

# BUYING FRESH FRUITS & VEGETABLES



The best teacher for choosing quality vegetables and fruit is **EXPERIENCE!** But, the following includes a few pointers for purchasing the best produce. First, buy organic if at all possible. With organic, you avoid the pesticides or synthetic fertilizers that are often present or used in fruits and vegetables in most supermarkets. Organic agriculture is the fastest growing segment of agriculture in the United States. According to Earth Bound Farms, some of the principal benefits of organic farming include the following:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Organic produce is never genetically engineered or modified, and is never irradiated.</li><li>• Organic farming helps protect our air, soil, water and food supply from potentially toxic chemicals and other pollutants.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Organic produce is grown without relying on toxic chemical pesticides. No herbicides, fumigants, or synthetic fertilizers are used either.</li><li>• Organic farming conserves natural resources by recycling natural materials.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Organic farming encourages an abundance of species living in balanced, harmonious ecosystems.</li></ul> <p>You can learn more about organic foods through their wonderful website: <a href="http://www.ebfarm.com">www.ebfarm.com</a></p> |
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## COMMON FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

### Asparagus

Stalks should be tender and firm, tips should be close and compact. Choose the stalks with very little white - they are more tender. Use asparagus soon - it toughens rapidly.

### Beans (Snap)

Those with small seeds inside the pods are best. Avoid beans with dry-looking pods.

### Berries

Select plump, solid berries with good color. Avoid stained containers, indicating wet or leaky berries. Berries such as blackberries and raspberries with clinging caps may be under ripe. Strawberries without caps may be too ripe.

### Cruciferous Vegetables

Broccoli, Brussel Sprouts, and Cauliflower: Flower clusters on broccoli and cauliflower should be tight and close together. Brussels sprouts should be firm and compact. Smudgy, dirty spots may indicate insects.

### Cabbage and Head lettuce

Choose heads heavy for size. Avoid cabbage with worm holes, lettuce with discoloration or soft rot.

**Cucumbers:** Choose long, slender cucumbers for best quality. May be dark or medium green but yellowed ones are undesirable.

### Melons

In cantaloupes, thick close netting on the rind indicates best quality. Cantaloupes are ripe when the stem scar is smooth and space between the netting is yellow or yellow-green. They are best when fully ripe with fruity odor.



### Honeydews

Honeydews are ripe when rind has creamy to yellowish color and velvety texture. Immature honeydews are whitish-green.

### Oranges, Grapefruit, and lemons

Choose those heavy for their size. Smoother, thinner skins usually indicate more juice. Most skin markings do not affect quality. Orange with a slight greenish tinge may be just as ripe as fully colored ones. Light or greenish-yellow lemons are more tart than deep yellow ones. Avoid citrus fruits showing withered, sunken, or soft areas.

### Peas and Lima Beans

Select pods that are well filled but not bulging. Avoid dried, spotted, yellowed, or flabby pods.

### Watermelons

Ripe watermelons have some yellow color on one side. If melons are white or pale green on one side, they are not ripe.