

IN THE KNOW ABOUT NUTRITION

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Ten Fall Produce Picks to Add to Your Plate

Fall is here! The nights are getting chilly and the sun is setting sooner. Cozy sweaters and boots are starting to sound like a great idea. This is the perfect time to start incorporating those seasonal foods of autumn! Head to the local grocery store or farmers market and start filling your cart with these nutritious fall produce picks!

1. Apples

Apples are sweet or tart, and satisfying to eat when raw or baked in delicious dishes. Remember to eat the skin—it contains fiber and heart-healthy flavonoids (antioxidants) that boost your immune system.

2. Beets

The entire beet is edible from their leafy greens down to the bulbous root. Red beets are the most common but other interesting varieties can be found at your local farmers market. Beets are rich in naturally occurring nitrates and may help to support healthy blood pressure.



3. Cranberries

Cranberries are known for their tart taste and their wealth of nutritional benefits. They may help prevent urinary tract infections because they contain a compound (proanthocyanidin) that prevents harmful bacteria from sticking to the bladder wall. Fresh and dried cranberries pair



well with a variety of meats and poultry, and be eaten raw, cooked, or dried. Dried may have a good amount of added sugar, however.

4. Kale

Kale is a nutrient powerhouse food that can survive a snowstorm. One cup of raw kale has only 8 calories and is loaded with vitamin A, C and K as well as manganese. Kale is great sauteed, cooked in soups, and excellent raw in salads; simply remove tough stems, slice into thin slivers and pair with something a bit sweet such as carrots or apples.



5. Okra

Often okra is found fried, but it is also wonderful in more nutritious dishes such as in stews, gumbos, curries, or stir-fries. Okra is high in vitamin K and C, a good source of fiber and folate, and low in calories. In the grocery store, look for pods that are no longer than 4 inches and are bright green and firm to touch.



6. Parsnips

Parsnips are similar to carrots—they have the same root shape but with white flesh. They are usually eaten cooked, but can also be eaten raw. One-half cup of cooked parsnips contains 3 grams of fiber and more than 10% of the daily values of vitamin C and folate. Try roasting, pureed into soups or even mashed.



7. Pears

Pears are available year-round, but they are most delicious in the fall. Check to see if the fruit near the stem gives to a little pressure – this indicates they are ripe. And, like apples they are excellent fresh, but can also be cooked, grilled, poached, pureed, or canned for the winter. Remember, don't skip out on the peel, as one medium pear has 6 grams of fiber – that's 20% of the daily recommendation!

8. Pumpkin

Pumpkins are more than just a holiday decoration! They are a rich, hearty vegetable that can be used in a variety of recipes. It is also full of fiber and vitamin A, and these nutrients are a good way to boost immunity as flu season rolls around.

9. Spaghetti Squash

Spaghetti squash is a fun, kid-friendly vegetable that is a lower-calorie and gluten-free alternative to grain-based pasta. Cut it in half to reveal a pocket of seeds; scoop those out and pop it in the microwave or oven and cook until tender. Scrap a fork into the flesh and spaghetti-like strands appear. It contains important nutrients such as vitamin A and potassium. Try it with pesto, marinara, or alfredo sauce for a quick veggie dish.



10. Sweet Potato

When compared to white potatoes, sweet potatoes have a little extra punch in terms of fiber, vitamin A and potassium. They are also high in vitamin B-6 and C. They are great for any meal and can be cooked in just about any way possible!

Source:

<http://www.eatright.org/resource/food/nutrition/healthy-eating/fall-produce-picks>

“A Produce Reference Guide to Fruits and Vegetables from Around the World” by Donald D. Heaton

Apple Crumble

1/3 cup flour
1/2 cup nonfat dry milk powder
1/3 cup sugar
3 cups sliced apples
1 tsp cinnamon
1/4 tsp nutmeg
3 Tbsp margarine

Preheat oven to 350°F. In a bowl, mix flour, milk, sugar, cinnamon, and nutmeg. Blend in margarine with fork until mixture is crumbly. Spread apples evenly in 9-inch pie pan. Top with crumb mixture. Bake for 25 minutes or until apples are tender.
Yield: 6-8 servings

Apple Leather

3 cups applesauce
1/2 cup sugar
1/4 tsp nutmeg
Powdered sugar

Mix applesauce, nutmeg and sugar. Spread 1/2" thick in shallow pan and bake at 250°F for 3 hours. Remove when nearly dry and sprinkle lightly with powdered sugar. Roll jell-roll style, slice thin and serve. Yield: 32 pieces

Honey Apple Rings

1/2 cup honey
2 Tbsp vinegar
1/4 tsp salt
1/4 tsp ground cinnamon
4 medium cooking apples, unpeeled, cored, and cut into 1/2" rings

Combine honey, vinegar, salt and cinnamon in a large skillet; bring to a boil. Add apple rings; reduce heat and simmer 8 to 10 minutes, turning apples once. Yield: 8 servings

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