



University of California
Cooperative Extension
Tulare County

Agriculture and Natural Resources



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July 10, 2000

Best Nutrition Buys for Summer Produce

July is a great month for summer produce. This is the time of the year the markets are full of freshly picked fruits and vegetables. However, not all fruits and vegetables are created equally when it comes to nutrition. Some of the produce available supplies an abundance of nutrients. So if you want to get more nutrition for your shopping dollars try the following.

Melons: This is the peak time of the year for melons. Watermelon is a good source of vitamins A and C and it contains some iron. Cantaloupes are also a good source of vitamins A and C. Both of these melons provide some thiamin. This B vitamin helps the body release energy from carbohydrates during metabolism.

Citrus: Valencia oranges, grapefruit, and lemons are all good sources of vitamin C. If you eat the fruit (instead of drinking the juice from the fruit), citrus is also a good source of fiber.

Peaches and Nectarines: Both of these fruits are a good source of vitamin A and fiber if you eat the skin. A peach also supplies some niacin, a B vitamin, which is involved in the synthesis of DNA, and maintains the normal function of your skin, nerves, and digestive system. Nectarines also supply some vitamin E.

Cabbage: This vegetable is a great source of vitamin C and fiber.

Peppers: Sweet red peppers are a great source of vitamins A and C. Green peppers are a great source of vitamin C.

Summer Squash: Such as zucchini and crookneck supply moderate amounts of vitamin C and fiber if you don't peel before eating.

Corn: This vegetable is a great source of fiber and supplies essential fatty acids, linoleic and linolenic acid. The body can't make these essential fatty acids which are required for normal growth and maintenance of cell membranes, and healthy arteries and nerves. In addition they help keep your skin smooth and lubricated.

Lettuce: There are many kinds of lettuce. The darker the leaves, the more nutrients the lettuce contains. Iceberg lettuce has the least amount of nutrients. Varieties such as red leaf and

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romaine, are a good source of vitamin A, and folic acid.

Tomatoes: This vegetable is known for its vitamin C content. Tomatoes are also a good source of the antioxidant lycopene, which appears to reduce the risk of prostate cancer.

As mentioned, not all fruits and vegetables are created equally when it comes to nutrients. However it is important to eat a good variety of food including fruits and vegetables. It is recommended that you eat five servings of fruits and vegetables a day. There is convincing evidence that a lowfat diet with lots of fruits and vegetables helps reduce the risk of certain cancers, heart disease, diabetes, obesity and other health problems.

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