Gary Crawford: [00:00:02] That Disney Animation classic Fantasia with that one segment with a group of dancing mushroom's remember that? And here at the Agriculture Department Farmer's Market in Washington in the education tent which should be called today fun-cational mush-action.

Gary Crawford: [00:00:14] We got all kinds of mushrooms on display not dancing however. And we have not one but two experts also not dancing. We've got...

Laura Popielski: [00:00:20] Laura.

Laura Phelps: [00:00:21] And Laura!

Gary Crawford: [00:00:22] It's going to be very confusing.

Laura Popielski: [00:00:24] Yeah probably.

Laura Phelps: [00:00:25] Not really!

Gary Crawford: [00:00:26] We'll see. We've got Laura Phelps with the American Mushroom Institute and Laura Popielski our regular chief Veg-U-cator with the Department of Agriculture. So L-P, L-P.

All: [00:00:36] Oh no!

Gary Crawford: [00:00:37] Oh no is right! OK first how many varieties of mushrooms are out there.

[00:00:44] [Both Lauras speaking at the same time.]

Gary Crawford: [00:00:45] Whoa! I'll answer it instead. Just in North America they've classified over 10000 types of mushrooms but far fewer jokes about them for instance. Laura Popielski.

Laura Popielski: [00:00:54] It's getting a little crowded in here. There's not "mush"room.

Gary Crawford: [00:00:57] I hear the sirens are coming for you now.

Laura Popielski: [00:00:59] Tell them that I've been no "truffle" at all.

Gary Crawford: [00:01:01] Oh I've got one. My boss treats me like a mushroom keeps me in the dark about everything and just as I'm in my prime...

Laura Phelps: [00:01:08] I get canned. I have heard them all several thousand times.

Gary Crawford: [00:01:12] OK but most mushrooms in this country are not canned right.

Gary Crawford: [00:01:16] That's right. Ninety percent of all the mushrooms grown in the United States are consumed fresh.

Laura Phelps: [00:01:21] And she says when we buy fresh mushrooms make sure they're firm to the touch not slimy and when you get them home put them in a paper bag and keep them refrigerated always and they'll stay in there for how long a week at least.
Gary Crawford: [00:01:32] But with mushrooms one word of warning.

Gary Crawford: [00:01:36] Yes Laura says never eat a mushroom you find out in the yard or the woods.

Laura Phelps: [00:01:39] Unless you are with someone is certified in mushroom identification. Mushrooms grown in the wild can make you very sick or worse.

Gary Crawford: [00:01:49] Good ones bought at a store or farmer's market can help your health. Laura Popielski what kinds of nutrients are in there?

Laura Popielski: [00:01:55] Oh so many good things. Did you know that mushrooms are the only produce item to contain Vitamin D?

Gary Crawford: [00:02:01] Oh now that's odd since vitamin D the sunshine vitamin mushrooms which are grown in total darkness have vitamin D.

Laura Phelps: [00:02:07] You can also talk about what they don't have. They don't have sodium. They don't have very many calories. They don't have any fat.

Gary Crawford: [00:02:14] Now people seem to think they don't have any taste either but I have found they certainly do each type with its own eating quality Laura Phelps. You see it's got a lot to do with how much water is in each type.

Laura Phelps: [00:02:24] So the white button mushroom has a high water content, so we put it on a salad and you get a nice fresh crunch. Shiitakes they have less water and they have an earthier, meatier taste and the portabella is the steak of the mushroom family because it's big and thick and dense just like a steak would be.

Gary Crawford: [00:02:44] Will it taste like a steak?

Laura Phelps: [00:02:46] Very close to steak.

Gary Crawford: [00:02:47] For some great recipe ideas for mushrooms. What's cooking USDA what's cooking USDA. Laura Phelps so you want to dance for us now?

Laura Phelps: [00:02:54] Not really.