

# nutmeg

## Baby's First Bites

BY NOURA BOUKMIHA



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





n

# 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.**

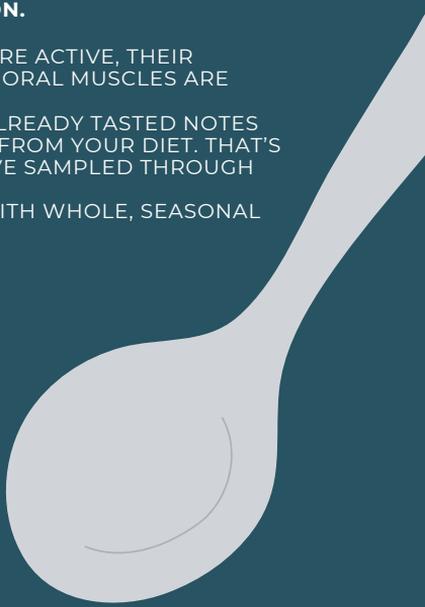
BY SIX MONTHS, YOUR BABY'S TASTE BUDS ARE ACTIVE, THEIR DIGESTIVE SYSTEM IS MATURING, AND THEIR ORAL MUSCLES ARE READY TO PRACTICE CHEWING.

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.



n



# 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?

| <b>Ingredient</b>    | <b>Why It's Great for Baby</b>              | <b>Key Nutrients</b>      |
|----------------------|---|---------------------------|
| <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.

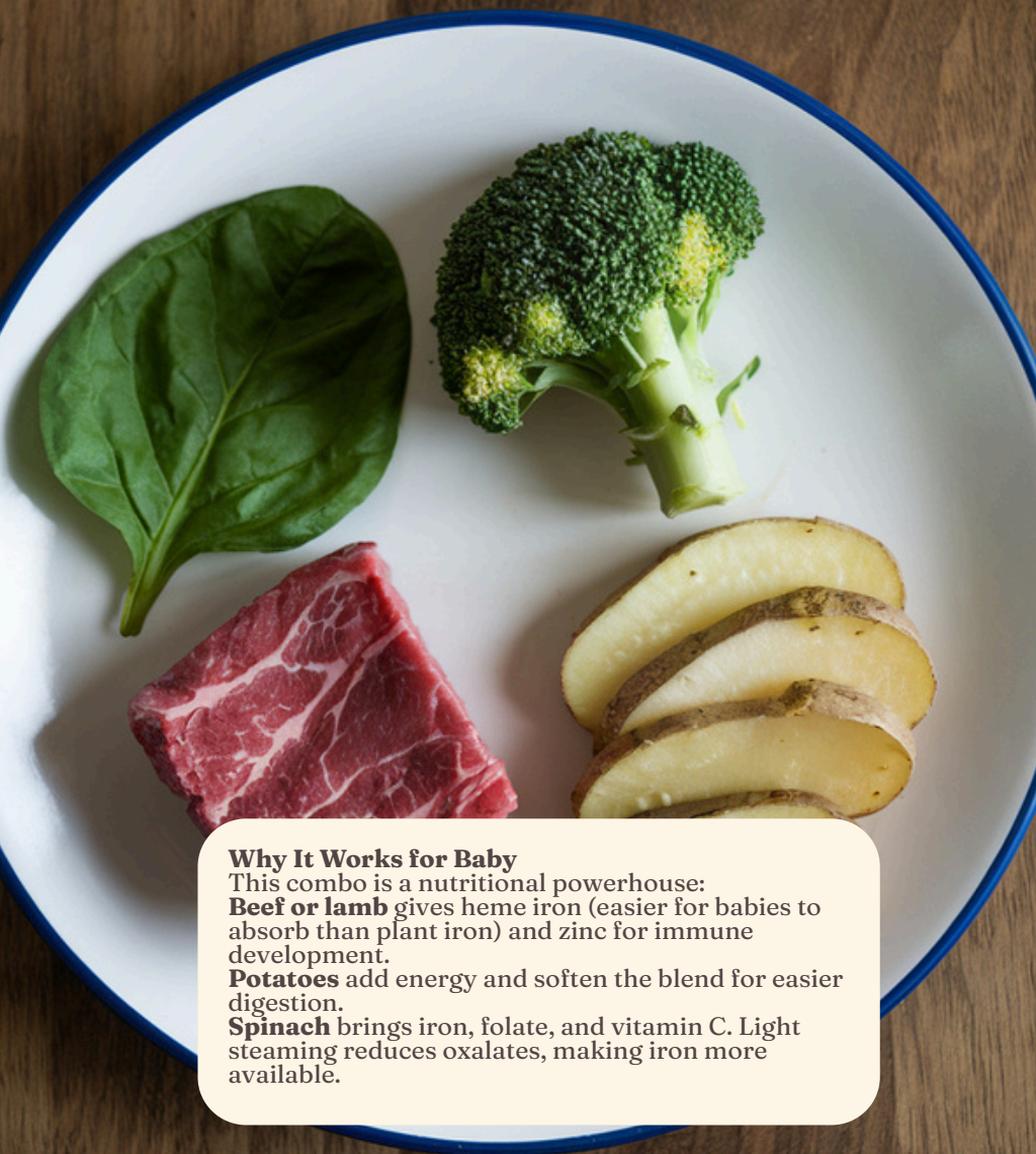


# BANANA BUCKWHEAT PUREE

**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.

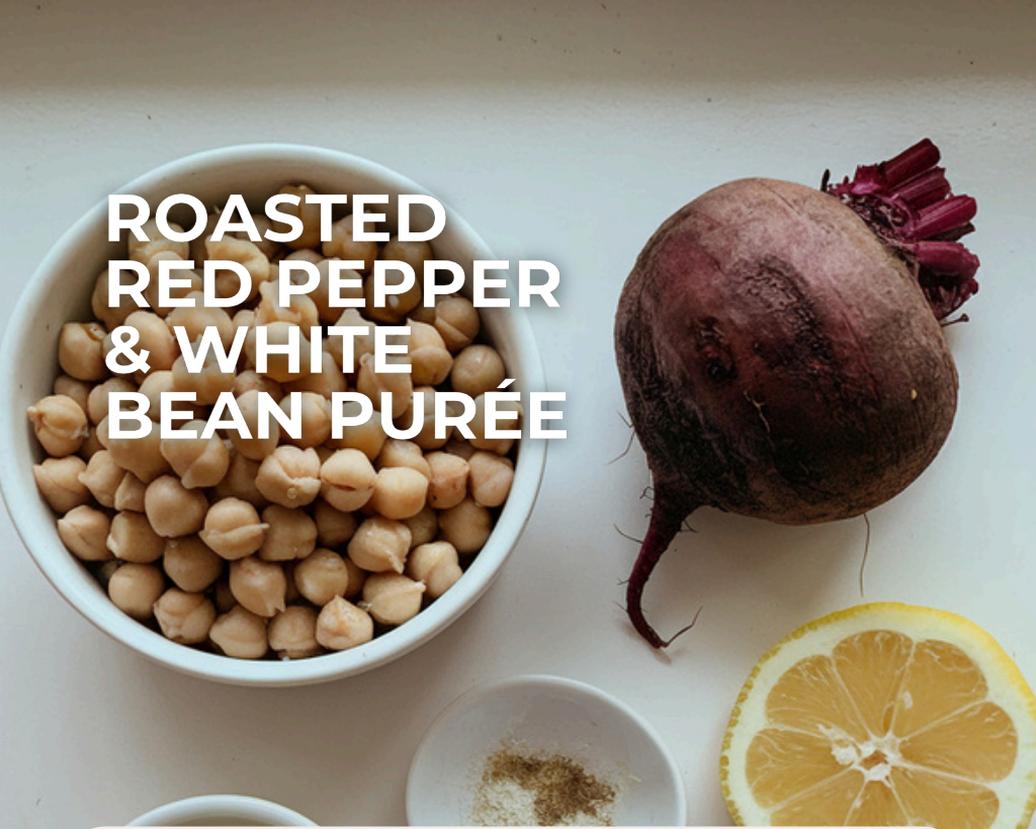


### Why It Works for Baby

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 white ceramic bowl filled with a smooth, vibrant orange puree. Surrounding the bowl are fresh ingredients: two whole carrots, a slice of pumpkin with its green skin, and a slice of a red apple. The background is a rustic 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 lemon. The baby is wearing a brown long-sleeved shirt. The hands are positioned over a white cutting board. On the cutting board, there are several whole lemons and two sliced lemons. Some lemon pulp and zest are scattered 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

A top-down photograph of a light blue ceramic plate with a ribbed pattern. On the plate are several slices of fresh orange, a small white bowl filled with smooth orange puree, and a white ceramic spoon with a small amount of puree on its tip. The background is a neutral, light-colored surface.

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)

