

Discover Wisconsin Farmers' Markets

a guided tour for seniors



B4180-03



Discover Wisconsin Farmers' Markets!

Welcome!

Thank you for joining us on this guided tour around your local farmers' market. Our tour—especially designed for seniors—will help you feel more confident when you:

- Shop at a farmers' market.
- Talk to vendors.
- Use food assistance benefits at the market.
- Select healthy food at a fair price that you and your family will enjoy.

Shopping at your local farmers' market is a great way to find fresh, healthy food and get to know the people who produce it. Farmers' markets thrive on seasonal fruit and vegetables. When fresh produce is in season, it is often at its lowest price.

Buying your groceries at the farmers' market is also a great way to support your community by keeping your money local. It is also an opportunity to catch up with friends and neighbors. You can find other farmers' markets in your area at: www.wifarmersmarkets.org



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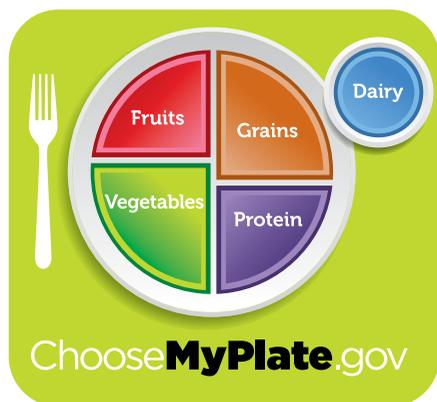




Why Shop at Farmers' Markets?

1. Farmers' markets are often in your neighborhood.
2. SNAP is accepted at many farmers' markets.

In Wisconsin, SNAP is called FoodShare. Use your QUEST (EBT) Card to purchase food at the market. WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, or incentive programs may be offered too. Look for an information table at the market.



3. Farmers' markets are nice places to be active or to gather with friends.

Make a date with a friend to walk the farmers' market. Along with lots of healthy foods to buy, there is often music and free education at the market.

ASK A VENDOR:

What is your favorite way to prepare this?

4. Freshly picked food is healthy.

It is at its peak in flavor and nutrition. Visit various booths and look for foods from all of the MyPlate food groups.

5. Kids and grandkids love farmers' markets.

They are full of colors, smells, and tastes! Teach kids where food comes from. Encourage them to try something new.

6. Farmers' markets help communities.

Shopping at a farmers' market supports your local farmers and keeps the money you spend close to where you live.

It is easy to create a healthy plate.





At the Market

Market Tips

1. Wear comfortable walking shoes. Watch out for bumpy ground beneath your feet.
2. Go when the market is opening to avoid crowds and have more choices.
3. Bring a market bag or basket. Make sure it has a sturdy handle.
4. Walk around the market. Compare prices, but do not haggle.
5. Expect a little dirt. Most food comes fresh from the field.
6. Get to know your farmers by asking questions about their products.
7. Meet at the market. Ask a few friends to join you and walk the market together for exercise.

Talk to Farmers and Vendors

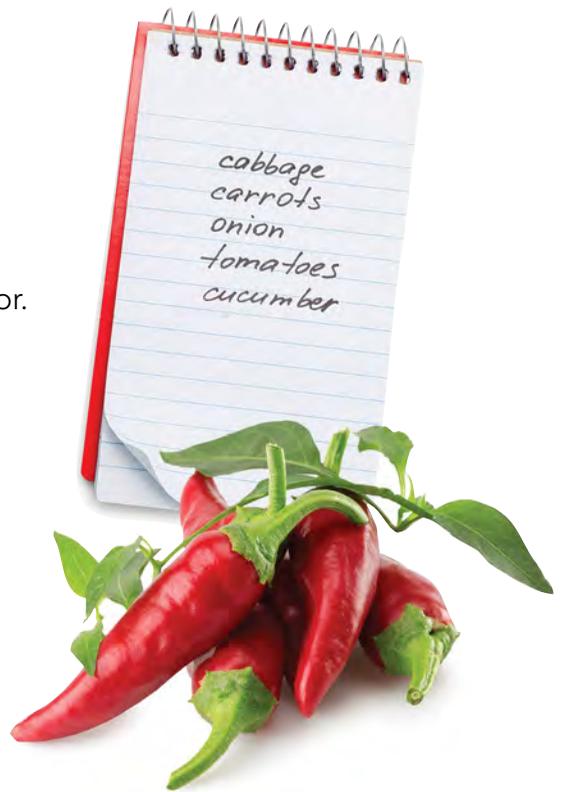
Ask:

1. What does this food taste like?
2. Do I eat it cooked or raw?
3. How do I store it? How long does it last?
4. How do I pick one that is ripe?



To Save Money

1. Make a note of what foods you have at home. Plan your meals before you shop. Be sure to include fruits and vegetables!
2. Come with a shopping list and a calculator. Many cell phones have calculators.
3. Ask farmers what is in season and at the best price.
4. Buy only what you will eat in a few days unless you have plans to preserve it.
5. Purchase slightly bruised fruits or veggies and day-old bread if they are lower in price and you have plans to use them right away.



Why Fresh and in Season?

Some of the benefits of eating fresh food that is in season are:

- **More taste!** Fresh food usually tastes great when it is ripe.
- **More nutrients!** As soon as fruit and vegetables are picked they start to lose their nutrients. Fresh produce at the farmers' market has been grown locally and that can mean a shorter trip to reach your table and more nutrients.
- **Save money!** A shorter trip from the farm to the market also means less travel costs. The vendor can pass the savings on to you.

FOOD SAFETY TIP:

When shopping, keep fresh produce separate from raw meat, poultry, eggs, seafood, or dairy foods. If you buy cut fresh fruits and vegetables, make sure they have been kept cold and be sure to refrigerate within 2 hours of purchasing.

Seasonal Availability of Wisconsin Vegetables

ZONE 3, NORTHERN WI **ZONE 4, CENTRAL WI** **ZONE 5, SOUTHERN WI**

Visit <https://hort.extension.wisc.edu/maps/> to determine the zone where you live. The bars represent average dates of harvest and availability which can vary with such factors as weather conditions, farm location, varieties grown, and season extension.

Vegetable	Zone 3 (Northern WI)		Zone 4 (Central WI)		Zone 5 (Southern WI)			
	Start	End	Start	End	Start	End		
GREEN LEAFY	 ARUGULA			JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	
			MAY	JUN		AUG	SEP	
		APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT
	 BROCCOLI				JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT
					JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT
				JUN	JUL		SEP	OCT
	 CHINESE CABBAGE					AUG	SEP	
						AUG	SEP	OCT
						AUG	SEP	OCT
	 COLLARD GREENS				JUL	AUG	SEP	
			JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	
		MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	
 KALE				JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	
			JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	
		MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	
 LETTUCE non-iceberg			JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP		
		MAY	JUN		AUG	SEP		
		MAY	JUN		AUG	SEP	OCT	
 MUSTARD GREENS				JUL	AUG	SEP		
			JUN		AUG	SEP	OCT	
		MAY	JUN			SEP	OCT	
 SPINACH				JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	
			JUN	JUL		SEP	OCT	
		MAY	JUN			SEP	OCT	
 CARROTS				JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	
				JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	
		MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	
 RED CHILI PEPPERS					AUG	SEP		
					AUG	SEP		
					AUG	SEP		
 RED/ORANGE PEPPERS					AUG	SEP		
					AUG	SEP		
					AUG	SEP		
 SWEET POTATOES /YAMS						SEP		
					AUG	SEP		
						SEP	OCT	
 TOMATOES				JUL	AUG	SEP		
				JUL	AUG	SEP		
				JUL	AUG	SEP		
 WINTER SQUASH acorn, butternut						SEP	OCT	
						SEP	OCT	
					AUG	SEP	OCT	

Vegetables are categorized by USDA vegetable subgroups.

* Beans, peas, and legumes category

						JUL	AUG	SEP		
*		DRIED BEANS AND PEAS				JUL	AUG	SEP		
						JUL	AUG	SEP		
								AUG	SEP	OCT
								AUG	SEP	
STARCHY		SWEET CORN				JUL	AUG	SEP		
						JUL	AUG	SEP		
						JUL	AUG	SEP		
						JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	
STARCHY		GREEN PEAS			JUN	JUL		SEP	OCT	
				MAY	JUN			SEP	OCT	
						JUL	AUG	SEP		
						JUL	AUG	SEP		
STARCHY		POTATOES				JUL	AUG	SEP		
						JUL	AUG	SEP		
					JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	
						JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	
OTHER		ASPARAGUS		MAY	JUN	JUL				
				MAY	JUN					
			APR	MAY						
OTHER		BEANS green and yellow				JUL	AUG	SEP		
						JUL	AUG	SEP		
						JUL	AUG	SEP		
						JUL	AUG	SEP		
OTHER		BEETS			JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP		
					JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	
							AUG	SEP	OCT	
							AUG	SEP	OCT	
OTHER		BRUSSEL SPROUTS					AUG	SEP	OCT	
							AUG	SEP	OCT	
								SEP	OCT	
								SEP	OCT	
OTHER		CABBAGE green and red					AUG	SEP	OCT	
							AUG	SEP	OCT	
					JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	
							AUG	SEP	OCT	
OTHER		CAULIFLOWER					AUG	SEP	OCT	
							AUG	SEP	OCT	
					JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT		
							AUG	SEP		
OTHER		CUCUMBERS & PICKLES					AUG	SEP		
							AUG	SEP		
					JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP		
							AUG	SEP		
OTHER		ONIONS				JUL	AUG	SEP		
						JUL	AUG	SEP		
						JUL	AUG	SEP		
							AUG	SEP		
OTHER		PEPPERS green, purple and yellow					AUG			
							AUG	SEP		
					JUL	AUG	SEP			
OTHER		RADISHES		MAY	JUN					
				MAY	JUN					
				MAY	JUN			SEP	OCT	
OTHER		ZUCCHINI SQUASH				JUL	AUG	SEP		
						JUL	AUG	SEP		
					JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP		



Paying at the Market

At the market, there may be several different ways to use food assistance benefits to pay for fruits and vegetables. Bring your EBT Card, WIC or Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) checks and stop by the information table to learn how to use your benefits. Not all markets participate in all programs.

Food Assistance Programs

- **SNAP - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.**
Also known as EBT (Electronic Benefits Transfer) or QUEST Card.
In Wisconsin, SNAP is called FoodShare.
- **WIC FMNP - Farmers' Market Nutrition Program.**
The WIC FMNP provides a one-time food benefit per growing season to WIC families to purchase locally grown fresh fruits, vegetables, and herbs at farmers' markets.
- **Senior FMNP - Farmers' Market Nutrition Program.**
Senior FMNP offers low-income older citizens an opportunity to purchase fresh, locally grown fruits, vegetables, and herbs from authorized farmers.
- **Incentive Programs.**
Some markets offer incentive programs that provide SNAP recipients with more money to buy food. Incentive programs may be known by terms like double value coupon program (DVCP), matching, double dollar, Fresh Checks, etc. Check with your local market to see if they offer any incentives.

Using SNAP benefits at the market

Market Currency (tokens, paper)

At most markets that accept SNAP, if you are using a QUEST (EBT) Card you will receive tokens or paper currency to spend at the market. Visit the market's information table to learn more. If the market uses a token system, you will swipe your QUEST (EBT) Card and market staff will give you tokens to spend at the market. The amount printed on the tokens is the amount you may spend. At some markets, all vendors accept tokens, otherwise use your tokens at any market booth that displays a sign stating "EBT Tokens Accepted Here."

Note: If an item you are buying costs less than the value of the token, the vendor is not allowed to provide change. Instead, he or she may change the amount of produce you receive to match the value of your token. On the other hand, if the items cost more, you will need to pay the balance with cash.

Example: If you buy something that costs \$2.75, you will need to give the vendor two \$1 tokens plus .75 cents in cash.

What to do with leftover tokens

You may keep unused tokens and use them next time you shop at the farmers' market. Tokens can only be redeemed at the market where they are purchased. Unused tokens may also be exchanged at the information table for a refund back onto your EBT Card.



How to use your QUEST (EBT) Card at the Market



1

Info booth

Visit the farmers' market information table.



2

Obtain tokens

Swipe your QUEST (EBT) Card to obtain tokens or paper currency to spend at the market.





3

Vendor who accepts EBT

Bring your tokens or paper currency to a vendor who accepts EBT.



4

Buy fresh

Use your tokens to buy fresh fruits and vegetables!



Using WIC and Senior FMNP benefits at the market

Checks can be redeemed from June through October at any participating farmers' market or farm/roadside stand. WIC and Senior FMNP participants receive a listing of farmers' markets and farm/roadside stands where they can shop. The listing is provided when checks are received. Checks can be presented to farmers posting a sign that identifies them as authorized to accept WIC or Senior FMNP benefits. You can redeem the full dollar amount of the check or pay the balance with cash if the item costs more. Vendors are not allowed to provide change if the item costs less than the check.

What Can I Buy?

SNAP

Allowed:

SNAP-eligible food items and food producing plants and seeds. This includes fruits and vegetables, meat, eggs, poultry, bread, cheese, and pasteurized milk.

Not allowed:

Food that is meant to be eaten as soon as it is purchased.

Example: food you would get at a store or restaurant that is ready to eat, such as hot tamales or fresh, unwrapped baked goods.



WIC AND SENIOR FMNP

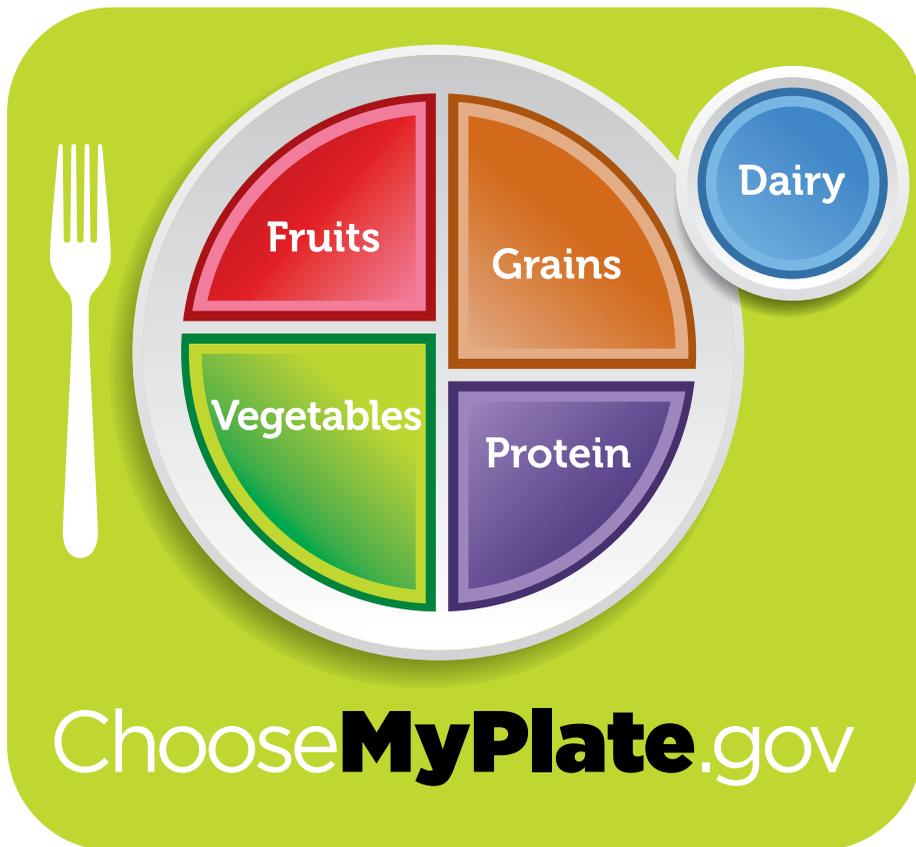
Allowed:

Locally grown, fresh, unprocessed fruits, vegetables, and fresh cut herbs for human consumption. Examples: apples, lettuce, green beans, berries, celery, peppers, tomatoes, and herbs.

Not allowed:

Non-produce items such as cheese, meat, baked goods, cider, or nuts.





A Healthy Way to Eat: Fill half your plate with fruits and veggies.

MyPlate Tips for Older Adults

- Choose foods rich in fiber such as fruits, vegetables, and whole grains to help keep you regular.
- Drink plenty water and other fluids to stay hydrated.
- Limit sweets to decrease consumption of empty calories and manage your weight.
- Get healthy oils from fish, nuts, and liquid oils such as canola, olive, corn, or soybean oils.
- Choose and prepare foods with little or no salt (sodium).
- Talk to your doctor about any vitamins or supplements you take. They might interact with your medications.

Eat right. Have fun.

Vary your veggies

Try something new! Look for a variety of colors when at the farmers' market. You will get different nutrients and try new flavors.

Focus on fruits.

Fruit found at farmers' markets can be extra sweet because it is picked at its peak. Whole fruit is a better choice than juice because it is higher in fiber.

Make at least half your grains whole grains.

There are many different types of whole grains. They have more nutrients and fiber than refined grains and can be used to make bread, pasta, and cereal. Whole-grain foods, together with plenty of water, will help keep you from becoming constipated. When you can, choose whole grains that are fortified with Vitamin B12, which older adults may have trouble absorbing.

Vary your protein routine.

Talk to farmers about how to prepare different cuts of meat. Think about trying other protein foods that you can often buy at the farmers' market such as beans, peas, eggs, nuts, and seeds.

Enjoy local dairy products.

You can often buy milk, yogurt, and cheese at the farmers' market. Look for fat-free or low-fat dairy foods and milk. Older adults should not purchase milk that is not pasteurized because they have a greater chance of getting sick from any bacteria that might be present.

ASK A VENDOR:

How do I store this fruit?
Can I freeze it?





Storing and Keeping Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

At home, before cooking or eating

- Wash hands with soap and warm water for 20 seconds before and after handling produce.
- Wash all surfaces and utensils (cutting boards, counter tops, knives, etc.) with hot water and soap before and after preparing fruits and vegetables to avoid cross-contamination.
- Rinse all fresh fruits and vegetables with cool tap water. Peel or scrub firm-skinned produce with a clean vegetable brush, even those with skins and rinds that are not eaten.
- Rub or scrub firm-skinned fruits and vegetables with a clean vegetable brush while rinsing under running tap water.
- Never use dish soap or bleach to wash fruits and vegetables.
- Store fresh fruits and vegetables separate from eggs, raw meat, poultry, or seafood in the refrigerator.



Cook

- Remove and throw away or compost bruised or damaged portions of fruits and vegetables before cooking or eating raw.
- Throw away or compost any fruit or vegetable that will not be thoroughly cooked if it has touched raw meat, poultry, or seafood.

Chill

- Refrigerate cut, peeled, or cooked fruits and vegetables within 2 hours. The sooner the better.

Throw Away or Compost

- Throw away or compost prepared fruits and vegetables that have not been kept cold for the past 2 hours.

— Adapted from: Partnership for Food Safety Education. www.fightbac.org



Freezing Vegetables

Freezing Vegetables

Freezing is one of the easiest ways to preserve vegetables. It is smart to buy vegetables when they are in season and the cost is low. When you find a good buy, follow these tips for freezing so you can enjoy healthy vegetables all year long.

Before Freezing

- Select high-quality fresh, tender vegetables. Freezing cannot improve quality.
- If vegetables cannot be frozen immediately, refrigerate them.
- Thoroughly wash and drain vegetables. Scrub solid vegetables with a vegetable brush or cloth under running water. Rinse small quantities at one time using several changes of cold water. Do not let vegetables soak in the water.

Blanching

Most vegetables need to be blanched or partially cooked before they are frozen. Blanching slows ripening, kills bacteria, and improves quality, color, and texture. It is best to boil or steam vegetables to blanch them. Different vegetables require different blanching times. See this resource for specific recommendations for water and steam blanching:
<http://nchfp.uga.edu/how/freeze/blanching.html>.

- **Water blanching** – Use 1 gallon of water per pound of prepared vegetables. Put the vegetables in a blanching basket or metal strainer and lower into a large pot of rapidly boiling water. Cover. Wait for water to return to boiling. Begin timing when water returns to boiling. **Note:** if you do not have a basket, you can add the prepared vegetables directly to the water and drain after boiling.
- **Steam blanching** – To steam, use a pot with a tight lid and a basket that holds the food at least 3 inches above the bottom of the pot. Put 1 to 2 inches of water in the pot and bring it to boiling. Place vegetables in the basket in a single layer, put the basket in the pot, cover and keep on high heat.

Cooling

As soon as the water or steam blanching is complete, place vegetables in ice-cold water. Change water often or use cold running water or lots of water with ice in it. Cool about 2 minutes or until vegetables are cold. Drain vegetables very well and pat them dry with a paper towel or a dish towel.

- Pack the vegetables into containers or freezer bags. Remove as much air as possible from bags. To avoid overfilling containers, leave about ½ inch of space at the top. Label and date the containers and bags. Frozen vegetables will last up to a year in a stand-alone freezer that is not opened and closed a lot, and up to 6 months in a frequently opened refrigerator-freezer.

Always follow a recipe for exact blanching, cooling, packing, and freezing instructions.

A few vegetables – such as raw tomatoes, fresh herbs, green onions, and peppers do not require blanching before freezing.





Freezing Fruits

Freezing Fruits

Freezing fruit is an easy way to save the great flavors of ripe, in season fruit to enjoy later in the year.

Before Freezing

- Select fresh, firm-ripe fruits. Freezing cannot improve quality. Scrub solid fruits with a brush or cloth while rinsing. Some fruits, such as blueberries and raspberries, can be dry-packed (without washing). Others require more preparation. Always consult a recipe when freezing or preserving fruit.

Fruit Tips – Each Fruit is Different

- Apples and pears need to be cored, peeled, and quartered or sliced. Toss them with a bit of lemon juice or cider vinegar to keep them from browning.
- Apricots should be halved and pitted. Large ones can be quartered.
- Blackberries, blueberries, and raspberries can be left whole.
- Cherries will be easier to use later if you remove the pits before freezing.
- Melons can be cut into cubes or slices or scooped into bite-sized balls.
- Peaches, plums, and nectarines should be pitted and peeled and may be sliced or cut into wedges.
- Strawberries need to be hulled and cut into halves or quarters.

Freeze the Fruit

Tray pack — Lay the prepared fruit in a single layer on a large baking sheet or pan. Make sure it fits flat in your freezer first. You can line the pan with parchment paper, waxed paper or foil, if you like. Make sure the fruit is not crowded and the pieces are touching each other as little as possible.

Put the baking sheet with fruit on it in the freezer. Freeze until fruit is solid. This usually takes a few hours, or you can leave the fruit uncovered in the freezer for up to 12 hours.

Transfer Fruit for Frozen Storage

Once the fruit is frozen, transfer it to a food storage container. Plastic freezer bags work well. Remove as much of the air as possible. You can press it out or use a straw or a vacuum sealer to do this. Label and date the bag and store it in the coldest part of your freezer.

Other kinds of packages work well for freezing, too. Proper packaging is important to protect the flavor, color, moisture, and nutritional value of frozen foods. Good freezer packages are:

- Moisture- and air-resistant.
- Strong and leakproof.
- Resistant to oil and grease.
- Easy to seal and write on.

ASK A VENDOR:

Which of these are best for freezing?
Which are best for canning?

Frozen fruit will last up to a year in a stand-alone freezer that is not opened and closed a lot, and up to 6 months in a frequently opened refrigerator-freezer.

Canning Fruits and Vegetables

The two main methods for canning fruits and vegetables are described below.

- 1. Pressure canning:** Pressure canning is the only method recommended for safely canning low-acid foods such as vegetables, meats, and fish. Low-acid foods must be canned this way to destroy the bacterial spores naturally present in these foods. Processing under pressure in the canner drives air out of the jars, creating a vacuum and sealing the food in the jars, preventing any new microorganisms (“germs”) from entering and spoiling the food.
- 2. Water bath canning:** Water bath canning is used to process high-acid foods such as fruits, tomatoes, pickled products, jams, and jellies. A water bath canner is a deep kettle that has a cover and a rack to hold jars. You can also use a covered stockpot that is deep enough to allow water to be 1 to 2 inches over the tops of the jars with room for a rolling boil. Like pressure canning, water bath canning drives air out of the jars, creating a vacuum so that the jars seal when they are removed from the canner and cooled.

Sources: Adapted from: Elizabeth Andress, Ph.D. 2014. “So Easy to Preserve” (6th edition). Cooperative Extension, University of Georgia. Bulletin 989, United States Department of Agriculture. Complete Guide to Home Canning

For more information on safely freezing or canning fresh fruits and vegetables, visit the National Center for Food Preservation: <http://nchfp.uga.edu>.

A 1-pound bag of fresh spinach or salad greens contains about 6 cups of greens.

How Much Do I Need?

Sometimes when produce is sold by weight, it is hard to figure out how much you need if you are following a recipe. This chart may be helpful. Try to buy only as much as you need or will use.

Fruit or Vegetable	Common Amounts	Pounds	Equals
Apples	3-4 medium size apples	1 pound	2 ½ cups chopped
Asparagus	16-20 spears	1 pound	3 cups trimmed
Berries	1 pint	¾ pound	2-3 cups
Beets, without tops	10 beets	1 pound	2 cups cooked
Broccoli	1 bunch	¾ pound	3 cups chopped florets
Cabbage	1 head	1¼ - 1½ pounds	About 6 cups shredded
Carrots	5-7 medium carrots	1 pound	2 ½ cups sliced
Corn	3-4 ears	1 pound	1 cup kernels
Cucumbers	2 medium	1 pound	2-3 cups peeled & chopped
Cauliflower	1 head	2-3 pounds	3 cups chopped
Green beans	3 large handfuls	1 pound	2 ½ cups cooked
Fresh greens	1 average head	about 1 pound	6 cups torn
Melon	1 melon	4 pounds	4 cups diced
Peaches	4 medium	1 pound	2 cups peeled and sliced
Peppers	1 large pepper	½ pound	1 cup chopped
Onion	1 medium	4-5 oz.	1/2-2/3 cup chopped
Potatoes	3 medium	1 pound	2 ¼ cups peeled & diced
Strawberries	24 large	1 pint	1 ¾ cups sliced
Watermelon	1 watermelon (avg. wt. 5-30 pounds)	1 pound	1 cup cubed
Winter squash	1 winter squash (avg. wt. 2-5 pounds)	1 pound	1 cup cooked and mashed



1 quart = 2 pints



1 bushel = 4 pecks



1 peck = 8 quarts



1 pint = 2 cups

Other Common Market Measurements

Buying for One or Two

Sometimes it is hard to figure out how much to buy if you are cooking for one or two. Here are some tips:

If you want to make...	Fruit or Vegetable	How Much Do You Need?
A salad	mixed greens, lettuce, baby kale, fresh spinach	1-2 cups per person for a side dish, 2-3 cups for a main dish salad
Fruit muffins (one batch of 12)	berries, shredded carrots, apples, or zucchini	1-1 ½ cups
Mashed potatoes	white potatoes, colored potatoes, sweet potatoes	2 medium-to-large white potatoes for four servings
Fruit crisp	berries, rhubarb, apple	1 cup of berries or cut fruit per person
Vegetable side dish (such as steamed, stir fried, or roasted veggies)	fresh broccoli, cauliflower, or carrots	1 cup per person
Vegetables added to a main dish, such as pasta or rice	colored peppers, onion, celery	½ to 1 cup cut veggies per person
Fruit smoothie for one	berries, cut-up fruit	About 1 cup of cut fruit per smoothie; about 1/3-1/2 pint of berries; or half of a large banana



Shopping and Cooking for One

Shopping

Shopping and preparing healthy meals can be hard when you are cooking for one. Shopping at the farmers' market is a smart idea for older adults. At farmers' markets you can buy fruits and vegetables in small amounts, something you can not always do in large stores.

Money- and Time-saving Tips

- 1. Plan ahead.** Make a (flexible) list that includes foods that are in season and on sale. Walk around the market and look for the best deals. Be prepared to change your list if something costs more than you want to spend.
- 2. Browse before you buy.** When you arrive at the market, walk around. See what is available and at what prices.
- 3. Do not overbuy.** If you buy more than you can eat or use, your waste will turn good buys into not-so-good buys.
- 4. Buy only what you can safely store.** Know exactly what you can fit in your refrigerator or freezer before you go shopping.
- 5. Buy fruits and vegetables that are seconds.** Vegetables that are a little wilted or past their prime may cost less. Add them to soups or stocks. Fruit that is a little overripe can be added to quick bread or muffin batter, blended into a fruit smoothie, or stirred into hot oatmeal.

Cooking

Make a plan for how you will eat what you buy:

- **Eat more perishable foods first, such as berries and leafy greens.** Save produce such as carrots and potatoes for meals later in the week.
- **Make a meal with veggies and eggs.** Eggs are an excellent source of protein and other nutrients. Toss a handful of fresh greens into scrambled eggs, make a quick omelet with leftover veggies, or make an egg sandwich and top it with a slice of tomato and onion.
- **Be creative.** For instance, the spinach in one bag of fresh spinach can be made into a spinach salad, sautéed with onion and garlic for a side dish, chopped and mixed into meatloaf, added to canned soup or pasta sauce, or blended with fruit in a smoothie.
- **Make desserts in mugs.** Make single-serving desserts in mugs to keep your portion sizes in check.
- **Cook in the microwave, toaster oven, or slow cooker.** These appliances cost less to run than a full-sized oven. You can also make a quick stir fry on the stove top, which will not use much energy.
- **After cooking, divide leftovers into small servings.** Label and date, and freeze to use within a few months.





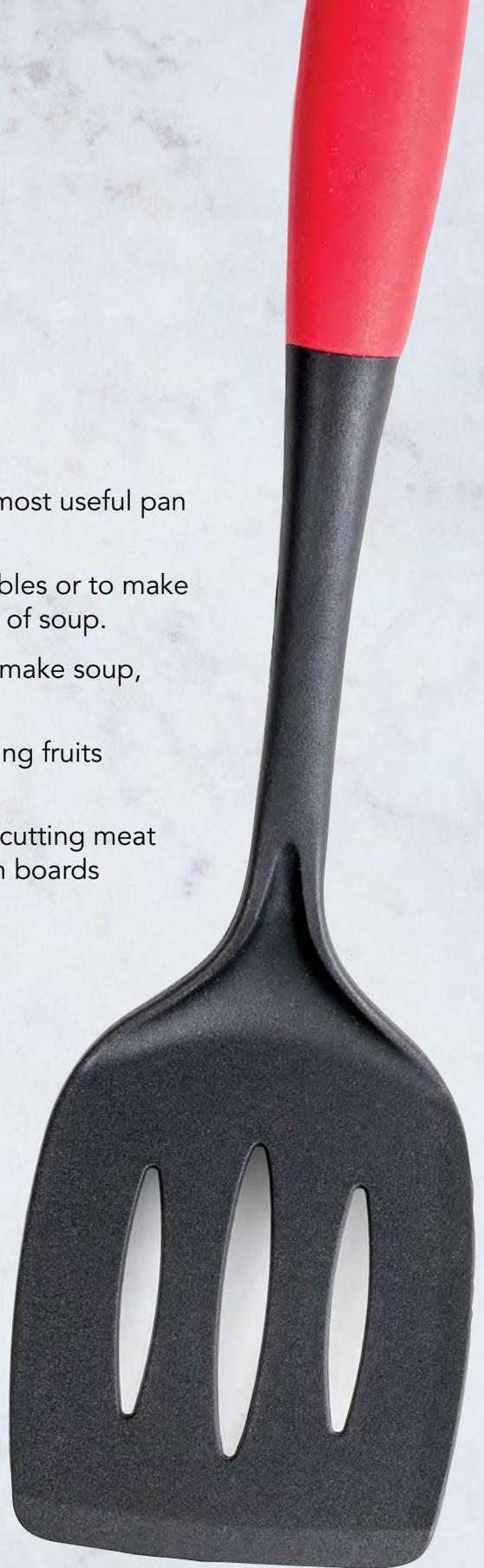
Kitchen Equipment – The Basics

You do not need to have a lot of pots, pans, or fancy kitchen gadgets to cook healthy food from the farmers' market. Here are some things that will make cooking easy. Check the ones you already have.



- ❑ Large non-stick skillet — probably the most useful pan in your kitchen.
- ❑ 3-quart saucepan — use to boil vegetables or to make rice, gravies, sauces, and small batches of soup.
- ❑ 8-quart pot — use to boil noodles and make soup, stew, or chili.
- ❑ Colander — good for washing and rinsing fruits and vegetables.
- ❑ Two cutting boards: Use one board for cutting meat and the other for produce. Always wash boards thoroughly between uses.
- ❑ Dry and liquid measuring cups.
- ❑ Heat-resistant spatula.
- ❑ Can opener.
- ❑ Fruit and vegetable scrub brush.
- ❑ Paring knife or vegetable peeler.
- ❑ Mixing bowl(s).
- ❑ Utility knife.
- ❑ Slow cooker.*
- ❑ Toaster oven.*

** Although not essential, they are handy to have.*



Nutrition for Older Adults

Add More Fruits and Vegetables to Your Diet

Most older adults need to eat at least 1½ cups of fruit and 2 cups of vegetables every day. Here are some ways to eat more of them:

- Put berries or diced peaches on oatmeal or hot cereal.
- Make homemade applesauce.
- Try a different kind of tender lettuce on your sandwich.
- Roast squash, carrots, turnips, or beets in the oven with a little olive oil and garlic powder.
- Add extra veggies to canned soup or jarred pasta sauce.
- Add steamed broccoli or cauliflower to macaroni and cheese or a pasta dish.
- Add leftover chopped veggies to pizza or an omelet.
- Eat hummus with tomatoes or zucchini for a snack.
- Make a fruit smoothie with ripe fruit, yogurt, and milk.

Cutting Back on Salt

The body needs sodium, but too much can make blood pressure go up. **Most people eat more salt than they need.**

If you are 51 or older, you should limit the sodium you consume to less than 2300 mg per day. That includes all the sodium in your food and drink, not just the salt you add at the table. Try to avoid adding salt—or add just a pinch—when you cook.

Spices, herbs, vinegar, and lemon juice can add flavor to your food without adding salt. **Try these no-salt flavor combinations to season vegetables:**

- Lemon pepper — black pepper, lemon, garlic.
- Southwest — chili powder, onion powder, garlic powder, cumin.
- Italian — basil, oregano, marjoram.
- Fresh basil and garlic.
- Fresh cilantro and lime.
- Rosemary, sage, lemon.
- Garlic, vinegar, pepper.

Fruits and vegetables are naturally low in sodium.



Adding More Fiber

Lots of fiber can be found at the farmers' market! Most older adults need 21 to 30 grams of fiber per day.

Fiber is found in plant foods. Eating more fiber may prevent digestive problems such as constipation. It may also help lower cholesterol and blood sugar.

Start adding fiber slowly to your diet. Look for these high-fiber foods at the farmers' market:

- Fruits and vegetables. Leave the skins on if possible.
- Dry beans, peas, and lentils.
- Whole fruits instead of fruit juice.
- Whole-grain breads and cereals.
- Nuts and seeds.

Drink plenty of liquids to help fiber move through your intestines.

Dental Problems

Sometimes dental problems — such as loose or missing teeth or a sore mouth — make it hard to eat fruits and vegetables. Try these suggestions:

1. Eat fruits when they are ripe.
2. Choose raw vegetables and fruits that are naturally soft, such as tomatoes, summer squash, greens, berries, bananas, ripe peaches, and melon.
3. Peel vegetables and fruits if the peels are too tough to chew.
4. Chop vegetables such as broccoli and cauliflower into small pieces.
5. Steam or cook fresh vegetables and fruits to make them easier to chew.





Mealtime Tips

Fill half your plate with fruits and vegetables. It is easy when you add them to every meal. Try these tips to add more market-fresh fruits and vegetables to meals and snacks:

1. Add tomato and cucumber slices to grilled cheese sandwiches.
2. Add chopped apple or fresh berries to pancake and muffin batter.
3. Add fresh spinach leaves to homemade or canned soup just before it is finished heating.
4. Have a salad for lunch or dinner. Top it with fish, egg, beans, or grilled chicken.
5. Stir extra ripe fruit into oatmeal or other hot cereal.
6. Add sliced tomatoes, onions, mushrooms, spinach, and bell peppers to pizza and omelets.
7. Mash some cooked cauliflower or rutabaga in with your mashed potatoes.
8. Flavor dishes with fresh herbs instead of salt.
9. Make a fruit crisp for one.
10. Roast squash, beets, or parsnips with a little olive oil and fresh garlic.
11. Stir chopped fruit into cottage cheese or yogurt.
12. Make a batch of beans in the slow cooker. Freeze the leftovers in individual plastic bags for easy single servings.
13. Add fresh steamed broccoli to macaroni and cheese.
14. Snack on your favorite fresh vegetable with hummus.



Little Ones in the Kitchen

Children like to eat what they help choose, prepare, or cook. Try these ideas to involve children in the kitchen:

- 1. Let children be produce pickers.** At the market, let them help choose fruits and vegetables. Point out various kinds of fruits and vegetables. Discuss your favorites. Talk about the colors and textures. Let them pick out something new to try.
- 2. Let children help cook.** Even very young children can help in the kitchen. They can wash berries, tear lettuce, remove the silk from corn, scrub potatoes with a brush, and more. If you let children help, they are more likely to eat what you prepare.
- 3. Eat together.** Make mealtime fun and relaxed. Turn off TVs and cell phones and talk during mealtime. Try new fruits and vegetables together.
- 4. Be a healthy role model.** Your grandchildren learn from watching you. Eat fruits and vegetables and they will, too.
- 5. Surround children with healthy choices.** If you give a child the option between an apple or a candy bar, most will choose a candy bar. But if you give children a choice between an apple and a peach, they will choose an apple or a peach. Both are great options!



Eat Your Greens!

Bright and beautiful, fresh greens are healthy, taste great, and are easy to use. If you have never tried more than iceberg lettuce, branch out!

Arugula. Mix a little arugula into your favorite salad greens, add a few leaves to homemade pizza, or sauté with other greens. Arugula has a strong peppery taste that many people find delicious.



arugula

Chard. Add chard to stir fries, along with kale, bok choy, and cabbage. Sauté the chard stalks first and add the tender leaves last.



chard

Collards. Try noodles and greens. Add chopped fresh collard greens to cooking water when pasta is about 5 minutes from being done. Drain and season with a small amount of sesame oil, sesame seeds, and a pinch salt.



collards



leaf lettuce

Romaine and leaf lettuce.

Use these large, flat-leaf greens as you would a tortilla. Lay the dry leaves flat and roll up your favorite sandwich ingredients inside.



Look at the leaves! Do you see kale or chard at the market?

Kale. Make kale chips. Wash leaves and remove thick ribs. Tear into pieces and toss with a little olive oil. Sprinkle on a pinch of salt. Lay leaves on a baking sheet (do not overlap) and bake at 325°F until crispy, about 20-30 minutes, turning over once.



kale

Mixed greens. Stuff tender mixed greens into a pita with cheese, lean turkey, or hard-boiled egg. Top with your favorite salad dressing.



mixed greens

Napa cabbage. Napa cabbage is mild and delicate in flavor. Use it in your favorite slaw recipe instead of red or green cabbage.

Spinach. Combine a few handfuls of spinach with fresh fruit, almond or soy milk, and yogurt for a super green smoothie.



spinach



napa cabbage

ASK A VENDOR:

What do these greens taste like?
Do I cook them or eat them raw?

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