



Before You Bring the Farm to the Table

What's In Season?

Whether you plant your own garden or shop at the grocery store and local farmer's market, there is a bounty of colorful, fresh produce available this time of year. In our region, here are just some of the offerings:

- Beets
- Bell Peppers
- Berries
- Cantaloupe.
- Carrots
- Cherries
- Corn
- Green Beans
- Herbs
- Kale
- Lettuces
- Peaches
- Plums
- Potatoes
- Tomatoes
- Summer squash
- Watermelon
- Zucchini



-Many of these produce items have different varieties and colors available.

-This a good time of year to experiment with different varieties of your favorite fruits and vegetables.

Have a Plan When You Shop:

1. Plan ahead. Bring a list of foods you need or would like to try.
2. Choose produce that isn't bruised or damaged.
3. Make sure that pre-cut items such as bags of lettuce or watermelon slices -- are either refrigerated or on ice both in the store and at home.
4. Challenge yourself to try at least one new fruit or vegetable.
5. Talk to the farmers. Ask questions. Learn how something is grown and how they use an ingredient in their recipes.
6. Follow the USDA's MyPlate method- make half your plate fruits and vegetables and the rest of your plate whole grains and lean protein.
7. Don't forget your Farmer's Market coupons & shopping bags.



Building Strong and Vibrant New York Communities

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What to Do Now That You Have Your Produce Home

Safely preparing produce before eating is an important way to prevent foodborne illness. Make sure to follow these recommendations:

1. Wash your hands for 20 seconds with warm water and soap before and after preparing fresh produce.
2. Cut away any damaged or bruised areas before preparing and eating.
3. Gently rub produce while holding under plain running water. There's no need to use soap or a produce wash.
4. Wash produce BEFORE you peel it so dirt and bacteria aren't transferred from the knife on to the fruit or veggie.
5. Use a vegetable brush to scrub firm produce, such as melons and cucumbers.
6. Dry produce with a clean cloth or paper towel to further reduce bacteria that may be present.
7. Throw away the outermost leaves of a head of lettuce or cabbage.

Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program

Once a year, the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) gives eligible, low-income adults, 60 years and older, \$20 in coupons to buy locally-grown fresh fruits and vegetables at participating farmers' markets in New York State. Booklets are available in July and may be used until the end of November. Each senior in an eligible household is qualified for one booklet per program year.

Farmer's Market Coupon Booklets can be obtained by calling:

Kathleen Albert, Senior Services Coordinator, at 518-382-8481, Ext. 9-304

Tomato-Basil Salad

4 large tomatoes, cut in wedges
¼ cup fresh basil, chopped
1 clove garlic, minced
1 tablespoon olive oil
3 tablespoons balsamic

Directions:

Toss together and serve. Serve this salad with chicken, fish, or other lean protein for a meal or on top of a bed of fresh greens you just purchased and washed. Enjoy!

Substitutions:

- In place of fresh basil you can use dried ½-1 teaspoon dried basil.
- In place of basil, try parsley, fresh or dried.
- In place of fresh garlic you can use powdered garlic to taste.
- If you don't have or like balsamic vinegar use whatever vinegar you like and have on hand.

Don't Waste Those Fresh Herbs

Herbs and spices are a great way to add flavor to your recipes and dishes without added sodium and sugar. They can also add new flavors and colors to common foods. Freezing and drying herbs when they're plentiful allows you to use them later.

How are herbs best stored?

Whether you grow your own herbs or buy them at the store or local farmer's market, here are some tips:

Harvest, sort and wash herbs

Most herbs are at peak flavor when flower buds first appear, before they are fully open.

- Pick herbs in the morning, just after the dew evaporates and before the sun is hot.
- Discard bruised, soiled or imperfect leaves and stems.
- With the leaves on the stems, lightly wash in cool running water.
- Gently shake to remove excess water.
- Drain on paper towels.

Herbs that freeze well:

basil, cilantro, chives, dill, lemon balm, lemon verbena, mint, oregano, parsley, rosemary, sage, savory, sweet marjoram, tarragon, thyme

Herbs to dry:

Basil, dill, fennel, mint, oregano, parsley, rosemary, sage, savory, scented geranium, tarragon, thyme

Dried herbs keep their flavor and color 3 months in cupboards and up to 1 year in refrigerators or freezers when stored properly.

How to dry herbs



- Tie 10 to 15 stems together in bunches and hang them in a warm, airy place to dry for up to three weeks.
- Leaves should feel crisp and crackly to the touch when dry.
- Dry leaves should be stored whole in airtight glass or ceramic containers for best flavor preservation.
- Dried herbs are best if used within the first year after harvesting.

How to freeze herbs



Frozen herbs can work for cooking, though they are usually not suitable for garnish as they become limp when thawed. For cooked dishes, use the same amount of frozen herbs as you would fresh ones.

Options for freezing herbs:

- Place a few sprigs or leaves in freezer wrap or in an airtight freezer container.
- Spread on a tray or cookie sheet and place in the freezer. When frozen solid, pack into airtight containers.
- To use in soups or stew, dice washed herbs and pack into ice cube trays. Fill the spaces with water. When frozen, pop out cubes and store in airtight containers.



This recipe uses tender, nutritious zucchini and fresh herbs that are in season.

Baked Zucchini Parmesan

Serves: 4-6 people

Ingredients:

4 medium zucchini, quartered lengthwise, remove seeds

½ cup grated parmesan cheese

¼ teaspoon garlic powder

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

2 tablespoons olive oil or canola oil

2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley leaves, optional

2 tablespoons fresh basil, torn into small pieces, optional



Directions:

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Coat a sheet pan with nonstick spray; set aside.
- In a small bowl, combine parmesan cheese, garlic powder, salt and pepper, to taste.
- In another bowl or large zipper lock bag, mix zucchini pieces with the oil.
- Place zucchini onto prepared baking sheet. Sprinkle with parmesan mixture. Place into the oven and bake until tender, about 15 minutes. Then broil for 2-3 minutes, or until crisp and golden brown.
- Serve immediately, garnish with fresh parsley and basil if desired.

References:

<http://ccschenectady.org/resources/7-tips-for-cleaning-fruits-and-vegetables>

<https://snaped.fns.usda.gov/seasonal-produce-guide>

EatRight.org, MyPlate.gov

Consumer-centered access for long-term care information, referrals and assessments.

Call 518-382-8481



NY Connects
Your Link to Long Term
Services and Supports

Do you have questions or concerns about what to eat?

If you are participating in services offered by Schenectady County's Senior and Long Term Care services, you are eligible to have a free consultation with a Registered Dietitian.

Call Cornell Cooperative Extension, Schenectady County at 518-372-1622, ext. 269. Leave a message, if necessary, for the dietitian to call you back.

Check out our website for nutrition resources:

<http://ccschenectady.org/nutrition-for-seniors>

Schenectady County Department of Senior and Long Term Care Services denies no person services or access to service based upon race, color, sex, religion, national origin, marital status and/or handicapping conditions. Schenectady County Department of Senior and Long Term Care Services is primarily funded with County tax dollars. Supplemental funding is through the New York State Office for the Aging under Title III-B/D, III-C-1, III-C-2, III-F of the Federal Older Americans Act, and New York State Expanded In-Home Services for the Elderly (EISEP), Community Services for the Elderly Act (CSE), Congregate Services Initiative (CSI), and the Wellness In Nutrition (WIN).