

# Asparagus





# Asparagus

## SHOPPER'S TIPS

- Look for firm, bright green stalks with tightly closed tips.
- Avoid limp asparagus stalks or stalks with open tips.

## FUN FACTS!

- Asparagus comes in green, white, and purple varieties.
- When temperatures reach 90°F, an asparagus can grow seven inches in one day.

## WHAT IS IN IT FOR YOU?

One cup of asparagus (about six medium- to large-sized spears) is:

- An excellent source of vitamin A and vitamin K.
- A source of vitamin C, iron, fiber, folate, riboflavin, and thiamin.

## SERVING IDEAS

- Cook asparagus in a small amount of boiling water until tender.
- Thread wooden skewers through whole spears side by side to make an asparagus "raft" that can be easily flipped on the grill.

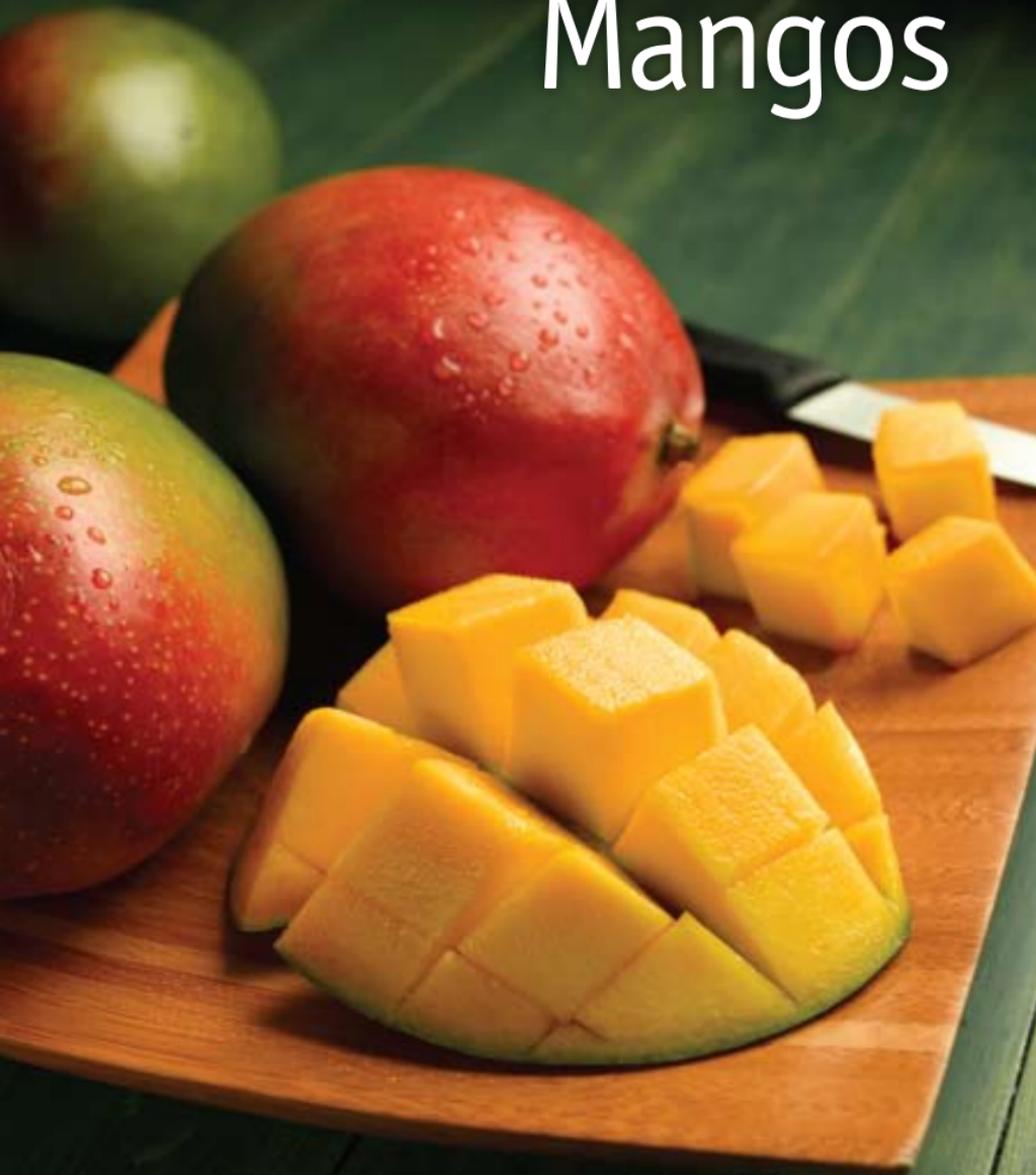
## PEAK SEASON

California grown varieties, available from mid-winter to spring, may be fresher and cost less than varieties shipped from other regions.

## STORAGE

Wrap the bottoms of the stalks in a damp paper towel and place in a plastic bag. Store asparagus in the refrigerator for up to three days, and make sure the tips stay dry.

# Mangos





# Mangos

## SHOPPER'S TIPS

- Look for firm, plump mangos that have a sweet smell and give slightly to gentle pressure.
- Avoid mangos with bruised or broken skin.

## FUN FACTS!

- Mangos come in various sizes and colors including red, orange, yellow, and green.
- Mangos came from Southeast Asia and India over 4,000 years ago.

## WHAT IS IN IT FOR YOU?

One mango is:

- An excellent source of vitamin C and vitamin A.
- A source of fiber, vitamin B6, vitamin E, and vitamin K.

## SERVING IDEAS

- Blend mango chunks with lowfat yogurt and orange juice for a smoothie.
- Sprinkle mango chunks with chili powder and lime juice for a refreshing snack.

## PEAK SEASON

California grown varieties, available in early summer and mid-fall, may be fresher and cost less than varieties shipped from other regions.

## STORAGE

Store mangos at room temperature and away from the sun until ripened. Store ripe mangos in the refrigerator for up to two weeks.

# Collard Greens





# Collard Greens

## SHOPPER'S TIPS

- Look for crisp bunches with smooth, firm leaves.
- Avoid bunches with yellow, wilted, or slimy leaves and thick, dried-out stems. Wilting is a sign of bitter tasting leaves.

## FUN FACTS!

- Collard greens were grown by the ancient Greeks and Romans.
- A southern tradition in the United States, collard greens are eaten on New Year's Day to ensure wealth in the coming year because their leaves resemble folded money.

## WHAT IS IN IT FOR YOU?

One cup of cooked collard greens is:

- An excellent source of vitamin A, vitamin K, vitamin C, folate, fiber, and calcium.
- A source of iron, vitamin B6, riboflavin, and magnesium.

## SERVING IDEAS

- Flavor collard greens with smoked turkey, and do not cook them too long or most of their vitamins will go into the cooking water.
- Sauté chopped collard greens with onions, tomatoes, olive oil, and garlic.

## PEAK SEASON

California grown varieties, available from winter to spring, may be fresher and cost less than varieties shipped from other regions.

## STORAGE

Wrap unwashed greens in a damp paper towel and store in an airtight plastic bag. Place the bag in the refrigerator for up to five days.

# Strawberries





# Strawberries

## SHOPPER'S TIPS

- Look for plump berries with a natural shine, rich red color, bright green caps, and a sweet smell.
- Avoid bruised, moldy, or soft berries with green or white tips. Staining at the bottom of the container may be a sign of overripe or rotting fruit.

## FUN FACTS!

- Native Americans used to pound strawberries into their cornmeal bread. European colonists made their own version, which is known today as strawberry shortcake.
- On average, there are about 200 seeds on each strawberry.

## WHAT IS IN IT FOR YOU?

One cup of strawberry halves is:

- An excellent source of vitamin C.
- A source of fiber.

## SERVING IDEAS

- Add sliced strawberries to your spinach salad for a sweet side dish.
- Top your cereal with sliced strawberries for a healthy start to your day.

## PEAK SEASON

California grown varieties, available in late spring, may be fresher and cost less than varieties shipped from other regions.

## STORAGE

Store strawberries in the refrigerator for up to three days. Do not wash them until you are ready to eat them.

# Tomatoes





# Tomatoes

## SHOPPER'S TIPS

- Look for plump tomatoes with smooth skin, an even color, and a sweet smell.
- Avoid mushy, bruised, or split-skinned tomatoes.

## FUN FACTS!

- There are over 4,000 types of tomatoes ranging in size, shape, and color.
- The tomato is actually a berry, but in 1893, the U.S. Supreme Court declared it to be a vegetable.

## WHAT IS IN IT FOR YOU?

One medium-sized tomato is:

- An excellent source of vitamin C.
- A source of vitamin A.

## SERVING IDEAS

- Add extra tomatoes to soups, stews, and chili for a great taste.
- Add fresh tomatoes to everyday foods like sandwiches and salads.

## PEAK SEASON

California grown varieties, available from late spring to mid-fall, may be fresher and cost less than varieties shipped from other regions.

## STORAGE

Firm tomatoes can be ripened in a paper bag until they give slightly to gentle pressure. Store ripe tomatoes at room temperature and away from direct sunlight for up to five days. Only refrigerate tomatoes that have been cut or cooked.

# Plums





## SHOPPER'S TIPS

- Look for firm fruit with full color that gives slightly to gentle pressure.
- Avoid fruit that is cracked, soft, or has brown spots.

## FUN FACTS!

- There are more than 140 types of plums sold in the United States.
- Most types have yellow or reddish flesh and skin colors that include red, yellow, green, and purple.

## WHAT IS IN IT FOR YOU?

One medium-sized plum is:

- A source of vitamin C.

## SERVING IDEAS

- Plums are perfect for picnics — just grab and go!
- Add chopped plums to fruit salads.

## PEAK SEASON

California grown varieties, available from late spring to mid-fall, may be fresher and cost less than varieties shipped from other regions.

## STORAGE

Ripen firm plums in a paper bag for up to three days or until they give slightly to gentle pressure. Store ripe plums in the refrigerator for up to five days.

# Okra





## SHOPPER'S TIPS

- Look for small pods that are dry, firm, medium to dark green in color, and free of dark spots.
- Avoid pods that look shriveled or moldy. Dark tops are a sign that the okra has been in storage too long.

## FUN FACTS!

- La okra came from Northeast Africa near Ethiopia.
- When okra pods are cut, they leak a sticky juice that is excellent for thickening soups and stews.

## WHAT IS IN IT FOR YOU?

One cup of okra slices is:

- An excellent source of vitamin K, vitamin C, and folate.
- A source of magnesium, fiber, thiamin, and vitamin B6.

## SERVING IDEAS

- Sauté whole okra pods with onions and tomatoes for a quick dish.
- Instead of deep frying okra, soak okra slices in buttermilk and roll in cornmeal. Bake okra slices on a lightly oiled pan at 450°F for 30 to 40 minutes until crispy.

## PEAK SEASON

California grown varieties, available from summer to mid-fall, may be fresher and cost less than varieties shipped from other regions.

## STORAGE

Store in a paper bag for up to three days in the refrigerator.

# Watermelon





# Watermelon

## SHOPPER'S TIPS

- Look for a firm fruit, with a sweet smell, dull rind, dried stem, and a yellow underside where it touched the ground.
- Avoid fruit that has cracks, soft spots, mold, or a white or very light green color on the underside.

## FUN FACTS!

- Watermelons came from Africa and are mentioned in Egyptian writings.
- Early explorers used watermelon rinds as canteens to hold their water.

## WHAT IS IN IT FOR YOU?

One cup of cubed watermelon is:

- An excellent source of vitamin C.
- A source of vitamin A.

## SERVING IDEAS

- Replace the tomato in your favorite salsa recipe with diced watermelon for a sweet and spicy snack.
- Blend equal amounts of watermelon and water with a splash of lime juice to make a cool Mexican drink called agua fresca.

## PEAK SEASON

California grown varieties, available from late spring to mid-fall, may be fresher and cost less than varieties shipped from other regions.

## STORAGE

Watermelons can be stored uncut at room temperature for up to two weeks.

# Bell Peppers





# Bell Peppers

## SHOPPER'S TIPS

- Look for peppers that have firm, smooth skin and a fresh green stem.
- Avoid peppers with sunken areas, broken skin, or black spots.

## FUN FACTS!

- Bell peppers can be found in a rainbow of colors including red, orange, yellow, green, purple, and chocolate brown.
- Green and red bell peppers come from the same plant. As bell peppers mature, their color changes from green to red. That's why red bell peppers are sweeter than green bell peppers — they are riper!

## WHAT IS IN IT FOR YOU?

A medium-sized green, yellow, or red bell pepper is:

- An excellent source of vitamin C.
- A source of vitamin B6.

## SERVING IDEAS

- Add sautéed bell pepper slices to chicken dishes.
- Add chopped bell peppers to your favorite salads or pasta sauces.

## PEAK SEASON

California grown varieties, available from late spring to mid-fall, may be fresher and cost less than varieties shipped from other regions.

## STORAGE

Store bell peppers in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for up to five days.

# Sweet Potatoes





# Sweet Potatoes

## SHOPPER'S TIPS

- Look for firm, dark, smooth skin without wrinkles, bruises, or sprouts.
- Avoid sweet potatoes with moldy spots.

## FUN FACTS!

- In the United States, sweet potatoes are often called yams. It is believed that the confusion started in 1930 when growers began calling a new type of orange sweet potato the Louisiana Yam to set it apart from the common white sweet potato.
- Sweet potatoes are roots (like carrots) that came from South America. Yams are tubers (like potatoes) that came from West Africa. True yams are not commonly found in the United States.

## WHAT IS IN IT FOR YOU?

One sweet potato is:

- An excellent source of vitamin A.
- A source of fiber, vitamin B6, and potassium.

## SERVING IDEAS

- Dip strips of sweet potatoes in egg substitute and bake on a lightly oiled pan at 425°F for 25 to 30 minutes for a batch of sweet potato fries.
- Bake sliced sweet potatoes with apples and cinnamon for a hot dessert.

## PEAK SEASON

California grown varieties, available in the fall, may be fresher and cost less than varieties shipped from other regions.

## STORAGE

Do not store sweet potatoes in the refrigerator or they will develop a hard core and an "off" taste. Sweet potatoes kept at room temperature should be enjoyed within one week.

# Butternut Squash





# Butternut Squash

## SHOPPER'S TIPS

- Look for heavy squash with a thick neck and a small round base.
- Avoid squash that looks shriveled, bruised, or dented.

## FUN FACTS!

- Butternut squash is a type of “winter squash.” The term dates back to a time before refrigerators when varieties of squash harvested in the fall were known as winter vegetables because they could last until December.
- Butternut squash is also known as the African Bell.

## WHAT IS IN IT FOR YOU?

One cup of butternut squash cubes is:

- An excellent source of vitamin A and vitamin C.
- A source of potassium, magnesium, fiber, vitamin B6, and vitamin E.

## SERVING IDEAS

- Roast butternut squash chunks that have been seasoned with nutmeg and sage.
- Bake butternut squash halves and mash for a filling side dish.

## PEAK SEASON

California grown varieties, available from late fall to early winter, may be fresher and cost less than varieties shipped from other regions.

## STORAGE

Store whole squash in a cool, dry place for up to three months.

# Apples





# Apples

## SHOPPER'S TIPS

- Look for apples that are firm and do not have soft spots.
- Avoid apples with broken or bruised skin.

## FUN FACTS!

- 2,500 apple varieties are grown in the United States.
- The legendary Johnny Appleseed was a real man who roamed the land planting apple trees for nearly 50 years so that people would never go hungry.

## WHAT IS IN IT FOR YOU?

A medium-sized apple is:

- A source of fiber and vitamin C.

## SERVING IDEAS

- Dip apple slices into peanut butter for a quick snack.
- Mix apple chunks and raisins with your morning oatmeal.

## PEAK SEASON

California grown varieties, available from late summer to early winter, may be fresher and cost less than varieties shipped from other regions.

## STORAGE

Apples can be stored at room temperature, but they will last up to six weeks if refrigerated. Do not refrigerate apples in closed bags.

# Cauliflower





# Cauliflower

## SHOPPER'S TIPS

- Look for heads that are white in color, firm, and compact.
- Avoid cauliflower with opened florets or brown patches.

## FUN FACTS!

- Cauliflower came from Asia and the Mediterranean area about 2,000 years ago.
- Cauliflower is white because the head is covered by heavy green leaves that shield it from sunlight while it grows.

## WHAT IS IN IT FOR YOU?

One cup of cauliflower florets is:

- An excellent source of vitamin C and vitamin K.
- A source of folate, vitamin B6, and fiber.

## SERVING IDEAS

- Sauté cauliflower florets with Italian seasoning.
- Add cauliflower florets to pasta sauces.

## PEAK SEASON

California grown varieties, available from mid-fall to early spring, may be fresher and cost less than varieties shipped from other regions.

## STORAGE

Store cauliflower in an open plastic bag in the refrigerator for up to five days.

# Grapefruit





# Grapefruit

## SHOPPER'S TIPS

- Look for grapefruit that has smooth skin and feels heavy for its size.
- Avoid any grapefruit with soft spots or very thick and wrinkled skin.

## FUN FACTS!

- Grapefruit can be found in white, pink, and red varieties.
- Grapefruit got its name from a Jamaican farmer who noticed the way it grows in clusters (like grapes) on the tree.

## WHAT IS IN IT FOR YOU?

Half a grapefruit is:

- An excellent source of vitamin C.

## SERVING IDEAS

- Eat half of a grapefruit in the morning along with your cereal.
- Toss peeled grapefruit segments into your fruit salads.

## PEAK SEASON

California grown varieties, available from winter to spring, may be fresher and cost less than varieties shipped from other regions.

## STORAGE

Grapefruit can be stored at room temperature for up to one week. If stored in the refrigerator, grapefruit will last up to two weeks. For the best flavor, enjoy them at room temperature.

# Avocados





# Avocados

## SHOPPER'S TIPS

- Look for avocados that give slightly to gentle pressure. Firm avocados can be ripened at home for use later in the week.
- Avoid avocados that are very soft.

## FUN FACTS!

- Avocados came from Central America over 7,000 years ago.
- European sailors once used avocados as their form of butter.

## WHAT IS IN IT FOR YOU?

Half an avocado is:

- A source of fiber, vitamin K, folate, vitamin C, vitamin B6, and potassium.

## SERVING IDEAS

- Add diced avocados to your favorite salad.
- Replace mashed avocados for mayonnaise in sandwiches.

## PEAK SEASON

California grown varieties, available from winter to summer, may be fresher and cost less than varieties shipped from other regions.

## STORAGE

Let hard avocados ripen on a countertop or place in a paper bag for two to three days at room temperature. Refrigerate ripe avocados for up to three days.

# Broccoli





# Broccoli

## SHOPPER'S TIPS

- Look for a firm stem and tight, compact florets with dark green color.
- Avoid tough stems and florets that are open, flowering, discolored, or soaked with water.

## FUN FACTS!

- Broccoli was first grown in Italy and has been around for more than 2,000 years.
- Broccoli has as much calcium per ounce as milk.

## WHAT IS IN IT FOR YOU?

One cup of chopped broccoli is:

- An excellent source of vitamin C and vitamin K.
- A source of folate and vitamin A.

## SERVING IDEAS

- Boil broccoli in a small amount of water until tender.
- Sauté broccoli with chopped onions and Italian seasonings.

## PEAK SEASON

California grown varieties, available year round, may be fresher and cost less than varieties shipped from other regions.

## STORAGE

Store unwashed broccoli in an open plastic bag and place in the refrigerator for up to five days.

# Oranges





# Oranges

## SHOPPER'S TIPS

- Look for fruit with shiny skin that is firm and heavy for its size. Oranges with thin skins tend to be juicier than those with thick skins.
- Avoid fruit with bruised, wrinkled, or discolored skins.

## FUN FACTS!

- Oranges came from Southeast Asia.
- Which came first, the color or the fruit? The fruit! Oranges got their name from an ancient Southeast Asian word that means “fruit.”

## WHAT IS IN IT FOR YOU?

One medium orange is:

- An excellent source of vitamin C.
- A source of fiber and folate.

## SERVING IDEAS

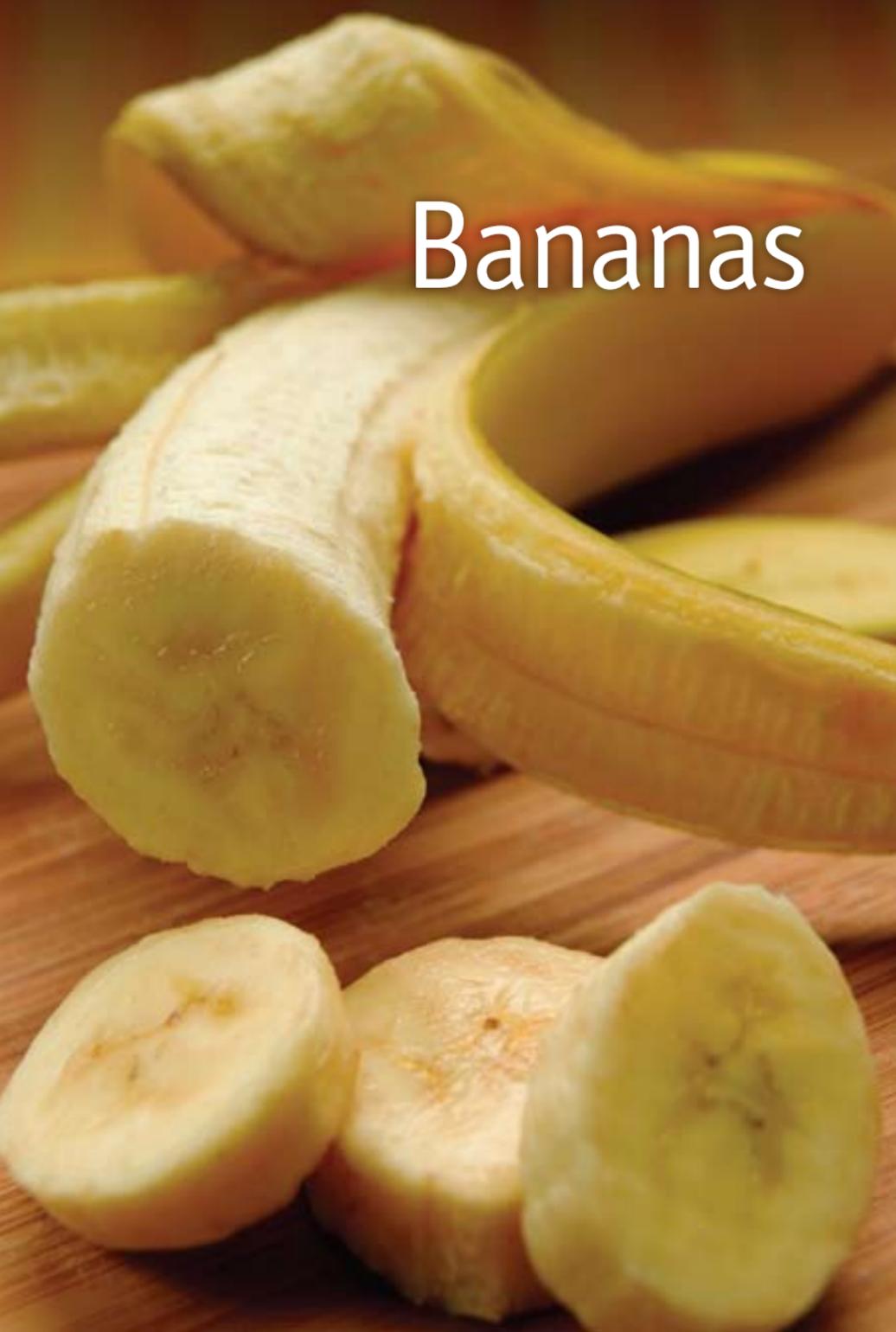
- Orange slices make a quick snack.
- Toss peeled orange segments into your green salads.

## PEAK SEASON

California grown varieties, available from winter to spring, may be fresher and cost less than varieties shipped from other regions.

## STORAGE

Oranges can be stored at room temperature or in the refrigerator for up to two weeks.

A close-up photograph of sliced bananas on a wooden surface. The word "Bananas" is overlaid in white text. The image shows several slices of banana, some whole and some cut into smaller pieces, arranged on a light-colored wooden cutting board. The lighting is warm and focused on the fruit, highlighting its texture and color. The word "Bananas" is written in a clean, white, sans-serif font, positioned in the upper right quadrant of the image.

Bananas



# Bananas

## SHOPPER'S TIPS

- Look for bananas that are firm and have a bright color.
- Avoid bananas with brown spots that seem very soft.

## FUN FACTS!

- Plantains, finger bananas, and red bananas are other popular types of banana.
- Ripe bananas can be stored in the refrigerator. Although the skin may turn dark, the fruit inside will be fresh and ripe.

## WHAT IS IN IT FOR YOU?

One large banana is:

- An excellent source of vitamin B6 and vitamin C.
- A source of fiber and potassium.

## SERVING IDEAS

- Add sliced bananas to cereal, yogurt, or a peanut butter sandwich.
- Out of yogurt for your smoothie? Substitute bananas for flavor and thickness in your favorite smoothie recipes.

## PEAK SEASON

Available year round.

## STORAGE

To ripen bananas, leave at room temperature for a couple of days. Enjoy bananas once they are ripe and have lost their green color.

# Frozen Fruit





# Frozen Fruit

## SHOPPER'S TIPS

- Look for unsweetened varieties.
- Avoid torn packages, packages with water stains, or expired use-by dates.

## FUN FACTS!

- The Chinese were the first to freeze foods beyond the winter months by using ice cellars as early as 3,000 years ago.
- During World War II, canned foods were needed for military use, so the frozen food industry grew to fill the gap created by the limited supply of canned goods. Until then, most frozen foods were a luxury.

## WHAT IS IN IT FOR YOU?

The freezing process locks in nutrients soon after harvest. As a result, frozen fruit can be just as nutritious as fresh fruit.

## SERVING IDEAS

- Top yogurt with frozen berries for a cool treat.
- Use frozen fruit to make smoothies.

## PEAK SEASON

Frozen fruit is available year round and makes a great substitute for fresh varieties that are not in season.

## STORAGE

Store fruit in the freezer for up to eight months. Once the package has been opened, tightly seal the remaining fruit to avoid freezer burn.

# Carrots





# Carrots

## SHOPPER'S TIPS

- Look for smooth, firm, and well-shaped carrots with an even color.
- Avoid carrots that are crackled, shriveled, soft, or wilted.

## FUN FACTS!

- Carrots, which came from Central Asia, were originally purple, white, and yellow in color.
- Most baby carrots you find in the store are made from large carrots that have been peeled and trimmed. The trimmings are used in salad mixes, juices, and other carrot products.

## WHAT IS IN IT FOR YOU?

One cup of chopped carrots is:

- An excellent source of vitamin A and vitamin K.
- A source of fiber, vitamin C, and potassium.

## SERVING IDEAS

- Snack on carrot sticks and light dressing.
- Add shredded carrots to coleslaw for extra crunch, color, and flavor.

## PEAK SEASON

California grown varieties, available year round, may be fresher and cost less than varieties shipped from other regions.

## STORAGE

Store carrots in a plastic bag and refrigerate for up to two weeks. If you buy carrots with the green tops, break off the tops before refrigerating.



# The Benefits of Fruits and Vegetables

Every fruit and vegetable has a different combination of nutrients that helps promote better health. Use this card to find out what each of these nutrients do to keep you healthy.

## VITAMIN A

This vitamin helps your body maintain healthy eyes and skin.

## THIAMIN

This B vitamin helps your body turn the food you eat into energy that your body can use. It also helps your body maintain a healthy heart, muscles, and nerves.

## RIBOFLAVIN

This B vitamin helps your body turn the food you eat into energy that your body can use. It also helps your body maintain healthy red blood cells.

## VITAMIN B6

This B vitamin helps your body build healthy blood cells.

## FOLATE

This B vitamin helps lower a woman's risk of having a child with certain birth defects.

## VITAMIN C

This vitamin helps the body heal cuts and wounds and maintain healthy gums.

## VITAMIN E

This vitamin helps maintain healthy cells throughout your body.



## VITAMIN K

This vitamin helps certain cells in your blood act like glue and stick together at the surface of a cut.

## CALCIUM

This mineral helps build strong bones and healthy teeth.

## IRON

This mineral helps red blood cells carry oxygen to all the parts of your body.

## MAGNESIUM

This mineral helps your body maintain a steady heartbeat and keeps your muscles and nerves working properly.

## POTASSIUM

This mineral helps your body maintain a healthy blood pressure and keeps your muscles and nerves working properly.

## ZINC

This mineral is needed for healthy growth and development. It also helps your body maintain a healthy immune system, and helps your body heal from cuts and wounds.

## FIBER

Fiber promotes good digestion and helps maintain a healthy heart. It also helps you feel full after a meal or snack.

## PHYTOCHEMICALS

Phytochemicals are naturally found in plants and help prevent disease and promote good health. Different kinds of phytochemicals give fruits and vegetables their bright colors. Eat red, orange, green, white, and purple fruits and vegetables for better health.

## WATER

The water found in fruits and vegetables helps you feel full after a meal or snack. It also adds to the amount of water you take in every day.