

5 Spring Fruits and Vegetables You Should Be Eating

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Springtime is the beginning of the growing season here in New England and we are already reaping the harvest! Locally grown fruits and vegetables picked when ripe are the healthiest produce around. Here are 5 local crops that are all considered superfoods that are delicious and good for you.

Asparagus

Asparagus, high in Vitamin K, fiber, antioxidants and folate, has many health benefits including potentially helping with digestive issues and urinary tract infections. Asparagus is easy to cook and is delicious grilled. I like to add a little olive oil, garlic and lemon juice when I bake asparagus. Asparagus is amazing on the grill with a little salt and lemon squeezed on at the end of grilling. It is also wonderful in an omelet with feta cheese and tomatoes. Extra grilled or baked asparagus can be added to an omelet with feta and tomatoes.

Strawberries

Strawberries are a potent anti-inflammatory and contain lots of nutrients that may help reduce the risk of heart disease, cancer and diabetes. They may also have an anti-aging effect. Strawberries will be in season over the next month. Its best to get them organic if possible as they are one of the fruits that sucks up the most pesticide. Organic strawberries are easy to find in Massachusetts and there are plenty of places where you can pick them yourself. May I suggest strawberries dipped in melted dark chocolate for a double dose of yummy nutrition or added to a smoothie with Greek yogurt, banana and orange juice?

Cherries

Cherries, like strawberries, are also a potent anti-inflammatory and may help relieve arthritis and lower the risk of stroke and cancer. Cherries may help with sleep because they contain melatonin, a natural sleep aid. You want to refrigerate cherries as they lose their quality very quickly at room temperature. Tart cherry juice has many of the same health benefits as whole cherries. Cherries are also delicious dipped in dark chocolate or in a salad alongside slivered almonds or walnuts.

Spinach

Spinach may help reduce the risk of asthma, diabetes, cancer and blood pressure. People in most of the healthiest places in the world eat greens on a daily basis. Spinach is great raw in salads or cooked. Two of my favorite spinach recipes are [Spinach with Potatoes and Olive Oil](#) and [Spinach with Feta and Lemon](#).

Broccoli

Broccoli is another vegetable that may help reduce the risk of cancer. It may also be helpful for digestive issues and bone health. I love roasting broccoli in the oven (at 400 degrees F) with extra virgin olive oil, salt and pepper. Broccoli is also delicious on pizza with other veggies such as mushrooms and goes very well with olives.

All of these fruits and vegetables are most flavorful and nutritious when eaten in season at their peak ripeness, but they can also be frozen for use at other times of the year. I usually cook them into a recipe and then freeze them.

Note: Check with your doctor If you are taking any medications or supplements that may have contraindications with any of these fruits and vegetables.

