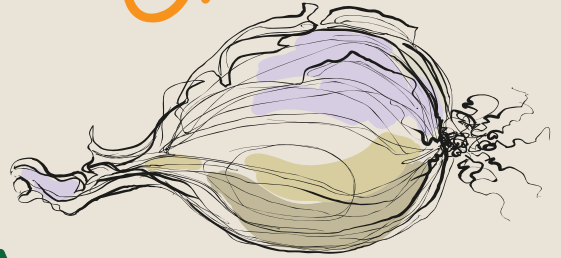
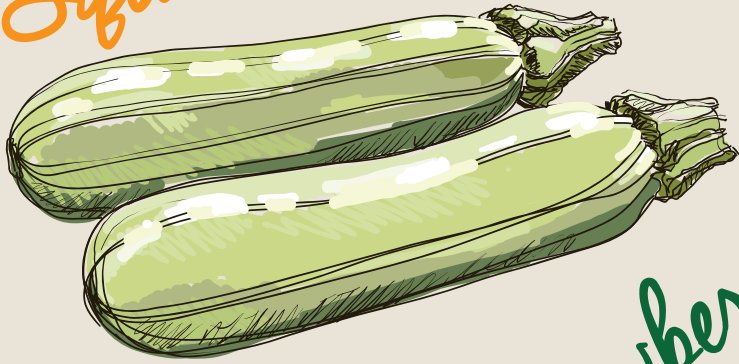


May Seasonal Produce

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Squash Okra Collards Onions



Peaches Strawberries Scallions



Snap Beans



Field Peas Cucumbers



Tomatoes

Pole Beans



Asparagus



Nectarines

Blueberries

Lettuce

Choosing the best quality and most flavorful produce can sometimes be a guessing game! Here are tips on choosing some of the most common produce available now.

Collard Greens

Chard, kale, mustard greens, turnip greens, collard greens, beet greens—they can be used almost interchangeably in recipes (although each will add its own distinct flavor). Kale and collard greens are a bit heartier than the others and will require a bit of extra cooking time.

Strawberries

Pick up the berries and give them a good sniff. Sweet, ripe strawberries are going to have a great strawberry scent to them, much as very ripe peaches, nectarines and other fruits smell great when they're at their peak.

Cucumbers

For both regular cucumbers and smaller, bumpier Kirbys (often used for pickles), choose firm, dark green ones with no wrinkles or spongy spots. No matter the variety, smaller cucumbers contain fewer and tinier seeds. The skins contain vitamin A, so try to buy unwaxed cucumbers, whose skin you can eat.

Peaches & Nectarines

Choose peaches and nectarines that are firm to the touch, but whose flesh will yield with gentle pressure. The fruits should be unblemished and free of bruises, with a warm, fragrant aroma.

Squash

Select yellow squash and zucchini less than eight inches long; the vegetables can become bitter the larger the plants grow. Make sure the squash are firm, particularly at the stems, and have bright skins.

Blueberries

Blueberries should have a slight frosty-white hue. Check all fruit for mold, and inspect containers for stickiness or stains.

Potatoes

Choose firm, smooth potatoes with few eyes. Avoid those with green patches—a sign of prolonged exposure to light. The discolored spots taste bitter and are toxic if eaten in large quantities.

Tomatoes

Select tomatoes that are deeply colored and firm, with a little give. Sniff all tomatoes if you can—you're looking for a sweet, woody smell. Check grape tomatoes for wrinkles, which are a sign of age.

Asparagus

Fresh asparagus will be bright green with no signs of shriveling. The tender tips may have a purplish cast, but they should be firm and tight, never mushy. The cut end will be thick and fibrous—the plant's reaction to the injury of cutting. This end is cut off before cooking, but if the shoots are fresh, you may lose only an inch.



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