
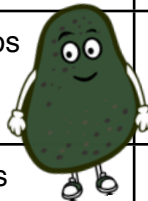

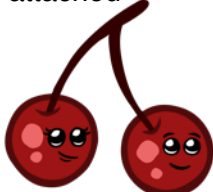
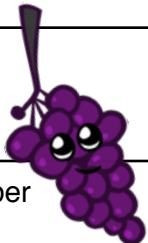
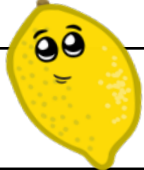
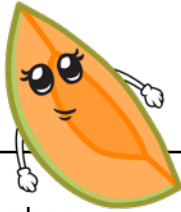

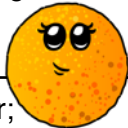


## Guide to Buying Fresh Fruits & Vegetables

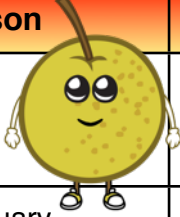
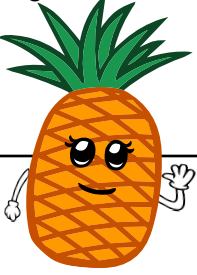
Many varieties of fresh fruit and vegetables are available all year in almost every part of the state, because of excellent transportation and storage facilities. For the greatest nutritional value and flavor, however, choose fruits and vegetables at the peak of their freshness. The guide below will help you select fresh fruits and vegetables.

Fruits	Season	What to look for:
Apples	September - May 	Good color for variety; firm to touch. Avoid those that are soft and mealy.
Apricots	June - July	Golden yellow; plump; firm. Avoid pale yellow or green, very hard or soft, shriveled and wilted ones.
Avocados 	All year	Yield to gentle pressure; vary in size, shape and color from green to black. Brown markings on skin do not lower quality.
Bananas	All year 	Firm; bruise free; yellow touched with green. If needed, ripen at room temperature.
Berries		Firm; plump; full-colored; bright, clean, fresh appearance. Only strawberries should have hull (stem cap) attached when mature.
Blueberries	June - August	
Cranberries	September - December March - July	
Strawberries	June - August	
Cherries	May - June	Fresh appearance; firm; good size for type of cherry.
Coconuts	September - March	Good weight for the size; milk inside still fluid. If no milk, coconuts are spoiled. Avoid ones with moldy or wet-looking eyes
Figs	July - September	Fairly soft to touch. Use at once, spoils quickly. Sour odor indicates overripe fruit.
Grapefruit	October - June 	Firm; well-rounded; heavy for the size; smooth textured. Avoid coarse, puffy, rough-skinned fruit.
Grapes	June - December	Fairly soft; tender; plump. Well-formed clusters with green, pliable stems. Darker varieties are free of green tinge; green grapes have a slight amber blush.

## Guide to Buying Fresh Fruits & Vegetables

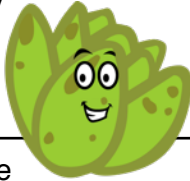
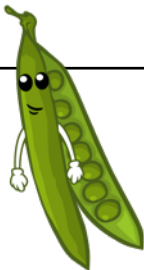


Fruits	Season	What to look for:
Kiwi	June - August	Soft to touch, like avocado. Sometimes called Chinese gooseberries.
Lemons	All year	Fairly firm; smooth and glossy-skinned; heavy for size. 
Limes	May - October	Heavy for size. Green variety more acidic than yellow.
Mangoes	April - August	Solid and not too soft to touch. Can vary in size from a plum to an apple and in color from yellow to red. Smooth skin often speckled with black. Green mangoes are sometimes used in cooking. 
Melons Cantaloupes	May - September	Color and aroma best guides. Delicate aroma; thick netting that stands out; yellow-tinged skin under the netting. No evidence of stem at blossom end.
Casabas	July - October	furrows Buttery-yellow, wrinkled rinds, lengthwise
Crenshaws	July - October	Yellow-gold rind; pleasant aroma
Honeydews	February - October	Creamy, yellow rinds; pleasant aroma.
Persians	July - October	Thick webbing; gray-green to brown skin under webbing.
Watermelons	May - August	 Dull surfaces with cream-colored undersides; symmetrical shape.
Nectarines and Peaches	June - September	Plump; fairly firm depending on type. Skin color white or yellow with a red blush.
Oranges	November - June	Heavy for size; firm; skins not too rough. 
Papayas	All year	Greenish yellow to full yellow in color; flesh gives slightly when fruit pressed in palm of hand.

## Guide to Buying Fresh Fruits & Vegetables




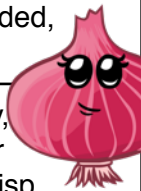

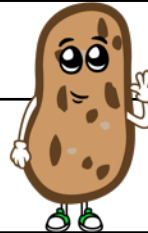
Fruits	Season	What to look for:
Pears	August - May 	Yield to gentle pressure at stem end. Color ranges from creamy yellow to russet. Ripen at room temperature.
Persimmons	October - January	Firm; shapely; plump; orange-red color; attached stem cap. Handle gently. Looks like a large red tomato in shape and firmness.
Pineapples	February - August 	Piney” aroma; golden yellow; slightly soft. Ripe when leaf is easily removed. Green fruit may not ripen properly. Over-mature fruit may show soft watery darker spots on the base or sides.
Plums	June - September	Plump; full-covered, soft enough to yield to slight pressure. Softening at tip is usually a sign that fruit is mature. Avoid shriveled and hard plums.
Pomegranates	September -November	Thin-skinned; bright purple-red; looks fresh.
Tangerines and Tangelos	November January January - October	Deep orange or yellow; glossy skin. Loose skin. Overripe fruit has puffy, dry skin.



## Guide to Buying Fresh Fruits & Vegetables

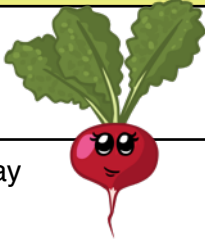
Vegetables	Season	What to look for:
Artichokes	March - May 	Heavy, compact, plump globes. Large tightly closed, fleshy leaf scales. Good green color. Heavy for the size.
Asparagus	March - June 	Tightly closed buds. Straight, tender, rich green stalks. Open tips and angular or ridged spears are signs of over maturity
Beans Green or Wax  Limas	April - October  April - August 	Crisp, long, straight, blemish-free pods.  Bright color for the variety. Crisp, dark green, well-filled pods.
Beets	June - October	Firm, round, smooth, deep red-colored roots. Fresh-looking tops. Avoid those with long roots and rough, scaly areas on surface, because they are tough, fibrous and strong flavored.
Belgian Endive	October - May	Firm without bruises. Color should be white with greenish cast.
Broccoli	October - May	Firm, closed, dark-green florets. Firm, tender stalks. Yellowing green-colored heads of broccoli are over mature.
Brussel Sprouts	October - November	Miniature, compact, bright-green heads.
Cabbage	All year 	Well-trimmed, solid heads. Heavy for size.
Carrots	All year	Firm; bright-colored; smooth; clean; well-shaped. Avoid rough, cracked or green-tinged roots.
Cauliflower	September - November	Bright-green leaves enclosing firm, closely packed creamy-white curd or florets. Avoid bruised or open florets.
Celery	All year	Fresh, crisp branches. Light green to green color. Should not have wilted, rough look or puffy feel to the stalk.

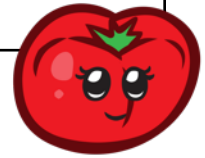
## Guide to Buying Fresh Fruits & Vegetables

Vegetables	Season	What to look for:
Corn	May - September 	Fresh-leaved, green husks. Plump, milky kernels. Avoid cobs with small or large, dented or shrunken kernels
Cucumbers	May - August	Bright, shiny green; firm; well-shaped.
Eggplant	August - September	Firm; heavy; smooth; even dark purple. Free of bruises or cuts.
Lettuce	All year 	Fresh green leaves with no wilted or bruised areas. Heading varieties of lettuce should be medium weight for size.
Mushrooms	November - April	Dry, firm caps and stems. Small brown spots or open caps are still good in flavor.
Okra	May - September 	Tender, bright-green, bruise-free pods, less than 4 1/2 inches long. Pale, faded, hard pods are tough and fibrous.
Onions	All year 	Well-shaped; hard; small necks. Dry, papery skins. Free of green spots or green-depressed leathery areas. Crisp green tops. Two- to 3-inch bleached white roots.
Parsnips	October - April	Small to medium size; smooth-skinned; firm. Decay and bruise free.
Peas, green	April - July	Well-filled; bright green. Swollen, light colored or gray-flecked pods contain tough, starchy peas. 
Peppers	All year	Good shape; firm exterior; thick flesh and bright, glossy skin.
Potatoes White	All year 	Fairly smooth; well-shaped; firm. Free of most blemishes. Avoid bruised, sprouting, shriveled or green-tinged.
Sweet	September - December	Thick, chunky, medium-sized with no bruises or decay. Should taper at the end.



## Guide to Buying Fresh Fruits & Vegetables

Vegetables	Season	What to look for:
Radishes	May - July 	Medium-sized (3/4- to 1-inch diameter); good red color; plump; round; firm; crisp. Bright-green tops.
Spinach	March - May	Large, bright, blemish-free leaves with good green color. Yellowing indicates the start of decay. Avoid leaves with coarse stems.
Squash Summer	June - August	Bright color; smooth, glossy skin. Heavy for the size; firm; well-shaped.
Winter	September - November	Heavy for the size. Hard, good-colored, unblemished rind.
Tomatoes	May - August	Well-formed; blemish-free; plump. Over all rich red color and slight softness.
Turnips and Rutabagas	September - March	Small to medium size; smooth; firm; heavy. Few leaf scars at top and few fibrous roots at base. Purple-tinged white ones are turnips. Yellow-skinned, larger roots are rutabagas.



### Chef Solus Healthy Recipes



Reprinted with permission from University of Tennessee Extension (2002). A Guide To Buying Fruits & Vegetables