

Choosing Vegetables & Fruits

YOUR GUIDE

to selecting the most freshest, and most nutrition packed, produce at the farmers market or grocery store.

IN GENERAL CHOOSE FROM FOODS THAT:

- **ARE IN SEASON**
- **DO NOT HAVE WRINKLES OR SOFT SPOTS**
- **ARE BRIGHT IN COLOR**



APPLES Choose firm, shiny, smooth-skinned apples with intact stems.

APRICOTS Choose apricots that are plump, firm and uniformly colored.

ARTICHOKES Choose plump artichoke heads with tightly closed leaves, heavy for size. Pull back one leaf to check heart for black blemishes. During winter, white, blistered or bronze appearance does not affect quality.

ARUGULA Look for bright green leaves that are delicately crisp, and stems that are neither withered nor slimy.

ASPARAGUS Choose odorless asparagus stalks with dry, tight tips. Avoid limp or wilted stalks.

BEETS Choose beets with firm, smooth skins and non-wilted leaves if still attached. Smaller ones are more tender.

BELL PEPPERS Choose firm, brightly colored peppers with tight skin that are heavy for their size. Avoid dull, shriveled or pitted peppers.



BLACKBERRIES Choose blackberries that are shiny and not bruised or leaking.

BLUEBERRIES Choose plump, dry blueberries with dusty blue color and uniform in size.

BOK CHOY Choose firm bok choy stalks without brown spots and fresh leaves (not wilted).

BROCCOLI Choose odorless broccoli heads with tight, bluish-green florets.

**BRUSSELS
SPROUTS** Choose firm, compact, bright green brussels sprouts heads.
Buy on stalk when possible.

CABBAGE Choose beets with firm, smooth skins and non-wilted leaves if still attached. Smaller ones are more tender.

CARROTS Choose well-shaped, smooth, firm, crisp carrots with deep color and fresh, green tops. Avoid soft, wilted or split carrots.

CAULIFLOWER Choose firm, brightly colored peppers with tight skin that are heavy for their size. Avoid dull, shriveled or pitted peppers.

CELERIAC Select roots that have few ridges or the smoothest skin. This will make it easier for peeling and slicing.

CHARD Select chard with fresh green leaves; avoid those that are yellow or discolored.

CHERRIES Select firm, red cherries. Avoid soft, shriveled or blemished cherries.

CUCUMBER Choose firm, well shaped cucumbers with dark green color, heavy for size.



EGGPLANT Choose eggplants that are heavy for their size and without cracks or discolorations.

GARLIC Choose garlic that is plump, dry and firm.
Fresh garlic should be white to off-white. Often with purple streaks.

GREEN ONIONS Choose stalks with fresh, green tops and slightly white ends.

KALE Choose dark colored kale bunches with small to medium leaves.
Avoid brown or yellow leaves.

KOHLRABI Choose firm kohlrabi globes that are heavy for their size and firm, without bruises or cracks.

LETTUCE (HEAD) Choose closely bunched, fresh-looking leaves. Avoid brown, wilting edges.

LETTUCE (LEAF) Choose lettuce with crisp leaves. Avoid brown edges.

LEEKS Choose firm, crisp stalks with as much white and light green regions as possible. Avoid leeks with yellow or withered tops.

MELON Choose well shaped melons that are nearly spherical. Honeydew melons should have a waxy, not fuzzy surface and feel heavy for size.

MUSHROOMS Choose well shaped mushrooms with firm texture. Avoid spots and slime.

ONIONS Choose onions that are firm and dry with bright, smooth outer skins.

PARSNIPS Choose parsnips that are firm and dry without pits. Smaller ones may be more flavorful and tender.

PEACHES Choose peaches with firm, fuzzy skins that yield to gentle pressure when ripe. Avoid blemishes.



PEARS Choose firm pears, then check for ripeness by applying gentle pressure to the stem end of the pear with your thumb. When it yields to the pressure, it's ready to eat.

PEAS Choose firm, bright green, medium-sized pods with no signs of decay or wilting.

POTATOES All potato varieties should be clean, firm, smooth, dry and uniform in size.

PUMPKIN Select pumpkins that are firm and heavy for their size.

RADISHES Choose smooth, brightly colored, medium sized radishes. Attached tops should be green and fresh looking.

RASPBERRIES Choose dry, plump, firm raspberries. Avoid wet or moldy berries.

RHUBARB Choose flat stalks that are not curled or limp. Deep red stalks are sweeter and richer; tenderness is not related to size.

RUTABEGA Choose rutabagas that are heavy for their size and free of soft spots or cracks.

SHALLOTS Shallots should be firm and heavy and have dry, papery skins. Avoid any signs of moisture, green shoots, or dark spots.

SPINACH Choose fresh, crisp, green bunches with no evidence of insect damage.

STRAWBERRIES Choose shiny, firm strawberries with a bright red color. Caps should be fresh, green and intact. Avoid shriveled, mushy or leaky berries..

**SQUASH
(SUMMER)** For all squash varieties, choose glossy, small- to medium-sized squash, heavy for size.

**SQUASH
(WINTER)** Choose squash with a smooth, dry, dull rind that's free of cracks or soft spots. Choose squash that has a deep color and is heavy for its size.



SWEET POTATOES

Choose firm, small- to medium-sized potatoes with smooth skin. Avoid cracks, soft spots and blemishes.

TOMATILLOS

Look for dry, hard tomatillos with tightly fitting husks that are dry and free of mold.

TOMATOES (CHERRY OR GRAPE)

Choose plump tomatoes with smooth skins that are free from bruises, cracks, or blemishes.

TOMATOES

Choose tomatoes with bright, shiny skins and firm flesh.

WATERMELON

Choose symmetrical watermelons with dried stems and yellowish undersides, heavy for size.

YAMS

Choose yams that are firm and are without soft spots or bruises.