



# TrueFood Seasonal Eating Guide

When you go to the grocery store, you see fresh produce from all over the world, but just because **fruits and vegetables** can be found in your grocery store doesn't mean they are currently in season.

Seasonal eating means eating fruits and vegetables that are locally grown during their official growing season. When food is grown in season, it is **more nutritious** because it is adapted to the region, grown in soil, and harvested at its peak. Buying seasonal foods also decreases the amount of both packaging required and the greenhouse gases generated from driving your food across the country.

This TrueFood Guide to Seasonal Eating will help you further realize why it's important to **eat with the seasons** and discover ways to find seasonal foods in your area.



## WHY EAT WITH THE SEASONS?

### Seasonal foods are fresh and the most nutritious

Consuming produce fresh is the best way to get all its benefits. When fruits and vegetables have been **picked at the perfect time**, they tend to be sweeter and higher in nutrients such as vitamin C and potassium – all critical for health and performance.

### Seasonal foods taste better

Seasonal food tends to have **more flavor** than food that is grown out-of-season. Food grown out-of-season is harvested early so it can travel long distances and it requires the use of artificial ripening with gases while stored in boxes as they are shipped.

### Seasonal food supports the community

When you buy seasonal food grown in your area, your money goes directly to the farmers who **share your values**.



## HOW TO EAT WITH THE SEASONS

### Know your seasons

Find a **seasonal calendar** from your state's agricultural department or extension office.

### Find a local farmers market or farm stand

Farmers markets can be found year-round in most places. [Local Harvest](#) is America's most comprehensive directory for regional food. Keep in mind: market stands that sell produce that aren't in season are not legitimate (e.g., selling oranges and bananas in Colorado). Also, if it's not labeled USDA certified organic, ask if chemicals were used.

### Use Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)

Community-supported agriculture (CSA) is a system that connects farmers and consumers more closely by allowing consumers to subscribe to the harvest of a certain farm or group of farms. CSA is a great way to buy seasonal and local produce the most direct way possible. CSA shares include vegetables, fruits, beans, grains, and even salsa or sriracha. CSA shares are purchased ahead of production (January/February) to provide farmers the means to get started. Each week, a CSA member picks up the weekly box of seasonal produce at a drop-off site (June-October). CSA shares are not only fair for the farmer but are also the **best way** to get seasonal food at the best price.

### Try at-home canning and freezing

Canning and freezing help **prevent fresh food spoilage** and waste in places with short growing seasons, like in Colorado.

### Look for stickers that say 'Local'

Look for "Local" stickers when shopping in your neighborhood grocery store, as these items are in season in your area.

### Think beyond produce

Fish and meat have seasons too! While meat and fish can be frozen for later consumption, if you are by the sea, choose the catch of the day. [Seafood Watch](#) can help you **make better seafood choices**.



The table below provides an example of what fruits and vegetables are typically produced nationwide during each season.

| SPRING        | SUMMER         | FALL          | WINTER                |
|---------------|----------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| Asparagus     | Cherries       | Apples        | Apples                |
| Rhubarb       | Berries        | Pears         | Pumpkins              |
| Strawberries  | Peaches        | Grapes        | Winter Squash         |
| Radish        | Plums          | Beets         | Beets                 |
| Spring Peas   | Melons         | Radish        | Carrots               |
| Spring Garlic | Summer Squash  | Carrots       | Rutabaga              |
| Garlic Scapes | Lettuce        | Cabbage       | Cabbage               |
| Spring Greens | Cucumbers      | Kale          | Garlic                |
| Sorrell       | Green Beans    | Chard         | Onion                 |
| Kale          | Tomatoes       | Potatoes      | Potatoes              |
| Spinach       | Eggplant       | Leeks         | Watermelon            |
| Arugula       | Garlic         | Onions        | Black Daikon Radishes |
| Chard         | Onions         | Winter Squash | Dried Herbs           |
| Spring Onions | Sweet Peppers  | Pumpkins      | Citrus*               |
| Chives        | Sweet Corn     | Pueblo Chile  | Swiss Chard           |
| Cilantro      | Early Potatoes | Spicy Peppers | Kale                  |
| Parsley       | Carrots        | Watermelon    | Collard Greens        |
|               | Oregano        | Flour Corn    | Spinach               |
|               | Thyme          | Grains        |                       |
|               | Marjoram       | Dry Beans     |                       |
|               | Rosemary       | Dates**       |                       |
|               | Sage           |               |                       |
|               | Basil          |               |                       |

\*Grown in Arizona and California (December-April)

\*\*Grown in Arizona (August-September)

**TrueFood for TrueSport** is a collaboration between the Daniels Fund Ethics Initiative and the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency. The project educates athletes, parents, and coaches about TrueFood to encourage ethical food choices, while promoting the health and performance of young athletes.