

A Healthy Shopper's Guide Spring Produce

Spring is in full swing for many of us, which means plenty of fresh produce is available no matter your geographic location. From orange to green to yellow, here's a look at the plethora of produce you might find in your grocery aisles this time of year.

- **Asparagus:** A well-loved vegetable that is deliciously crisp and slightly sweet, asparagus is high in nutrients such as Vitamin K and folate. When choosing the perfect bunch, look for asparagus spears that brightly colored with tightly compact and closed tips while avoid ones that appear dry with brown ends. To enjoy, snap off the ends and prepare asparagus on the stovetop in a stainless steel pan or cast-iron skillet, or toss it in a stir-fry.
- **Carrots:** Carrots are a fan-favorite vegetable among children because of their naturally sweet taste when cooked. which is great because they are very high in Vitamin A and will promote eye health. From orange, purple, red, white, and yellow varieties, all carrots no matter their color are high in Vitamin A, which helps to promote eye health. Carrots can be prepared in a variety of ways: roasted, glazed, shredded, thrown in stews or stir-fries, or enjoyed raw with a side of vegetable dip.
- **Peas:** Peas are high in many vitamins and minerals and are also an excellent source of fiber and protein, which helps make you feel fuller longer. Always choose peas that are bright green in color, and don't shy from the smallest of the bunch; those tend to be sweeter. From a bag of frozen peas to the peas in their pods, you can enjoy peas in salads, skillet meals, or simply sautéed with a little olive oil or butter.
- **Leafy Greens:** From spinach, kale, arugula, romaine, mustard greens, Swiss chard, cabbage; there are many leafy greens that provide a variety of vitamins and minerals that will help reduce your risk of developing chronic diseases. Whether you are growing your own greens or shopping for them at your local grocery store, choose greens that are vibrant, leafy, and deep with color. While most shoppers pick greens for a homemade salad, they are delicious as a side or an addition to any soup or stew.
- **Pineapple:** This sweet, tropical fruit is full of Manganese and Vitamin C, both which can help boost your immune system and build strong bones. Choose pineapples that have green leaves and give that distinctive pineapple smell when you sniff its bottom side. Enjoy fresh pineapple kabobs or add it to a fresh fruit salsa. You can also grill pineapple and use it as a topping on your favorite burger recipe or eat it as a simple dessert with a dollop of Greek yogurt on top.
- **Strawberries:** This grocery store staple is filled with high levels of Vitamin C that will boost your immune system and satisfy any sweet tooth while being lower in natural sugars. When choosing strawberries, look for bright red berries with vibrant green caps. There are many ways to eat strawberries including enjoying them plain, throwing them in a fresh salad, adding to a smoothie or yogurt, or making a homemade jam to spread on toast.

While these spring produce items are available at a reasonable price this time of year, remember you can enjoy ANY fruit or vegetable year-round by using fresh, frozen, canned, dried, and 100% juice. They all count towards good health!



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