

Summer Produce

Mid-June through August

The *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* (2010) recommend increasing fruits and vegetables in the U.S. diet. In summertime, you can find fresh fruits and vegetables at farmers markets, roadside stands, and grocery stores across Indiana. Use the following tips to select, prepare, and store these healthy foods.

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Vegetables available in summer in Indiana

Basil and fresh herbs	Beets	Brussels sprouts	Cabbage
Carrots	Cucumbers	Eggplant	Green beans
Mushrooms	Onions	Peppers	Potatoes
Tomatoes	Sweet corn	Summer squash	

Carrots and tomatoes

Select

Look for bright orange carrots with a smooth skin. Try picking medium-sized carrots that taper at the ends. Clip the greens as soon as you arrive home to avoid moisture loss.

Tomatoes with the strongest tomato aroma will have the richest taste. Tomatoes should also be firm with taut skin and heavy for their size. The outside should be free from bruising.



Prepare

Carrots should be thoroughly washed in cold water and scrubbed to remove soil contaminants. Peel carrots to remove outer layer, then slice as desired and serve cooked or raw.

Tomatoes should be washed in cold water before use. For salads and sandwiches, slice a tomato horizontally (just lay the tomato on its side and slice down) to prevent the juice and seeds from leaking out.

Store

Store carrots in plastic bags separate from the greens and place in the refrigerator crisper. Carrots will last for a few weeks, while the greens will last only a few days.

Allow tomatoes to remain at room temperature. Refrigeration will cause them to lose their flavor and become grainy.

Fruits available in summer in Indiana

Apples	Blackberries	Blueberries
Cantaloupe	Cherries	Grapes
Peaches	Plums	Raspberries
Strawberries	Watermelon	

Cantaloupe and grapes

Select

Select cantaloupes that are free from bruises and evenly shaped with no soft spots or cracks. Cantaloupes should have a light brown netting that stands out from their underlying smooth skin. If the stem is still attached, it was picked too early. Also, ripe cantaloupes will have a mildly sweet fragrance.

Look for firm, plump grapes that are rich in color and firmly attached to their stem. Fully ripe grapes are soft and tender. Don't purchase those that have brown spots or are shriveled and sticky.



Prepare

Wash the outside of the cantaloupe with running water or a wet cloth to remove any remaining dirt. Cantaloupe may be sliced as desired once the seeds are removed. Serve at room temperature or chilled.

Clean grapes under a gentle spray of water, drain, and pat dry.

Store

Cantaloupes continue to ripen off the vine, so if bought ripe, eat as soon as possible. Cantaloupe can be stored in the refrigerator crisper for up to five days.

Fresh grapes will be good to eat for two to three days when stored in a covered container or plastic bag in the refrigerator.



Summer Recipes

PASTA SALAD

Yield: 12 servings

Ingredients

- 3 cups pasta (uncooked)
- 1/2 cup celery (chopped)
- 1 bell pepper (medium, chopped)
- 1/2 cup carrot (diced)
- 1/2 cup broccoli (chopped)
- 1/3 cup mayonnaise
- 1 1/2 tablespoons garlic powder
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper

Instructions

1. Cook pasta according to package directions.
2. Drain and place in bowl or pan.
3. Add the rest of the ingredients and mix well.
4. Cool in refrigerator before serving.

FARMERS MARKET SALSA

Yield: 8 servings

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup corn (fresh cooked or frozen)
- 1 can black beans (15 ounce, drained and rinsed)
- 1 cup tomatoes (fresh diced)
- 1/2 cup onion (diced)
- 1/2 cup green pepper (diced)
- 2 tablespoons lime juice
- 2 garlic cloves (finely chopped)
- 1/2 cup picante sauce

Instructions

1. Combine all ingredients in a large bowl. Chill until serving time.
2. Drain before serving.
3. Serve with lowfat baked tortilla chips or fresh vegetables.

CANTALOUPE COOLER

Yield: 8 servings

Ingredients

- 1 cantaloupe (ripe)
- 2 1/2 cups orange juice (cold)
- 2 tablespoons sugar (granulated)
- ice (crushed)

Instructions

1. Cut melon in half. Scoop out seeds, remove rind, and discard. Cut melon into 1-inch cubes.
2. In blender or food processor, blend melon cubes with 1/2 cup orange juice until smooth.
3. Pour puree into pitcher and stir in the remaining orange juice and the sugar. Stir until sugar is dissolved.
4. Pour into glasses filled with crushed ice.



For more information . . .

. . . on safe refrigerator storage:

- U.S. Department of Agriculture Refrigeration and Food Safety:
www.fsis.usda.gov/Fact_Sheets/Refrigeration_&_Food_Safety/index.asp

. . . about farmers markets:

- Indiana State Department of Health:
www.in.gov/isdh/24776.htm
- U.S. Department of Agriculture:
www.ams.usda.gov/farmersmarkets

Sources

- U.S. Department of Agriculture Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Education Connection Recipe Finder:
<http://recipefinder.nal.usda.gov/>
- Produce for Better Health Foundation:
www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/
- University of California, Division of Ag and Natural Resources:
<http://anrcatalog.ucdavis.edu/pdf/8095.pdf>

Other publications in this series

- HHS-754-W, *Spring Produce*
https://mdc.itap.purdue.edu/item.asp?item_number=HHS-754-W
- HHS-756-W, *Autumn Produce*
https://mdc.itap.purdue.edu/item.asp?item_number=HHS-756-W

Five reasons to eat more fruits and vegetables

1. They are naturally low in calories.
2. They are high in vitamins and minerals, which help you to feel energized.
3. They provide fiber to help keep you full.
4. They are healthy whether they are fresh, canned, dried, frozen, or in 100% juice.
5. They taste great!

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