

Spring Produce

April through mid-June



Nutrition experts agree that most Americans would be healthier if they ate more fruits and vegetables. In springtime, you can find fresh cool-season fruits and vegetables at farmers markets, roadside stands, and groceries across Indiana. Use the following tips to select, prepare, and store this delicious produce.

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Vegetables available in spring in Indiana

Asparagus	Beets	Broccoli	Cabbage
Cauliflower	Collards	Green onions	Kale
Lettuce	Mushrooms	Peas	Radishes
Rhubarb	Spinach	Turnips	

Spinach and broccoli

Select

When selecting spinach, make sure it is free of bruises, cuts, and mold. Spinach should have dark, unblemished leaves and smell fresh.

When selecting broccoli, be sure that it is dark green and not yellow. The florets should be even in color, the leaves should not be wilted, and the stalks should not be fat and woody.



Prepare

Spinach leaves should be washed thoroughly in cool water until the grit is removed and then gently dried between paper towels. Spinach can be enjoyed either raw or cooked.

Broccoli can be washed under cool, running water to remove any dirt from the florets. You may also soak broccoli in salt water (one teaspoon of salt dissolved in one quart of water) to drive out any insects that may be hiding in the florets. Cut off leaves and woody sections of the vegetable and serve raw or cooked.



Store

Keep unwashed spinach in a plastic bag in the crisper section of the refrigerator for up to three to four days. Wash spinach before eating — not before storing. Store unwashed broccoli in a plastic bag in the crisper section of the refrigerator for a few days.



To allow airflow,

make sure the bag is not sealed completely.

Fruits available in spring in Indiana

Strawberries

Peaches (late spring)

Strawberries

Select

When selecting strawberries, make sure they are free of bruises, cuts, and mold. Strawberries should be evenly shaped and not too seedy or white at the tips.



Prepare

Gently rinse strawberries under running water with the green cap still on. Once they have been washed, remove the green cap and enjoy.

Store

Strawberries should be stored between 34 and 38 degrees Fahrenheit for best results. If possible, store them in the same plastic container they came in. Under ideal conditions, strawberries can be kept in the refrigerator for two to five days.

Recipes

Try these delicious and healthy recipes with your spring produce.

Strawberry Spinach Salad

Ingredients:

- 2 bunches of spinach leaves
- 1 pint strawberries
- ½ cup sugar
- 2 Tablespoons sesame seeds
- 1 Tablespoon poppy seeds
- ½ teaspoon minced onions
- ¼ teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- ¼ teaspoon paprika
- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- ⅓ cup cider vinegar

Directions:

1. Wash spinach leaves and strawberries in clear water and drain well.
2. Remove stems from spinach leaves, tear into bite-sized pieces, and place in a large bowl.
3. Remove stems from strawberries, slice, and add to spinach.
4. Cover and chill until serving time.

Dressing:

1. In a blender or food processor, combine sugar, sesame and poppy seeds, onion, Worcestershire sauce, and paprika.
2. With blender running, add oil and vinegar.
3. Chill in refrigerator.
4. Toss spinach and strawberries with about half the dressing (reserve the rest for another recipe). Serve.

Broccoli Stir-Fry

Ingredients:

- 2 Tablespoons toasted sesame oil
- ½ cup walnuts, broken or chopped coarsely
- ¼ cup green onions with tops, chopped
- 4 cups broccoli florets
- ¼ cup red pepper strips
- 1 Tablespoon light soy sauce

Directions:

1. In a large heavy skillet, heat oil until hot. Add walnuts and onions. Stir-fry for one minute, tossing constantly.

2. Add broccoli and continue to toss for three to four more minutes.
3. Add red pepper strips and soy sauce and continue to cook one minute longer. Serve immediately.

Spring Vegetable Sauté

Ingredients:

- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- ½ cup sweet onion, sliced
- 1 garlic clove, finely chopped
- 1 potato, cubed
- ¾ cup carrots, sliced
- ¾ cup asparagus, sliced
- ¾ cup green beans
- ¼ cup salt
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- ½ teaspoon dried dill

Directions:

1. Heat oil in skillet. Add onion and cook for two minutes.
2. Add garlic and cook for another minute.
3. Stir in potatoes and carrots. Cover, turn heat to low, and cook until almost tender (about four minutes). Add asparagus, green beans, salt, pepper, and dill.
4. Cook, stirring often, until just tender (about four minutes). Serve immediately.

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!

For more Information . . .

. . . on safe refrigerator storage, visit:

- www.extension.purdue.edu/extmedia/CFS/CFS-424-W.pdf

. . . about farmers markets, visit:

- Purdue Extension: www.extension.purdue.edu/anr/anr/anr/farmersmkts.html or 1-888-EXT-INFO
- Indiana State Department of Agriculture: www.in.gov/isda/market or (317) 232-8770
- United States Department of Agriculture: www.ams.usda.gov/farmersmarkets

Other publications in this series

- CFS-755-W, *Summer Produce* www.extension.purdue.edu/extmedia/CFS/CFS-755-W.pdf
- CFS-756-W, *Autumn Produce* www.extension.purdue.edu/extmedia/CFS/CFS-756-W.pdf

Sources

- Marsh Supermarket produce guide: www.marsh.net/instore/produce/berryguide.html
- Recipe Zaar: www.recipezaar.com/95039
- Quick Salad Recipes: www.quick-salad-recipes.com/spinach.html
- Kansas State University: www.kidsacookin.ksu.edu
- Produce for Better Health Foundation: www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/
- University of Illinois Extension: www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/veggies/broccoli1.html
- United States Department of Agriculture Recipe Finder: www.recipefinder.nal.usda.gov

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