

Benefits of Fruits and Vegetables

Buying fruits and vegetables at your Farmers' Market provides you with healthy foods, physical activity and fun for the family.

FARMERS' MARKET LIST

Fruits	Veggies

Reference

University of Nebraska Extension
 University of Illinois Extension
<http://www.choosemyplate.gov/>
<http://fnic.nal.usda.gov/>
www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org

Agency use:

For more information: Call or visit your local Illinois Department of Human Services office.

If you have questions about any Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) program, call or visit your local IDHS office. We will answer your questions. If you do not know where your local IDHS office is or if you are unable to go there, you may call the automated helpline 24 hours a day at:

1-800-843-6154

(866) 324-5553 TTY/Nextalk, 711 TTY Relay

You may speak to a representative between:
8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Monday - Friday (except state holidays)

For answers to your questions, you may also write:

Illinois Department of Human Services
 Office of Customer and Support Services
 100 South Grand Avenue East
 Springfield, Illinois 62762

Visit our website at:
www.dhs.state.il.us

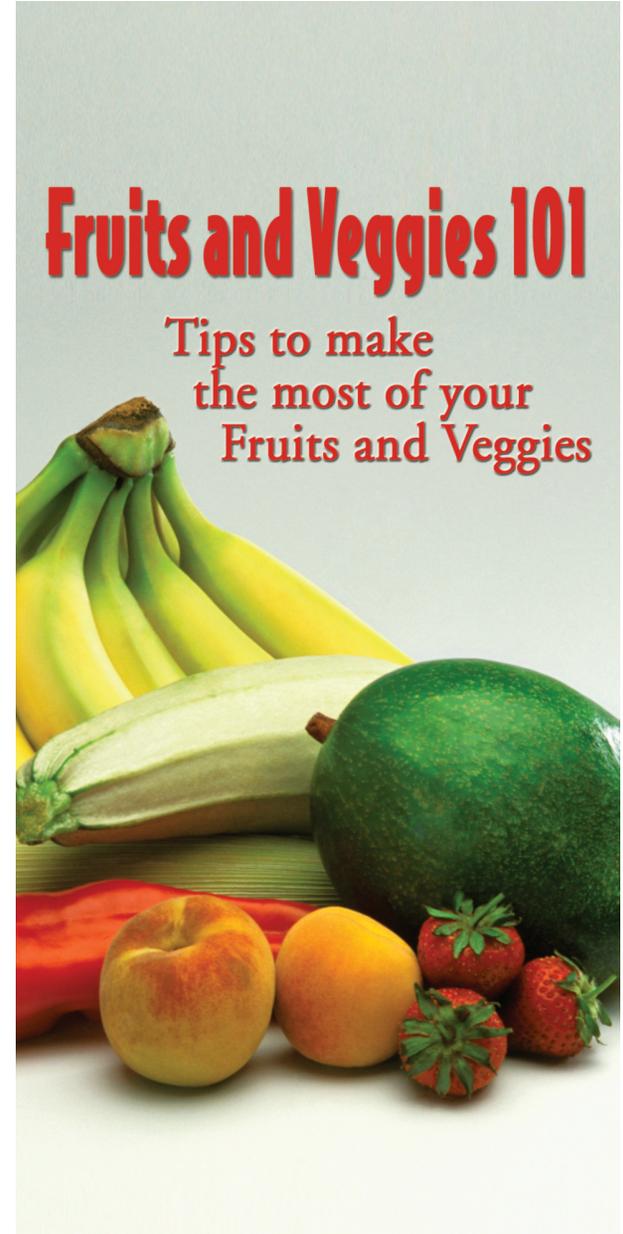


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 Department of Human Services



Fruits and Veggies 101

Tips to make
 the most of your
 Fruits and Veggies



SELECTION



Shop early

This will allow you to find the best selection of fresh produce.

Choose in-season fruits and vegetables

The closer you are to the growing season, the fresher your produce and the better it tastes.

Check for freshness

Look for brightly colored fruits and vegetables. Leaves or greens should be crisp, not wilted.

Large does not mean better

Larger sized vegetables may be too mature and have little flavor.

Bag properly

Place the heavier, firmer produce at the bottom of the bag or basket.

STORAGE

Store produce right away to prevent spoilage.

Most fruits will not continue to ripen if they are refrigerated. This is true for tomatoes as well.

These fruits should be refrigerated:

- ☞ Apples
- ☞ Berries
- ☞ Grapes
- ☞ Melons

Potatoes and onions will lose quality in the refrigerator.

Punch holes in plastic bags before storing.



CLEANING

Just before preparation give your produce a good washing in cold water.

When cooking firm produce with tougher skin, scrub with a brush.

Allow leafy greens to float in clean water.

Soaps or cleaners are not needed; water does the job.

PREPARATION



Heat and too much water can destroy important vitamins. Limit cooking time and water.

SPEED UP THE RIPENING PROCESS

1. Place fruit in a large paper bag.
2. Punch several holes in the paper bag.
3. Do not stack pieces of fruit on top of each other.
4. Fold the top of the bag.
5. Leave the bag on the countertop.
6. Check on fruit daily.

FOOD SAFETY

- ✓ Wash your hands before preparation.
- ✓ Keep fresh fruits and vegetables stored away from raw meats.
- ✓ Wash cutting board, utensils and countertops with hot soapy water.