

Broccoli, Sweet Onion and Pecan Salad Tossed with Orecchiette and Feta

- 1 large bunch [broccoli](#), tough stem ends removed (discard or save for soup)
- 1/2 c pecan halves, lightly roasted for about 10 minutes at 300 degrees
- 1 c [Vidalia](#) or other sweet onion, cut into thin slices
- 1 c coloured bell pepper, cut into thin strips
- 1/4 c dried cranberries
- 1 c cooked small pasta, such as [De Cecco's Orecchiette](#) (optional, but excellent)
- 1/3 c [feta](#), chopped into small cubes (optional, but excellent)

Separate broccoli into florets, and slice tender stalks 1/4" thin. Bring lightly salted water to a boil, blanch broccoli for 30 seconds, drain quickly, immerse in cold water, drain again and dry well. Combine broccoli, onion, bell pepper and cranberries with dressing, then refrigerate. Add the warm pasta, feta and pecans just before serving.

Broccoli, Sweet Onion and Pecan Salad Dressing

- 1 T maple syrup
- 2 T seasoned rice vinegar
- 1 t soy sauce
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1/4 t coarsely ground pepper
- 1 t Dijon mustard
- 1/4 t red pepper flakes (use half if you don't want the spicy kick)
- 1 T olive oil

In a small bowl, mix syrup and vinegar, soy sauce, garlic, ground pepper, mustard and red pepper flakes. Whisk in oil.