

Eating Now:

# A Seasonal Produce Guide



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California is home to **8 diverse growing regions** and is responsible for over **400 different commodities** and nearly **half of all fruits, nuts and vegetables grown in the US**, come from California.

**Sacramento Valley**

Counties: Sutter, Yolo, Butte, Sacramento, Colusa, Glenn and Tehama

Commodities: Rice, Almonds, Tomatoes, Sugar Beets

**San Joaquin Valley**

Counties: Fresno, Kern, Tulare, Merced, King, Madera, Stanislaus

Commodities: Grapes, Cotton, Milk, Oranges, Almonds, Stone Fruit, Cattle, Alfalfa, Poultry

**Delta Region**

Counties: Contra Costa, Solano, San Joaquin

Commodities: Milk, Asparagus, Vegetables, Corn

**Central Coast**

Counties: Monterey, San Benito, Santa Cruz, Ventura, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara

Commodities: Lettuce, Lemons, Celery, Strawberries, Broccoli, Cauliflower, Artichokes, Grapes, Cattle

**South Coast**

Counties: Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego, Riverside

Commodities: Strawberries, Oranges, Tomatoes, Milk, Eggs, Avocado,

**North Coast**

Counties: Mendocino, Sonoma, Humboldt, Del Norte, Santa Clara, San Mateo, Napa

Commodities: Wine Grapes, Timber, Milk, Livestock

**Desert Region**

Counties: Imperial

Commodities: Dates, Lettuce, Melons, Cattle, Alfalfa, Cotton, Wheat, Sugar Beets, Chickens



**Mountain Region**

Counties: Trinity, Lassen, Modoc, Siskiyou, Mariposa, Plumas, Sierra, Nevada, Placer

Commodities: Livestock, Timber, Hay, Pasture, Christmas Trees, Grapes, Potatoes

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# Growing Regions



There are an abundance of fruits and vegetables available year round due to California's varied climates, modern growing practices and storage capabilities.

Apples  
Arugula  
Beans  
Beets  
Belgian Endive  
Bok Choy  
Broccoli  
Broccoli Rabe  
Cabbage  
Carrots

Cauliflower  
Celery  
Chard  
Collard Greens  
Fennel  
Kale  
Leeks  
Lemons  
Lettuce  
Mint

Mushrooms  
Mustard Greens  
Onions  
Oregano  
Parsley  
Potatoes  
Radicchio  
Rosemary  
Sage  
Scallions

Sorrel  
Spinach  
Spring Mix  
Sprouts  
Thyme  
Turnips  
Watercress

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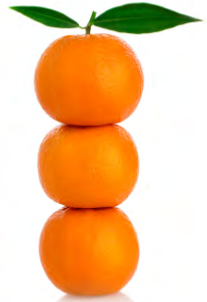
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# Year Round Produce



During the winter months of **December, January and February** there are many produce items harvested and in peak quality. These items thrive in the cooler temperatures and have the best flavor during this time. Some favorites of this season are:



### Citrus

Winter is peak citrus season and there are a bounty of varieties available including:

- |               |              |
|---------------|--------------|
| Navel Oranges | Meyer Lemons |
| Mandarins     | Satsumas     |
| Grapefruit    | Pommelos     |
| Tangelos      | Clementines  |
| Tangerines    | Kumquats     |



### Radicchio

As all chicories do, radicchio become sweeter during the winter. The standard round variety is called Radicchio di Chioggia and has deep red leaves with white veins and is very firmly packed together.



### Kale

While kale is available year round, it is in its peak quality during the winter months. Kale comes in many varieties such as Red Russian Kale, Curly Kale, Lacinato Kale and Redbor Kale. The cooler temperatures keep this super food and leafy green sweet and not bitter.



### Rutabagas

This cross between a cabbage and a turnip has a slightly bitter flavor and is crisp and juicy when raw. Once cooked this member of the Brassica family turns golden in color and sweet like a potato, but with less starch.

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# Winter Produce



Spring brings rebirth to our environment as we warm up from winter and start to see new growth in the fields. During **March, April and May** there are an abundance of new items for our plates. A few notable favorites are:



#### Asparagus

Asparagus is in season from about February to June, peaking in the Spring months. These shoots come from a fern plant that if left alone, would grow to about 6ft. It is known as a luxury vegetable because of the amount of time and space the plant requires. The first harvest produces very thin spears, but as the season progress the stalks become thicker. Both green and white varieties are available.



#### Fava Beans

Fava Beans are an ancient food source and are in fact one of the oldest plants under cultivation today. While cleaning and removing the beans from the shells is labor intensive, their distinct sweet and nutty flavor and creamy texture lend themselves well to a wide variety of dishes.



#### Green Garlic

While green garlic often looks like a regular scallion, it is actually an immature garlic plant with a very delicate garlic flavor. These plants used to be the by product of thinning out a field of garlic, but today they are increasing in popularity and are often now grown as a crop of their own. They are available from March to July.



#### Strawberries

Strawberries are the first fruit to ripen in the Spring time in California. They are harvested From January through November with peak season being April to June. These sweet berries are a universal favorite and can be used in sweet and savory dishes alike.

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# Spring Produce





Summer showcases California's most impressive harvest in terms of variety of fresh produce. During **June, July and August** crowd favorites are in abundance as the days get warmer and longer. Here are just a few highlights from this delicious season.



#### Tomatoes

Juicy tomatoes begin to become available in June and last into fall. They are at their peak sweetness during the warm summer months. There are a large variety of tomatoes available today including heirloom, cherry, grape, roma and beefsteak. They come in color from red to green, purple, black to striped and more. Tomatoes are truly a summer treat not to be missed.



#### Stone Fruit

Sweet, sticky, juicy stone fruit is long awaited by many all year long. While some varieties may begin showing up on the market in late Spring, the best fruit will be during the heat of summer from June to August. Stone fruit includes peaches, nectarines, cherries, apricots, apriums, plums and pluots .



#### Summer Squash

Summer squash includes zucchini, scallop, yellow crookneck, yellow straightneck, sun drops, blossom, globe and more. The skin of summer squash is delicate and the flesh when cooked has buttery notes. Squash is an incredibly versatile ingredient and lends itself especially well to being stuffed.



#### Melons

There are many varieties of melons and heirloom melons available during the summer months. Watermelon, cantaloupe, honeydew, crenshaw, canary, casaba, sugar melon, Piel de Sapo and many more. They will last from summer into early fall.

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# Summer Produce



During the months of **September, October and November** lower temperatures bring diverse harvest to the market. California's varied climates offer a rich assortment of crops including:



#### Persimmons

Persimmons come in two common varieties, fuyu and hachiyas. Both varieties have a nutty and mild pumpkin like flavor. Fuyus can be eaten raw, but hachiyas are most commonly used in baking and are prized for their pulp in sweets. Unless completely ripe, hachiyas have a very tart flavor.



#### Pears

Comice, bosc, red anjou, French butter, bartlett, seckel and asian pears are just some of the popular varieties of pears available in the fall. With their firm flesh and often delicate skin, pears are used in a variety of dishes, both savory and sweet.



#### Broccoli Rabe

While related to broccoli, broccoli rabe is actually most closely related to turnips. This plant has a nutty taste with a slightly pleasant bitterness. The large dark green leaves and stalks are perfect for sautéing.



#### Figs

Figs are a luxury fruit that is becoming more popular and widely available. They have two seasons, a short season in early summer and a second main season in late summer through fall. Figs have a very unique texture and flavor. They are very soft, sweet and are full of delicate seeds and prized in both savory and sweet dishes.

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