

SEASONAL EATING: HOW TO EAT LOCAL FOOD ALL YEAR ROUND

- **Think about the food your grandparents might have served.** Many of our traditional foods are seasonal, and there are remnants of these traditions in many of our family celebrations: turkey and squash in October; cranberries and brussel sprouts in December; strawberry rhubarb pie in June; and Hodge Podge in July.



- **Listen to your stomach and your taste buds.** Often our bodies ask us for seasonal foods: fresh crunchy salad greens in the early spring and a warming rich stew as the first frosts are coming on in the late fall.
- **Base your meals around local foods,** which are, by definition, always in season.
- **Expand your definition of seasonal.** Many foods store well. A food need not be growing in the field to be in season. Locally grown and frozen, canned, pickled, or dried foods count.
- **Find foods that are always in season.** Animal based foods, like eggs, dairy, and meat are always in season. Dried herbs, mushrooms, potatoes, apples, and other storage vegetables are available all year round.
- **Learn how storing, shipping, and processing foods** affects nutrients and taste. For example, foods frozen at their peak of freshness may maintain a higher quality than the same food picked and transported, fresh, across the continent.¹
- **Do the math.** Foods in season are often significantly less expensive than they will be when not in season. Buy in bulk with the intention of storing some food while it's in the peak of availability, taste, and nutritional quality.²
- **Set some food by.** Freezing, canning, pickling, and drying vegetables is not that daunting a task. Ask someone to teach you. Have a canning party! Start this summer, and grow your commitment over the years as you learn new food preservation skills.
- **Find a great cookbook,** or search the web for seasonal recipes and tips. Examples include *Eating by the Seasons*, published by the Ecology Action Centre, and *Simply in Season* (found at <http://www.worldcommunitycookbook.org/>).

¹ *What Counts: Nutrients in Fresh and Preserved Fruits and Vegetables.* Gene Lester, Ph.D. USDA. October 2007

² *Eat Healthy, Dirt Cheap.* Heather Bryce. McMaster University. http://www.mcmaster.ca/health/hwc/Newsletters/jan05/eat_healthy_dirt_cheap.htm

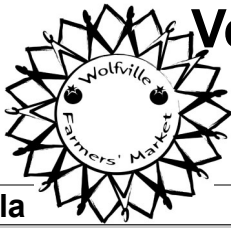
Fresh Veggies in your Freezer ¹

Freezing is one of the easiest, cheapest, and most reliable methods of preserving fresh food. Kept at zero degrees Fahrenheit (- 18 degrees Celsius), the quality of food is maintained for eight to 12 months. The growth of microorganisms, which cause food spoilage, is inhibited. Enzymes, which naturally cause food to change and ripen, are slowed. Oxidation, the chemical change which decreases the nutrients in food toward rancidity, is likewise hindered. Frozen food is easily and safely defrosted in the fridge or by heating when preparing a meal.

¹ For original instructions and comprehensive answers to home food preservation questions: National Centre for Home Food Preservation, USDA and The University of Georgia. <http://www.uga.edu/nchfp>

- Pick or purchase vegetables at their peak flavour and texture
- Wash vegetables and trim away any inedible parts
- Blanch batches sorted by size: Immerse one pound of vegetables in one gallon of boiling water. With the lid on, boil the vegetables for the time indicated on the chart below, then cool boiled vegetables by placing them in plenty of cold water for the same length of time as they were boiled.
- The blanching process stops the enzymes which would degrade the flavour, colour, and texture of vegetables while they are frozen. Do not under- or over-blanch.
- Drain the blanched vegetables of water, package them in meal-sized portions, label, and freeze.

Vegetable	Minutes required for blanching and cooling		
Asparagus	2 – small stalk	3 – medium stalk	4 – large stalk
Beans – snap or waxed	3		
Beans – Fava, Lima	2 – small	3 – medium	4 – large
Beets	Cook through		
Broccoli – flowerets	3		
Brussel Sprouts	3 – small heads	4 – medium heads	5 – large heads
Cabbage – shredded	1 ½		
Carrots	5 – small, whole	2 - sliced	
Cauliflower - flowerets	3		
Celery	3		
Corn	9 - medium ears, on the cob, add 4 more – whole kernel cut from the pre-blanching ear		
Eggplant	4		
Greens, Collard	3		
Kohlrabi	3 – whole	1 - cubed	
Mushrooms	5 - whole	3 ½ - quartered	3 - sliced
Peas	1 ½ to 3 – edible pod		1 ½ – shelled
Peppers	3 – halved	2 – strips or rings	
Pumpkin	Cook through		
Squash	Cook through		
Zucchini	3		
Turnips and Parsnips	2 - cubes		



Vegetables at the Wolfville Farmers' Market

● Peak ○ Available ◦ Low

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Arugula	◦			○	●	●	○	○	○	○	◦	◦
Asian Greens Tatsoi & Yukina Savoy					●	●				●	●	
Asparagus					●	●	◦					
Beans Yellow & Green						○	○	●	○	◦		
Purple							○	●	○			
Chinese long								●	○			
Fava/Broad							○	●	○			
Beet Greens				○	○	●	●	○	○			
Beets	◦	◦				●	●	●	●	○	○	◦
Bok Choy				○	●	●	○	○	○	●		
Broccoli						◦	○	●	●	●	◦	
Brussel Sprouts	○								○	●	●	○
Cabbage Chinese & Nappa	○	◦	◦					◦	●	●	○	○
Green & Red	○	○	○	◦	◦			○	●	●	○	○
Carrots	○	○	◦			◦	○	●	●	●	●	○
Callalo (Jamaican Spinach)							○	○	○			
Cauliflower						○	●	●	●	○		
Celery						○	●	●	●			
Celeriac	◦	◦	◦					◦	●	●	○	○
Collards							○	○	○	○	○	
Corn							◦	●	●	○		
Cucumbers						◦	○	●	●	○	◦	
Eggplant							◦	●	○			
Endive						○	●	○	○	◦		
Fennel						○	●	●	●	○	○	◦
Fiddleheads				◦	●	○						
Garlic Scapes						◦	●					
Bulbs	◦	◦					◦	○	●	○	○	○
Gourds										●	○	
Green				◦	○	○	●	●	●	●		
Kale	◦	◦	◦	◦	◦	◦	○	●	●	●	●	●
Herbs Basil							○	●	●	◦		
Cilantro						○	○	●	○	○		
Dill						○	○	●	○			
Dried	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Mint					○	○	●	●	○			
Parsley					○	○	●	●	○	○	○	
Kohlrabi	○	◦							●	●	○	○
Leeks	○	○					◦	○	○	●	●	○
Lettuce Head Lettuce						●	●	○	○	○		
Mesclun Salad Mix					○	○	○	●	○	○		
Onions	○	○	○	◦		○	○	○	●	●	●	○
Parsnips	●	○	◦						○	●	●	●
Peas						○	●	●	○			
Peppers Sweet							◦	○	●	○	◦	
Hot							◦	●	●	○	◦	
Potatoes	○	○	○	○	○	◦	○	○	○	●	●	○
Pumpkins									○	●	○	○
Radicchio							○	●	○	○		
Radish Red	◦	◦	◦	◦	◦	●	●	●	○	○	○	◦
Diakon	○	○	◦					●	●	●	○	○
Black Spanish	○	○	○						○	●	●	○
Shallots	○	○	◦	◦					●	●	○	○
Spinach	◦	◦	◦	●	●	○	○	○	●	●	○	○
Sprouts	○	○	○	○	○							
Spring Turnips				○	○	●	○	○	○	◦		
Squash	○	○	◦					◦	●	●	●	○
Sweet Potatoes									●	○		
Swiss Chard					○	●	●	●	●	●	○	◦
Tomatoes Hot House					○	○	●	○				
Field, Roma & Cherry								●	●	○		
Turnips	○	○	○						○	●		○
Zucchini						○	●	●	○			

Jan Feb Mar Apr May June July Aug Sept Oct Nov Dec