



Best Buys In... Vegetables and Fruit

Are you getting enough? *Canada's Food Guide* recommends eating 4 – 10 servings of Vegetables and Fruit daily. (The number of servings you require each day varies depending on your age and gender – refer to *Canada's Food Guide* for your daily recommendation). Vegetables and fruit are great sources of vitamins, minerals and fibre. Dark green and orange vegetables and fruit are rich in vitamin A and folate. Citrus fruits are excellent sources of vitamin C.

Think Fresh

- Fresh produce is cheapest when it is in season.
- Buy produce at its peak of freshness.
- Buy bags of produce instead of individual pieces. Share with a friend or be sure that you can use them all before they spoil.
- Choose small apples or bananas for children instead of large fruit.
- Visit pick-your-own farms to buy large quantities of produce; preserve some by freezing or canning.
- Grow your own vegetables. You can get started with a small garden or window box and some seeds.

Good Value for Vegetables in Season

Broccoli	Potatoes
Brussels sprouts	Romaine lettuce
Cabbage	Rutabagas
Carrots	Spinach
Cauliflower	Squash
Corn	Sweet potatoes
Green beans	Tomatoes

Good Value for Fruit in Season

Apples	Oranges
Bananas	Peaches
Grapefruit	Pears
Grapes	Plums
Kiwis	Strawberries
Nectarines	

Frozen and Canned

- Canned or frozen products are a better buy when vegetables and fruit are not in season.
- Canned and frozen products have about the same nutrient content as fresh. However, canned vegetables tend to be salty. Be sure to rinse before heating to remove excess salt.
- Do not thaw frozen vegetables before cooking. This will help keep the nutritional value high.
- Avoid vegetables that have a breaded coating or sauces added. These cost more and may be higher in fat.
- Compare the price of the products using unit price (price/100 mL usually seen on the store shelf sticker) to find the best buy.
- Avoid fruit punches, beverages, or drinks as they contain a small amount, or no fruit juice and are high in sugar.
- Look for frozen concentrated **juice** for the best buy.
- A juice box costs more per serving than juice bought in a larger container. For lunches, use a thermos or bottle to bring juice from home.

Best Buys...When in Season

The following chart indicates the main season for Ontario harvest. The dots indicate optimum availability and peak “pick your own” season.

Fruits/ Vegetables	June	July	August	September	October
Apples				••••••••	
Blueberries			••••••••		
Cherries		••••			
Grapes				••••••••	
Peaches		••••••••			
Pears				••••••••	
Strawberries	••••••••				
Beans (wax)		••••••••	••••••••	••••••••	
Broccoli		••••••••	••••••••	••••••••	••••••••
Carrots		••••••••	••••••••	••••••••	••••••••
Cauliflower			••••••••	••••••••	••••••••
Peas		••••••••	••••••••		
Squash				••••••••	••••••••
Tomatoes			••••••••	••••••••	

Tips on How to Use Leftover Vegetables and Fruit

Vegetables

- Add to tossed salad
- Create a stir fry
- Add to casseroles, soups or an omelette
- Marinate in oil, vinegar and spices (serve chilled)

Fruits

- Make a fruit salad
- Add to a vegetable salad
- Mix into batter for baked goods (muffins, bread)
- Use on top of cereal

Quick & Easy Stir Fry

Ingredients

½ cup	Reduced sodium chicken or vegetable stock	125 mL
		30 mL
2 tbsp	Reduced sodium soy sauce	15 mL
1 tbsp	Cornstarch	5 mL
1 tsp	White sugar	2
2 cloves	Garlic	350 g
¾ lb	Chicken, lean beef or pork, thinly sliced	1
1	Medium onion, thinly sliced	750 mL
3 cups	Assorted vegetables cut in bite-sized pieces	30 mL
2 tbsp	Vegetable oil	

Method

1. Mix together the stock, soy sauce, cornstarch, and sugar. Set aside.
2. In a wok or large frying pan, heat 1 tbsp of the oil over medium heat. Add meat and stir fry for 4 to 5 minutes until cooked through. Remove and set aside.
3. Add remaining oil and heat as before. Add the garlic and onion and stir fry 1 minute. Add the other vegetables starting with the firmer ones. Stir fry 1 to 2 minutes between each group of vegetables.
4. Add the meat and sauce to the stir fry. Continue to cook until the sauce is clear and thickened. Serve immediately.

Source: Cooking Healthy Together, 1998.

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