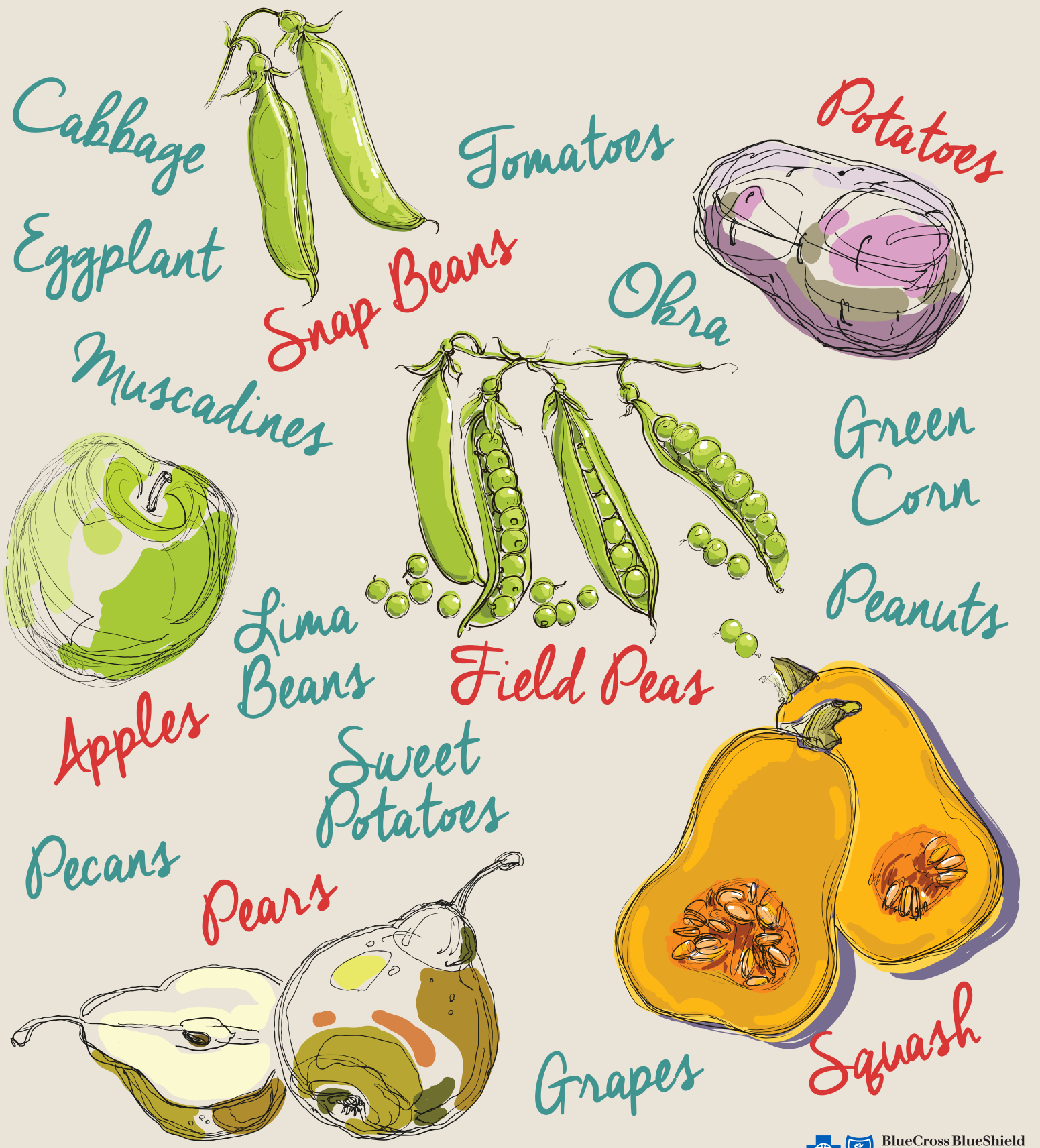


# Seasonal Produce September



**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.**

## Apples

Look for smooth skins with few bruises and that have a good aroma. Too many bruises mean the apple may rot. Choose apples with a bright and sparkly color.

## Pears

Choose a pear that is bright and fresh looking with no bruises or external damage. Pears do not dramatically change color when they ripen. Test for ripeness by pressing gently near the stem. If it gives to gentle pressure and is sweet and juicy, it is ready to eat.

## 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.

## Okra

Okra is an excellent source of vitamin C. Fresh okra will have firm, dry pods and be a rich green. Okra pods are typically picked while they are still small and immature. This ensures they are tender and tasty.

## Pecans

For the freshest and most flavorful pecans, choose whole ones in the shell; look for nuts that are heavy for their size and don't rattle when shaken. Pecans can be stored in a freezer for up to two years in a moisture-proof bag.

## Sweet Potatoes

When selecting sweet potatoes, it is important that they are firm to the touch and show no signs of decay. For even cooking, choose sweet potatoes that are uniform in shape. Look for small to medium sweet potatoes, which are sweet and creamy. (The larger ones tend to be starchier.)

## Green Corn

Top-quality sweet corn ears have fresh green husks and ears well-filled with bright-colored, plump, and milky kernels. Corn is overripe if indentions have formed in the kernels or kernel contents are doughy when broken. Ears should be free of insect and disease damage.

## 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.

## 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.



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