

SEASONAL EATING WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE IN CANADA?

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YOU MAY HAVE HEARD THE TERM SEASONAL EATING, BUT WHAT DOES THIS REALLY MEAN AND WHAT MAKES IT SO GREAT?

Seasonal eating refers to eating foods around the same time they are naturally grown and harvested. In Canada, the types of foods available seasonally will vary month-to-month and season-to-season. In this article, I will be highlighting the top six reasons why you should eat more seasonally and what fruits and vegetables are available for Canadians over the summer months.

Six reasons you should eat more seasonally:

1) Nutritional Quality

Eating seasonally allows you to

consume more fruits and vegetables at their nutritional peak. Both fruit and veggie plants get their nourishment from the soil, sun, and water. We often harvest produce based on ripeness, so when we allow fruits and veggies to become ripe on the plant we are allowing them to develop to their peak nutritional quality (meaning more antioxidants and vitamins per bite).

2) Supports the Local Economy

When you eat seasonally you have the opportunity to support your local economy by supporting local farmers, markets, and businesses. This feeds into local jobs and supports your community's growth. In addition, eating seasonally drives the supply and demand chain, meaning lower prices for seasonal produce. That means the berries we all love are inexpensive over the summer months in Canada because we can naturally grow and harvest them during the warmer months.

“... SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL ECONOMY BY SUPPORTING LOCAL FARMERS, MARKETS, AND BUSINESSES.”

3) Environment

There are so many ways that seasonal eating supports our environment. For one, we are saving on transportation of fruits and vegetables. When we purchase more seasonally, our food doesn't have to travel as far to get to us, therefore reducing emissions. Eating seasonal also allows you to support your local farmers, meaning more open farm and green spaces for your community. What's even more amazing is that seasonal produce can grow with less support from things like pesticides or genetic modifications, making our produce a lot healthier while creating less environmental pollution.

4) Community Building

Eating more seasonally allows you to get to know your local community a little better. Connect with local farmers or others interested in sustainable and seasonal eating. You might have the opportunity to support or collaborate with community programs and workshops. For example, many towns and cities will have local farmers' markets (especially during the warmer months) and CSA (community supported agriculture) share, where you invest in a local farmer and receive their produce in return. Together we can make change.

5) Tasty Benefits

I always love giving the example of a tomato; there is just no comparison to a fresh summer garden tomato. Am I right? Fruits and veggies that have the opportunity to be fully ripened by the sun produce amazing flavour. Who doesn't want fruits and veggies that taste delicious and are loaded with nutrition?

6) Support a Strong Immune System

Our Canadian summer fruits and vegetables are rich in so many nutrients, including vitamin C and other

antioxidants like anthocyanins and polyphenols, both of which play an important role in keeping our bodies functioning at their best. In addition, our seasonal produce tends to have a high water and fibre content, helping keep our bowels working properly and our bodies hydrated all summer long.

Bonus Benefit: Eating more seasonally gives you the opportunity to have fun and experiment in the kitchen, perhaps even get your family and kids involved. Try making the strawberry chia seed jam included here for a super easy, healthy and totally delicious recipe!

What's in season during Canadian summers?

Early Summer (May-June)	Summer (July-August)
- Cherries	- Apricots
- Rhubarb	- Blueberries
- Strawberries	- Cantaloupe
- Asian Greens	- Cranberries
- Asparagus	- Grapes
- Beans	- Nectarines
- Broccoli	- Raspberries
- Cucumber	- Plums
- Kale	- Pears
- Lettuce	- Brussels Sprouts
- Potato	- Celery
- Raddish	- Swiss Chard
- Spinach	- Corn
	- Eggplant
	- Fennel
	- Rapini
	- Tomatoes
	- Zucchini
	- Turnips

In Canada, there is a lot more produce available in the summer months, so take advantage. Perhaps even freeze or can some for the winter months, where the root vegetables and richer foods are more available.

Cheers to happy and healthy seasonal eating!



Angela Wallace is a registered dietitian, nutritionist, family food expert, and canfitpro personal trainer. She specializes in women's health, with a focus on

weight loss and digestive conditions. She uses a 'non dieting approach' with her ultimate goals being to help people find a balanced lifestyle and healthy relationship with food. Find out more at eatrightfeelright.ca or @eatright_rd

CHIA SEED BERRY JAM



Ingredients:

- 3 cups strawberries (can be any berry or any combination of berries)
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 tbsp water
- 2 tsp vanilla extract
- 1-2 tbsp honey or maple syrup
- 3 tbsp chia seeds

Directions:

1. In a pot over medium heat, begin to heat the berries (1 minute, stirring).
2. Add in lemon juice, vanilla, honey, and water. Continue to cook until strawberries soften and start to form a gel like substance (3-5 minutes).
3. Remove from heat and add chia seeds.

Enjoy over yogurt, on a slice of bread, with oatmeal, or just off the spoon!