

# LOCAL SUMMER PRODUCE GUIDE

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## JUNE

### Swiss Chard

**Why** Helps to reduce inflammation, regulate blood sugar, and boost bone health, which is so important for women.

**Serve** Use in place of spinach, sauté in virgin coconut oil and garlic as a yummy side dish, or try this {rich} recipe for **Four Cheese Swiss Chard Lasagna**.

### Spinach

**Why** Improves blood cell function, strengthens bones, regulates heart rate and blood pressure, and combats those pesky free radicals that disease and age us.

**Serve** Add to casseroles to boost nutrition, toss into a smoothie, or make a raw spinach salad like this recipe for **Spinach Strawberry Salad with Roasted Asparagus and Balsamic Vinaigrette**

### Kale

**Why** Kale is the darling when it comes to leafy greens. For good reason. Research has also shown that kale contains 45 different flavonoids with a variety of antioxidant and anti-inflammatory effects. It has been shown to lower cholesterol and may reduce the risk of certain types of cancer, plus it's an incredible source of well-absorbed calcium, one of the many factors that may help.

**Serve** Kale is versatile, and any Google search will yield numerous recipe

ideas. My favorites include homemade kale chips, sautéed in virgin coconut oil and garlic as a yummy side dish, or {of course} a hearty kale soup like this recipe for **Roasted Vegetable and Kale Soup**

### Radishes

**Why** Radishes are natural detoxifiers, aiding in gallbladder and liver function, are a stellar diuretic, preventing and fighting urinary tract infections, rich in fiber, and aid in relieving respiratory congestion.

**Serve** Radishes tend to be favored raw as a salad add-in or you can make them the main event like in this recipe for **Cucumber, Radish, Chick Pea, and Parsley Salad with Creamy Feta & White Wine Vinegar Dressing**.

### Strawberries

**Why** Boast cancer-protecting antioxidants, inflammation-fighting phytochemicals, immunity-boosting and wrinkle-fighting Vitamin C, and heart-healthy potassium and fiber. Be sure to buy your strawberries organic, since conventionally-grown are flooded with pesticides that are impossible to remove from the delicate and porous skin.

**Serve** They are amazingly delicious eaten fresh, in smoothies, yogurt, a-top homemade granola, among other things, including baked goods like in this recipe for **Super Omega-3 Strawberry Rhubarb Crisp**

## JULY

### Broccoli

**Why** One cup contains the entire RDA of immune-boosting and free-radical fighting Vitamin C, which aids in cancer protection as well as sun damage and supporting skin detox and repair. Broccoli is also high in fiber, aiding in digestion, weight management, blood sugar balance, regularity, and appetite control.

**Serve** Roast it, steam it, sauté it, or enjoy it blanched and cold in this recipe for **Sweet 'N Sour Broccoli Salad**.

### Beets

**Why** Great source of folate which is necessary for the production and maintenance of new cells, including that of growing babes {as well as preventing birth defects}, loaded with cancer-fighting antioxidants, aid in cleansing the blood and colon, while strengthening the gallbladder and liver {super-detoxing}, and contain betaines, which naturally boost our happy hormones, giving us a sense of well-being and relaxation.

**Serve** Absolutely delicious roasted and make a great addition to salads, like this high-protein **Blushing Quinoa, Roasted Beet, and Feta Salad with Chick Peas and Honey Balsamic Vinaigrette**.

### Cucumbers

**Why** Great natural detoxifier and hydrator, since they are 95% water, cancer-fighting with a nice dose of lignans, and a great source of immune-boosting Vitamin C {10% of

the RDA}, particularly in the skin. Be sure to buy your cukes organic, since conventionally-grown are doused with pesticides.

**Serve** Refreshing addition to smoothies, green salads, as well as summer pasta salads like this **Greek {Whole Grain} Pasta Salad**.

### Tomatoes

**Why** Great source of potassium, folate {for those buns in the oven} and Vitamins A, C, and E. Besides being super heart-healthy and potent cancer-fighters, tomatoes may also help the body burn fat. Bioflavonoids found in the skin of tomatoes have been found to reduce inflammation, helping to regulate hormones like leptin, which is responsible for appetite control, metabolism, and ultimately weight loss.

**Serve** The better question is what can't you do with a tomato? How about ditching the canned stuff and stocking your freezer with homemade tomato paste {yes, really}? Check out this **Fresh Tomato Paste** recipe at [www.fortheloveoffiber.com](http://www.fortheloveoffiber.com).

### Blueberries

**Why** Practically the Patron Saint of the berry family, blueberries have the highest antioxidant capacity of all fresh fruit. **All fruit**. That's a lot. This helps to boost immunity, neutralize free radicals, reduce heart disease, protect from cancer, aid in digestion, and has also been shown to help reduce belly fat.

**Serve** Everything. Blueberry pancakes, coffee cake, a yogurt or cereal topper, or old faithful, muffins, like these **Whole Wheat Flax and Blueberry Muffins with Walnut Streusel**. Or take a walk on the wild side with this **Sweet 'N Sour Green Smoothie**.

## AUGUST

### Peppers

**Why** From hot peppers to bell peppers to sweet peppers, and everything in between, peppers are loaded in vitamin A, vitamin C, beta-carotene, lutein, and zeaxanthin, a carotenoid that promotes eye health. Hot peppers, however, get an A+ in the awesomeness category due to their energy and mood-boosting capabilities. The capsaicin in hot peppers raises endorphins {our happy hormones} as well as body temperature, which boosts metabolism, helping to reduce body fat accumulation.

**Serve** Roast in the oven or on the grill, add to green salads, make a killer chili, stuff and bake with your favorite fixins' or try this **Sweet 'N Tangy Barbeque Quinoa Bean Salad**, a summer party favorite which has received rave reviews from my favorite foodies.

### Eggplant

**Why** Eggplant is super high in fiber, which aids in digestion and weight management, as well as cancer protection, not only from its high antioxidant content, but as it moves through the digestive tract, it has the tendency to absorb toxins and chemicals that can lead to the development of colon cancer. Its high-water content also boosts skin tone – who doesn't love that?

**Serve** Besides the ever popular eggplant parm, which you can never go wrong, or roasted on the grill, eggplant makes a great swap for meat in many dishes, due to its fibrous and filling nature. Or get meaty with this hearty **Eggplant Bolognese** recipe.

### Garlic

**Garlic** gets a bad rap due to its stink factor, but its powerful healing properties make garlic breath totally worth it. Not only has it been proven to reduce cholesterol, but it's also a powerful antioxidant. Most notably, it's a powerful antibiotic, fighting

infection and bacteria, which is particularly beneficial with the fall germ season just around the corner when garlic is making its peak.

**Serve** Everything Just about every recipe calls for garlic in some form. Use it liberally and double the amount called for. Your body will thank you.

### Potatoes

**Why** When trying to lose weight, potatoes are one of the first things people cut out, but potatoes are hardly the devil's food ({unless deep-fried in cheap vegetable oil and served out of a paperboard container}). All varieties are nutritional powerhouses, boasting a variety of vitamins and minerals, as well as being a great source of fiber-rich complex carbohydrates, something our bodies need to stay fueled {and filled}. Better yet are the skins, which are where a good portion of the nutrients and fiber live.

**Serve** Roast 'em, mash 'em, bake 'em, or add to salads like this **Quinoa Salad with Roasted Kale, Sweet Potato, and Cannellini Beans**, or really go outside of the box with his **Maple Sweet Potato Hummus**.

### Peaches

**Why** There is nothing like a perfectly ripe, in-season peach. Not only are they delicious, but also boast some powerful stats, including a laundry list of vitamins (A, C, E, and K), as well as being a rich source of calcium, beta-carotene, fiber, potassium, and folate. This translates to weight loss/management, maintaining that youthful glow, and sharp eye sight.

**Serve** You can get all fancy with your peaches, making peach cobbler, peach pie, or peach ice cream, but my personal preference is to wash well and slowly savor the fresh, juicy nectar that can only be enjoyed for a few short weeks every August. One of life's simple pleasures.