.



# ROASTED RED PEPPER & WHITE BEAN PURÉE

## Why This Works for Baby

This may sound like a strange mix, but it checks all the boxes for early solids:

**Watermelon** hydrates and delivers natural sweetness, making new veggies easier to accept.

**Cauliflower** is rich in choline (key for brain development) and fiber.

**Yogurt** introduces safe dairy and gut-supporting probiotics.



# SWEET POTATO + CARROT PURÉE

## **Why This Works for Baby**

This combo is a foundational puree that does more than just “taste good.” It actively supports your baby’s:

Vision and skin health (hello, beta-carotene!)

Immune system (vitamin A, antioxidants)

Digestive system (gentle fiber that promotes regularity)

A close-up photograph of a white ceramic bowl filled with a smooth, vibrant orange puree. The puree has a slight swirl on its surface. In the background, several fresh ingredients are visible: two whole carrots, a halved pumpkin showing its orange flesh and dark green skin, and a sliced apple. The entire scene is set on a wooden surface.

# PUMPKIN + CARROT + APPLE PURÉE

## Why This Works

This trio gives your baby a soft, sweet introduction to vegetables with big nutritional payoffs:

**Pumpkin** brings beta-carotene for eye and immune health.

**Carrots** are gentle on digestion and loaded with antioxidants.

**Apples** add natural sweetness and pectin to support the gut. It's especially great if your baby tends toward constipation or you want to expand their palate beyond bland.




# ROASTED RED PEPPER & WHITE BEAN PURÉE

**Why it works:** Smooth, creamy, and rich in iron. Beans are ideal for fiber introduction.

**Nutrition:** Iron, protein, vitamin C (from pepper).

Digestion note: Introduce small amounts early and monitor gas

A top-down photograph of a baby's hands holding a small wedge of a lemon. The baby is positioned at the bottom of the frame, with their head and dark hair visible. The hands are holding the lemon wedge between the thumb and index finger. Above the hands is a white, circular cutting board. On the cutting board, there are several lemons: two whole lemons and two sliced lemons showing their internal segments. There are also some lemon juice splatters and small pieces of lemon on the board. The background is a neutral, light-colored surface.

# Lemons might seem too sour for babies, but they actually offer surprising developmental and nutritional benefits

Introducing lemons to your baby in tiny, safe amounts can support their taste development, digestion, and nutrient absorption. The tangy flavor helps expand their palate early, making them more open to sour and bitter foods later (like greens and veggies). Lemons also contain vitamin C, which boosts iron absorption—especially helpful if your baby eats plant-based foods or iron-fortified grains. A few drops of fresh lemon mixed into purées (not straight wedges) is enough to gently expose them to this bright, powerful flavor.



# What No One Tells You About Texture & Timing

Your baby's oral motor development depends on texture progression. Staying too long on ultra-smooth purees can delay chewing skills.

Start smooth. Move to mashed by week 2.

Introduce soft finger foods like steamed zucchini sticks, ripe pear, or banana by 7 months.

Think of solids as a sensory experience, not just nutrition.

Your baby is learning to chew, move food, and enjoy new things — it's more than just swallowing.

In a pediatric nutrition study (2021), babies introduced to solids with seasonal vegetables and fruits during summer were:

28% more likely to accept green vegetables at 12 months

Had fewer feeding difficulties at age 2

Showed better microbiome diversity by month 9

Starting solids when fresh produce is in season supports gut health, taste acceptance, and meal variety.

# Thank You for Trusting Us

WE'RE HONORED TO BE PART OF YOUR PREGNANCY AND MOTHERHOOD JOURNEY. YOUR HEALTH, YOUR BABY'S GROWTH, AND YOUR WELL-BEING MATTER AND WE'RE HERE TO SUPPORT YOU EVERY STEP OF THE WAY.

## STAY CONNECTED

FOLLOW US FOR EXPERT TIPS, REAL-MOM INSIGHTS, AND DAILY GUIDANCE:

**INSTAGRAM: @ITSANUTMEG**

**TIKTOK: @ITSANUTMEG**

**PINTEREST: @ITSANUTMEG**

**SUBSTACK: @ITSANUTMEG**

JOIN A COMMUNITY OF WOMEN COMMITTED TO SMART CHOICES, CLEAN EATING, AND STRONG MOTHERHOOD. EXPLORE MORE

DISCOVER OUR NUTRITION EBOOKS, MEAL PLANNERS, AND EXPERT RESOURCES MADE FOR MOMS LIKE YOU.

START HERE: [WWW.ITSANUTMEG.COM](http://WWW.ITSANUTMEG.COM)

