

Choosing Fruits and Vegetables



Foods for Life

Fruits



Types of Fruits

☞ Melons

- Cantaloupe
- Honeydew
- Casaba



☞ Berries

- Raspberries, Strawberries, Blackberries, Blueberries and Grapes

☞ Citrus Fruits

- Grapefruit, Oranges, Tangerines



Types of Fruits

∞ Apples and Pears

∞ Drupes

- Cherries, Plums, Peaches, Nectarines and Apricots
 - Drupes: Central pit enclosing a single seed

∞ Tropical Fruits

- Bananas, Pineapples and Papayas



Fruits Around the World



Going beyond your typical fruits...

Carambola

- ☞ Star Fruit (shape when cut)
- ☞ Similar to a blend of apples, grapes and citrus fruit
- ☞ Good source for Vitamin C and A



Atemoya

- ☞ Sweet flavor
- ☞ Creamy, custard like texture
- ☞ Good source of Vitamin C and Potassium



Lychees

- ☞ Small, round, sweet fruits the size of cherries
- ☞ Bumpy, red/red-brown skin
- ☞ Good source of Vitamin C and potassium



Pummelo

- ☞ Originated in Far East
- ☞ Resembles grapefruit but sweeter
- ☞ Good source of Vitamin C and Potassium



Calabaza

- ☞ West Indian Pumpkin
- ☞ Green, tan, orange
- ☞ Good source of Vitamin A and C and potassium



Chayote

- ☞ Tropical summer squash
- ☞ Similar flavor to zucchini
- ☞ Good source of Vitamin C and potassium



Malanga

- ✎ Popular in Cuba and Puerto Rico
 - Yautia
- ✎ Texture and flavor resembles a blend of dry beans and potatoes
- ✎ Good source of Vitamin C



Boniato

- ☞ Tropical sweet potato
- ☞ Good source of Vitamin C and Potassium



Vegetables



Types of Vegetables

☞ Roots

- Store a plant's food supply in its roots and send nutrients and moisture to the rest of the plant
 - Carrots, Beets and Turnips

☞ Stems

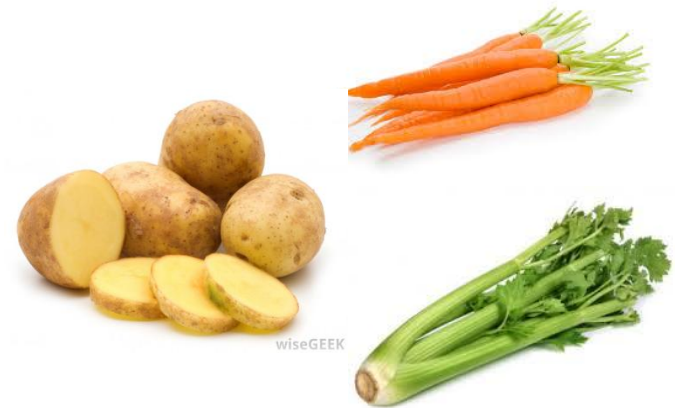
- Above ground
 - Celery and Asparagus

☞ Tubers

- Large underground stem that stores nutrients
 - Potatoes

☞ Leaves

- Use photosynthesis to turn sunlight, carbon dioxide and water into high energy carbohydrates
 - Spinach, Lettuce, Kale and Collards



Types of Vegetables

🌀 Bulbs

- Made of fleshy leaves surrounding a portion of a stem
 - Onions and Garlic



🌀 Flowers

- Includes the flowers of a plant along with the attached stems
 - Broccoli, Cauliflower,



🌀 Seeds

- High in carbohydrates and other nutrients because they are the part of the plant from which new plants grow.
 - Corn, Beans and Peas

🌀 Fruits

- Part of the plant that holds the seeds
 - Cucumbers, Eggplants and Tomatoes



Plan Your Purchases



Nutrients in Fruits and Vegetables

- ✎ Excellent source of Vitamins, Minerals and Fiber
- ✎ Low in Fat and Sodium
- ✎ No Cholesterol

✎ Cruciferous Vegetables

- Lower the risk of certain cancers
 - Broccoli, Brussel Sprouts, Cabbage, Collards, Kale, Mustard Greens, Cauliflower, Rutabagas and Turnips

Buying Fresh Produce

☞ All Year vs. Seasonal

- Prices will be lower when produce is in season

☞ Loose, Bag/Unitized

- Unitized: large produce is held together with a rubber band or a plastic tie
- If you won't use as much as comes in a unitized package, buy individually (typically price is higher per unit of product)

Buying Fresh Produce-Tips and Guidelines

- ∞ Top Quality Fruits and Vegetables
 - Most nutrients and will last longer
 - Poor quality is a waste of money
- ∞ Store and Use
 - Buy only what you can store and use
 - Fruits and vegetables only last about a week in the refrigerator
- ∞ Inspect Packaged Produce
 - Stains, Odors?
 - Sign of damaged or spoiled produce
- ∞ Avoid Wilting, Shriveling, Bruised or Decayed Produce
 - Some produce may have natural blemishes that do not affect their quality
 - Example: Grapefruit and oranges-brown on them
- ∞ Buy by Weight
 - Fruits and vegetables (not including leafy vegetables) should feel heavy

Buying Fresh Fruits

∞ Mature Fruits

- Reached their full size and color but may not have ripened
 - They will be hard and have not yet reached full flavor

∞ Ripe Fruits

- Tender with a pleasant aroma and fully developed flavors
- Testing for Ripeness: Press very gently, fruit should give a little under pressure
 - Pressing too hard will damage fruit!



Ripening Fruits

☞ Brown Paper Bag

- Room temperature until they reach stage of ripeness you want

☞ Plastic Bag

- Put holes to allow excess moisture to evaporate
- If you don't, fruit may mold and decay before ripening

☞ Refrigerate Mature Fruits

- Slows down the ripening process

Buying Fresh Vegetables

- ☞ Already ripe when you buy them
- ☞ Select vegetables which are typical in shape and medium in size
 - Misshapen vegetables: not the best quality
 - Large vegetables: could be overripe
- ☞ Avoid vegetables that look like they have discoloring
 - Indicated decay

Storing Fresh Produce

- ∞ Do NOT wash produce unless dirty
 - Added moisture will speed up spoiling caused by bacteria
 - Cause mold to grow
 - If you do wash: dry all the way before placing in refrigerator
- ∞ Store in Refrigerator
 - Most fruits and vegetables will be stored here
 - Except potatoes, sweet potatoes and onions
 - Place in crisper section or in brown paper bags
 - What do you do when using plastic bags??
 - Do not line bottom of drawer/shelf with paper towels
 - Will get soggy which could cause decay/mold

Potatoes don't go in the fridge...Why?

- ☞ Starch in potatoes turn to sugar
 - Changes their flavor
- ☞ Onions and Sweet Potatoes
 - Mold and decay when refrigerated
- ☞ Storing Potatoes, Sweet Potatoes and Onions
 - Cool, dark and dry place
 - If kept at room temperature these foods will keep for a short time
 - Buy only what you need if this is the case

Convenience Fruits and Vegetables

∞ Canned Fruit

- Less fiber than fresh but still a good source of vitamins and minerals

∞ Avoid fruits canned or frozen in heavy syrups

- Lots of sugar!

∞ Serving frozen fruits

- Thaw partially so the fruit is still firm and cold, not mushy

∞ Canned Vegetables

- Added sodium
 - Drain liquid from vegetables and rinse before cooking

Washing Fresh Produce

- ☞ Should wash before eating or cooking
- ☞ Removes pesticides, residues, dirt and germs
- ☞ Tender fruits and vegetables
 - Wash carefully in cool, clear water
- ☞ Thick-Skinned Produce
 - Use a stiff brush and scrub
 - Squash, Potatoes
- ☞ Do not let produce soak in water
 - Cause a loss of nutrients



Cutting Fresh Produce

- ☞ Occurs AFTER washing
- ☞ Cut/Peel away thick, inedible parts
 - Skin, seeds, stems, damaged areas
- ☞ Minimize nutrient loss
 - Largest possible pieces
 - Quick serving after cutting
- ☞ Shapes
 - Crosswise, wedges, cubes, shredded, grated, strips

Preventing Cut Fruits from Darkening

☞ Some fruits turn dark (discolor) when exposed to the air

☞ Enzymatic Browning

- Enzyme: polyphenoloxidase

☞ To avoid..

- Coat product in ascorbic acid (Vitamin C) as soon as they are cut
 - Lemon juice
 - Buy ascorbic acid powder to mix with water to put on product



Serving and Storing Cut Produce

- ☞ Arrange in an artistic pattern
- ☞ Cover arrangement with plastic wrap
 - Get as much air out as possible
 - Refrigerate until serving time
- ☞ Use tightly sealed bags
- ☞ Excess air will destroy nutrients

