

Spring 2014 Nutrition Newsletter

How to Select the Best Produce

Spring time brings so many welcomed changes: good weather, outdoor activity, and an abundance of fresh fruits and vegetables. Selecting fruits and vegetables at the peak of freshness is a difficult challenge in our modern supermarkets. Read through the tips below to get some new ideas of how to pick the perfect produce!!

Deciphering Produce Labels: Produce in super markets come with stickers on them to designate how they were grown. If the label starts with a “9” then the product was grown organic (no pesticides). If the sticker begins with a “3” or “4” it is considered conventional- grown with pesticides. If the label begins with an “8” the product has been genetically modified (GM). GM produce has multiple risks and there still needs to be further research done to determine the effects of long term exposure, so buyer beware!



Utilize Local Farmers Markets: Farmers markets are wonderful for a variety of reasons. Not only is the produce extremely fresh and reasonably priced, purchasing from the farmers directly assists the local economy. Going to farm stands is also a great way to expand the variety of fruits and vegetables you consume which can get you out of a salad or broccoli rut. Being outdoors is another wonderful part of spring, so do some research and spend nice weekend morning visiting some local farmers markets in your area.



Select Produce During Their Season: Fruits and vegetables are grown and harvested at different times throughout the year. Knowing when a fruit or vegetable is “in season” will help you select to consume that fruit when it is at its best (better taste and increased nutrient density). The chart to the right is just one of many helped to direct consumers of the optimal time to purchase these produce items. The most important part is to ensure you are consuming these amazing food items. One should strive for at least five servings of vegetables and two to three servings of fruit each day to ensure adequate intake of fiber and nutrients.



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