

## Selecting Spring Fruits and Veggies

*By Lauren Cooper*

Spring has almost sprung and it's time to set the table with this season's fruits and veggies. Including fruits and veggies in your daily diet creates a healthy balance amongst the other food groups when eating. According to [choosemyplate.org](http://choosemyplate.org) half of your plate should consist of fruits and veggies, fruits being 1- 2 cups and veggies being 1-3 cups a day. Eating fresh produce is very beneficial to your health and to your wallet. When picking fresh produce at the farmers market or in the store there are helpful tips to keep in mind when selecting the freshest item for you and your family. Here are just a few tips:

### **Apricots –**

- Preferred: Plump with golden – orange color
- Avoid: Pale yellow, greenish-yellow colors, bruised or shriveled

### **Asparagus –**

- Preferred: Firm Brittle Spears, bright in color, tight closed tips
- Avoid: Limp or wilted stalks

### **Butter Lettuce –**

- Avoid: Lettuce heads with wilted leaves

### **Collard Greens –**

- Preferred: Dark Green leaves with no yellowing
- Avoid: Yellowing and wilted leaves

### **Corn –**

- Preferred: Fresh looking ears with green husks, when pierced with thumbnail tight kernels should squirt juice. Tough husks indicate over-maturity.
- Avoid: Silk ends with decay or worm injury

### **Mangos –**

- Preferred: Slightly firm Mangos with sweet aroma
- Avoid: Sap on skin of mango

### **Oranges –**

- Preferred: Firm, thin smooth skin and bright color
- Avoid: Fruit with any hint of softness or whitish mold

### **Spinach –**

- Preferred: Fresh, crisp green bunches
- Avoid: Signs of insect damage

### **Strawberries –**

- Preferred: Firm, Shiny and bright red colored with green intact cap
- Avoid: Leaky, mushy or shriveled berries

### **Snow Peas –**

- Preferred: Shiny, flat with very small peas that are barely visible through the pod
- Avoid: Shriveled, transparent pods



Eating seasonal fruits and veggies is not only healthy but saves money. To learn more tips on how to eat healthy, seasonal food and save money, consider attending a local EFNEP (Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program) series program. This eight-hour free course helps families learn basic nutrition, food

preparation, food budget management and food safety in informal, convenient locations throughout the county.

For information regarding free classes contact:

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Sources:

Duyff, R. L. (2017). *Academy of nutrition and dietetics complete food and nutrition guide*. Boston:  
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

<https://www.choosemyplate.gov/eathealthy/fruits>

<https://fruitsandveggies.org/series/what-fruits-veggies-are-in-season/>