

Farmers Market Tips

Summer is peak farmers' market season and a great way to implement fresh fruit and vegetables into your week! Not to mention, you get to support your local vendors and reduce your carbon footprint since the produce does not have to travel as far to get to you. Due to the wide variety of options and some lesser-known fruit and vegetable varieties, the farmers market can feel a bit overwhelming. Read these 6 important tips to have the best shopping experience!

Don't know where the closest farmers market is? Click [here](#) to be taken to USDA's Local Food and find to the closest one to you!



Seasonal Produce

Gaining basic knowledge about your seasonal local produce will help you know what to expect when you go shopping. Check out this website to plug in your state and current month to get not only a list of seasonal produce in your area but also fun facts, cooking tips and nutritional information: <https://www.seasonalfoodguide.org/>



Plan Ahead

Planning out your meals for the week ahead will not only save you time and money but ensure you will consume healthy, well-balanced meals. Buy only the amount of produce you will use within one week to help avoid food waste. Take stock of what you have at home and create a list of what you will need.



Bring Small Change

Vendors prefer cash payment so be sure to hit your bank beforehand. If you receive financial assistance for purchasing food from your state organization, you may use your benefits at farmers markets to buy eligible food items. Find the manager's booth and tokens will be issued for the value you want to spend while you are there.



Identifying Rotten Produce

Use your best judgment when choosing produce and don't be afraid to inspect it fully before throwing it in your bag. Signs of rotten produce can have the following attributes: slimy or mushy to the touch, paler than its ripe color, moldy and/or accompanied by a foul odor.



Ugly Produce (Don't be Afraid!)

Buying imperfect foods is still just as tasty and healthful as the "normal" looking fruits and vegetables. Most of the time, leftover "ugly" produce goes to waste. Do your part and reduce food waste by buying that carrot that has a second leg!



Organic vs Locally Grown

"Grown locally" does not mean Organic, and vice versa. Most people visit their farmers' markets to buy locally sourced produce & assume all the produce are. However, depending on where you are located, some produce stands might be selling fruits or vegetables not grown anywhere near your town. Ask the vendor for clarification!