



NORTHEAST REGIONAL

Food Guide

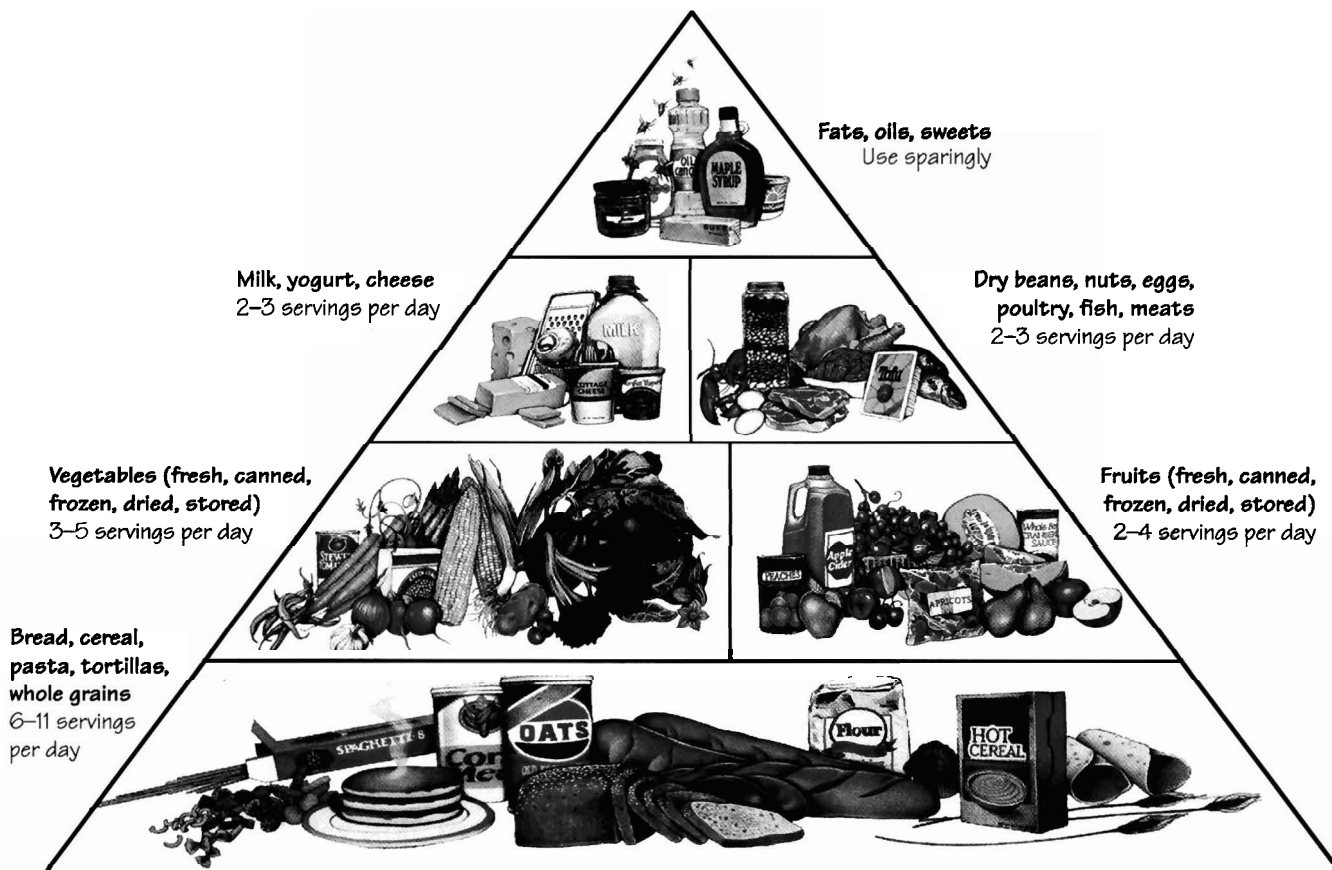
Just like other food guides, the Northeast Regional Food Guide reflects our current understanding of the relationship between diet and health. In addition to health, food choices have important impacts on local agriculture and the environment. The Northeast Regional Food Guide helps you select a healthful, seasonally varied diet from a wide variety of foods produced in the Northeast.

In the Northeast and across the country, the level of interest in local and regional food systems where farmers sell their products to nearby

consumers is increasing. A growing number of consumers are concerned about the region's farmers, farmland, and the resources used in transporting food great distances from farm to table. One way to improve the market for farmers in the Northeast is to eat more of the foods they grow. By using the Northeast Regional Food Guide, you will improve the nutritional quality of your diet while supporting your neighbors, northeastern agricultural producers and food processors. The guide is easy to use and can help you

and your family learn more about our region's bountiful harvest.

Many foods pictured on the guide are available from regional sources year-round: milk, yogurt, and cheeses; dry beans, nuts, eggs, poultry, fish, and meats; and breads, cereals, pasta, tortillas, and whole grains. Fresh fruits and vegetables are available on a seasonal basis, with those that store well being available much of the year. Because fruits and vegetables are canned, frozen, and dried, it's possible to enjoy wonderful northeastern produce year-round.



(Number of servings is based on the Food Guide Pyramid, USDA 1992.)

Visit our Web site at: www.nutrition.cornell.edu/foodguide/

Seasonal Availability of Produce

Because of the varied climate in the Northeast, different fruits and vegetables are available at different times of the year. In the winter, emphasize canned, frozen, dried, and stored produce in your diet, as well as year-round produce such as sprouts and mushrooms. During the spring, summer, and fall enjoy our region's abundant fresh produce.

Spring

Spring is the time to enjoy a wide diversity of nutritious greens, several other vegetables, and the year's first fruits.

Vegetables

asparagus	mizuna
beets	mustard
broccoli	sorrel
cabbage	tat soi
cauliflower	turnip
fiddleheads	lettuce
garlic greens	mushrooms
greens	parsnips
arugula	peas—snap
beet	and snow
bok choi	radishes
chard	rhubarb
collard	scallions
cress	spinach
dandelion	sprouts
kale	turnips

Fruits

apples
strawberries

Season with

chives	oregano
cilantro	parsley
dill	sage
marjoram	thyme
mint	

Summer

Summer is the peak of the season for many northeastern fruits and a great time to enjoy a wide variety of fresh vegetables.

Vegetables

beets	mushrooms
broccoli	okra
cabbage	onions—red
carrots	and yellow
cauliflower	peppers—hot
celery	and sweet
cucumbers	potatoes—new
eggplant	radicchio
endive	scallions
fennel	sprouts
garlic	summer squash
green beans	sweet corn
kohlrabi‡	tomatoes
lettuce	

Fruits

apricots	gooseberries
blackberries	melons
blueberries	nectarines
cherries	peaches
currants	plums
elderberries	raspberries

Season with

basil	parsley
cilantro	rosemary
dill	savory
marjoram	tarragon
mint	

Fall

Fall, the traditional harvest season, is the time to enjoy the bounty of northeastern fruits and vegetables.

Vegetables

beets	turnip
broccoli	horseradish†
Brussels sprouts	kohlrabi
burdock (gobo)	leeks
cabbage	lettuce
carrots†	mushrooms
cauliflower	onions—red
celeriac	and yellow†
daikon†	parsley
fennel	parsnips
garlic†	potatoes†
greens	pumpkins
arugula	radishes
beet	rutabaga
bok choi	scallions
chard	shallots†
collard	sprouts
kale	sweet potatoes
mustard	turnips
mizuna	winter squash†
tat soi	

Fruits

apples†	grapes
apple cider†	pears†
Asian pears	quince
cranberries	raspberries

Season with herbs dried from the spring and summer harvests.

Winter

At this time of year a wide variety of northeastern foods can be found canned, frozen, dried, and stored.

Vegetables

beets	leeks‡
burdock (gobo)	mushrooms
cabbage	onions—red
carrots	and yellow
celeriac	parsnips
daikon†	potatoes
garlic	rutabagas
horseradish	shallots
Jerusalem	sprouts
artichoke	sweet potatoes
kale‡	turnips
kohlrabi‡	winter squash

Fruits

apples
apple cider
pears

Season with herbs dried from the spring and summer harvests.



* The fruits and vegetables listed reflect the availability of fresh and stored produce. In addition, many regional fruits and vegetables can be found canned, frozen, dried, or stored year round.

† This is the peak harvest season. However, this fruit or vegetable can be found in other seasons stored from local sources.

‡ Available early in this season only.

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NORTHEAST REGIONAL

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How to Use This Guide

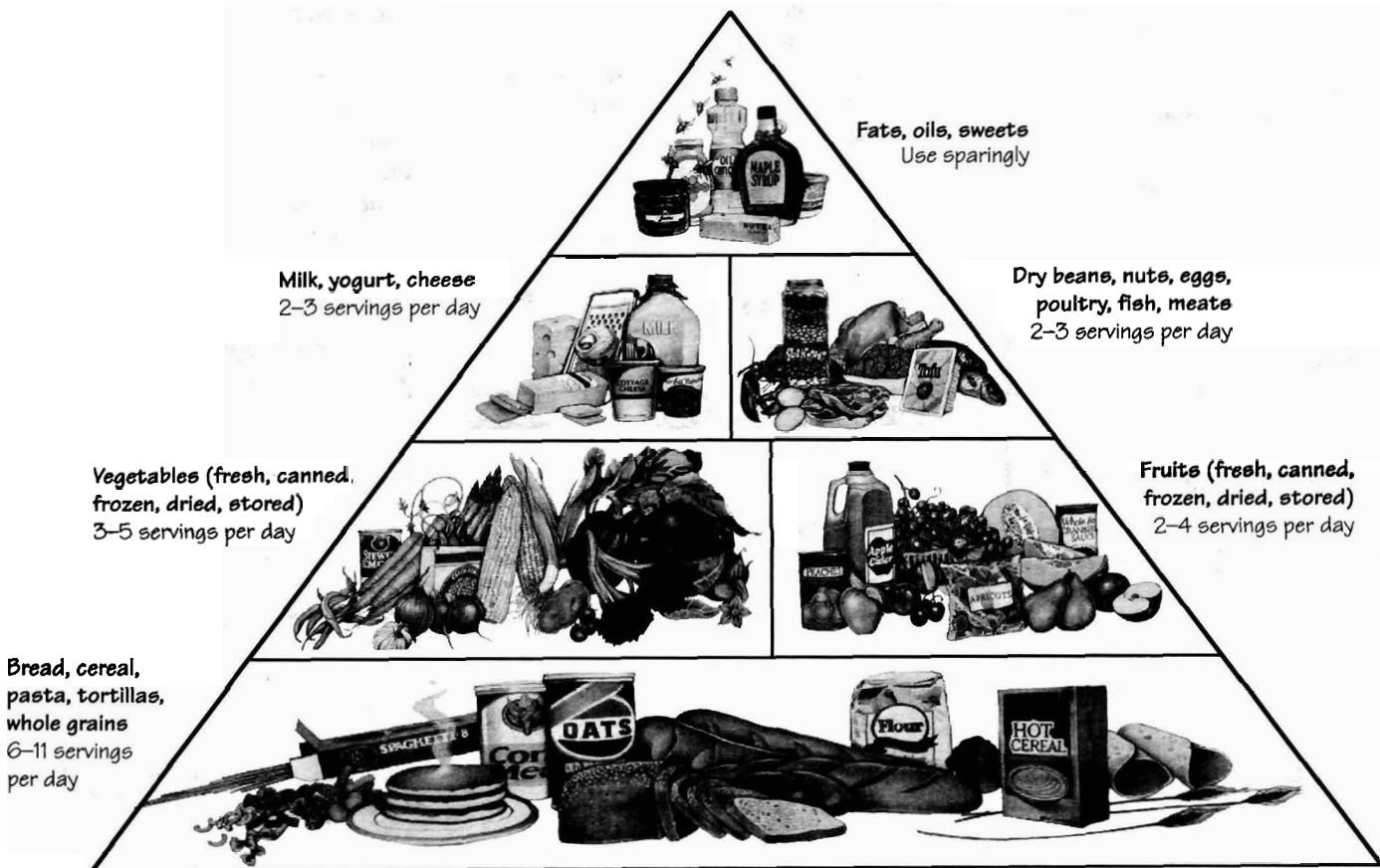
Why Is a Regional Food Guide Necessary?

All food guides are based on our current understanding of the relationship between food choices and health, but few are specific to a particular region of the country. The Northeast Regional Food Guide helps you select a healthful diet from a wide variety of foods, emphasizing those that are produced and processed in the Northeast.

The foods we choose have an important impact on local agriculture and the environment. Northeastern consumers express a preference for locally produced foods and a concern about the region's farmers, farmland, and the resources used in transporting food great distances. One way to improve the market for northeastern farmers is to eat more of the foods they grow. By using the Northeast Regional Food Guide you will improve the

nutritional quality of your diet while supporting your neighbors—northeastern agricultural producers and processors. The guide is easy to use and can help you and your family choose a healthy diet while learning more about our region's bountiful harvest.

Many foods listed in the guide are available from regional sources year round—milk, yogurt, and cheese; dry beans, nuts, eggs, poultry, fish, and meats; and bread, cereal, pasta,



The Northeast Regional Food Guide

(Number of servings is based on the Food Guide Pyramid, USDA 1992.)

tortillas, and whole grains. But the foods in the fruit and vegetable groups are available seasonally. Thus eating produce from the Northeast means learning about the different forms in which they are available—fresh, canned, frozen, dried, and stored—throughout the year.

Dietary Guidelines for Good Health and a Sustainable Food System

The Northeast Regional Food Guide is based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans (U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Fourth Edition, 1995) and the Food Guide Pyramid (United States Department of Agriculture, 1992).

- Eat a variety of foods.
- Balance the food you eat with physical activity. Maintain or improve your weight.
- Choose a diet with plenty of grain products, vegetables, and fruits.
- Eat a diet low in fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol.
- Consume a diet moderate in sugars.
- Choose a diet moderate in salt and sodium.
- If you drink alcoholic beverages, do so in moderation.

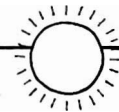
The Northeast Regional Food Guide adds two more guidelines:

- Choose a diet with plenty of foods produced in the Northeast.
- Eat a seasonally varied diet—especially with respect to fruits and vegetables.

Seasonal Availability

How can I shop for produce?

Because of the varied climate in the Northeast, many vegetables are available at different times of the year. We emphasize canned, frozen, dried, and fresh produce as well as year-round produce such as sprouts. In spring, summer, and fall enjoy our region's abundance of fresh produce.



Spring

Spring is the time to enjoy a wide diversity of nutritious greens, several other vegetables, and the year's first fruits.

Vegetables

asparagus	mizuna
beets	mustard
broccoli	sorrel
cabbage	tat soi
cauliflower	turnip
fiddleheads	lettuce
garlic greens	mushrooms
greens	parsnips
arugula	peas—snap and
beet	snow
bok choy	radishes
chard	rhubarb
collard	scallions
cress	spinach
dandelion	sprouts
kale	turnips

Fruits

apples
strawberries

Season with

chives	oregano
cilantro	parsley
dill	sage
marjoram	thyme
mint	

Summer

Summer is the peak of the season for many northeastern fruits and a great time to enjoy a wide variety of fresh vegetables.

Vegetables

beets	mushrooms
broccoli	okra
cabbage	onions—red and
carrots	yellow
cauliflower	peppers—hot and
celery	sweet
cucumbers	potatoes—new
eggplant	radicchio
endive	scallions
fennel	sprouts
garlic	summer squash
green beans	sweet corn
kohlrabi†	tomatoes
lettuce	

Fruits

apricots	gooseberries
blackberries	melons
blueberries	nectarines
cherries	peaches
currants	plums
elderberries	raspberries

Season with

basil	parsley
cilantro	rosemary
dill	savory
marjoram	tarragon
mint	

* The fruits and vegetables listed reflect the availability of fresh and stored produce. In addition, many regions have their own specialties.

† This is the peak harvest season. However, this fruit or vegetable can be found in other seasons stored from the previous season.

‡ Available early in this season only.

Availability of Produce*

Produce that's in season?

In the Northeast, different fruits and vegetables are in season at different times of the year. In the winter, you can find canned and stored produce in your diet, as well as mushrooms. During the spring, you can find abundant fresh produce.



Fall

Fall, the traditional harvest season, is the time to enjoy the bounty of northeastern fruits and vegetables.

Vegetables

beets	turnip
broccoli	horseradish
Brussels sprouts	kohlrabi
burdock (gobo)	leeks
cabbage	lettuce
carrots†	mushrooms
cauliflower	onions—red and yellow†
celeriac	parsley
daikon†	parsnips
fennel	parsnips
garlic†	potatoes†
greens	pumpkins
arugula	radishes
beet	rutabaga
bok choy	scallions
chard	shallots†
collard	sprouts
kale	sweet potatoes
mizuna	turnips
mustard	winter squash†
tat soi	

Fruits

apples†	grapes
apple cider†	pears†
Asian pears	quince
cranberries	raspberries

Season with herbs dried from the spring and summer harvests.

Winter

At this time of year a wide variety of northeastern foods can be found canned, frozen, dried, and stored.

Vegetables

beets	leeks‡
burdock (gobo)	mushrooms
cabbage	onions—red and yellow
carrots	parsnips
celeriac	potatoes
daikon†	rutabagas
garlic	shallots
horseradish	sprouts
Jerusalem artichoke	sweet potatoes
kale‡	turnips
kohlrabi‡	winter squash

Fruits

apples
apple cider
pears

Season with herbs dried from the spring and summer harvests.

The Northeast Regional Food Guide is designed to help you choose a diet that will meet nutrient requirements, promote health, support an active life, and reduce your risk of contracting several diet-related diseases. This guide promotes a diet rich in a wide variety of plant foods—fruits, vegetables, grains, cereals, beans, and legumes—as well as an adequate and enjoyable variety of dairy products, meats, and eggs. There is much variety between the food groups as well as within each group.

Remember that most of your daily calories should come from foods in the grain group (6–11 servings), the vegetable group (3–5 servings), and the fruit group (2–4 servings). Foods from the dairy group (2–3 servings) and animal products from the meats and beans group (2–3 servings), especially those that are high in fat, should be eaten in moderate amounts. Foods found in the smallest portion of the pyramid (fats and sugars) should be consumed sparingly. In addition, you should consume six to eight 8-ounce glasses of water or fluid each day.

Why is there a range of recommended servings?

As with the Food Guide Pyramid, the Northeast Regional Food Guide recommends a range of servings from each food group. The correct number of servings will depend on your energy needs, which are based on your age, sex, body size, and level of activity. Almost everyone needs at least the smallest number of servings in each food group range.

If you tend to be sedentary, you will require fewer servings each day from the groups in the pyramid. If you are more active, growing, or are pregnant or nursing, you will likely need to choose more servings to meet your nutritional needs.

*All fruits and vegetables can be found canned, frozen, dried, and stored year round. Local sources.

How much is a serving?

The amount of any food that counts as a serving depends on the calorie and nutrient content of the food.

Food Group	Serving Size
bread, cereal, pasta, tortillas, whole grains	1 slice bread; 1/2 bagel; 1 oz. cold cereal; 1/2 cup hot cereal or pasta; 5–6 crackers; 1 tortilla
vegetables (fresh, canned, frozen, dried, stored)	1 cup leafy raw vegetables; 1/2 cup cooked or chopped raw vegetables; 3/4 cup vegetable juice
fruits (fresh, canned, frozen, dried, stored)	1 medium piece fresh fruit; 1/2 cup chopped, cooked, or canned fruit; 3/4 cup fruit juice
milk, yogurt, cheese	1 cup milk, yogurt, or kefir (liquid yogurt made from cow's milk); 1 1/2 oz. cheese
dry beans, nuts, eggs, poultry, fish, meats	1/2 cup cooked beans; 2–3 oz. poultry, fish, or lean meat; 4 oz. tofu or tempeh; 8 oz. soy milk; 2 eggs; 2 tbsp. peanut butter, tahini, or other nuts or seeds

How can I shop for produce that's in season?

Because of the varied climate in the Northeast, different fruits and vegetables are available at different times of the year. In the winter, emphasize canned, frozen, dried, and stored produce in your diet, as well as year-round produce such as sprouts and mushrooms. During the spring, summer, and fall enjoy our region's abundant fresh produce.

Sample Food Plans for One Day

How many servings are right for me?

The following table* can help you decide:

	1,600 calories (for many sedentary women and some older adults)	2,200 calories (for most children, teenage girls, active women, and many sedentary men)	2,800 calories (for teenage boys, many active men, and some very active women)
Bread, cereal, pasta, tortillas, whole grains:	6 servings	9 servings	11 servings
Fruits (fresh, canned, frozen, dried, stored):	2 servings	3 servings	4 servings
Vegetables (fresh, canned, frozen, dried, stored):	3 servings	4 servings	5 servings
Milk, yogurt, cheese†:	2–3 servings	2–3 servings	2–3 servings
Dry beans, nuts, eggs, poultry, fish, meat:	2 servings	2 servings	3 servings

*Adapted from USDA (1992)

† Women who are pregnant or breastfeeding, teenagers, and young adults need 3 servings.

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Quiz: Are You a Regional and Seasonal Eater?

Take this quick quiz to find out how well you eat according to the seasons in the Northeast:

1. When purchasing produce, how frequently do you look for information that tells you where it was from?

- a. seldom/never
- b. sometimes
- c. always

2. In the winter how does your consumption of stored, dried, canned, and frozen produce compare to fresh?

- a. decreases
- b. stays the same
- c. increases

3. During the growing season, how much of your produce comes from farm stands, farmers' markets, community-supported agriculture, directly from farmers, from your own garden, or from produce labeled as "local" at the supermarket?

- a. none
- b. some
- c. all or most

4. During the winter, how often do you consume fresh tomatoes?

- a. regularly
- b. sometimes
- c. hardly ever

5. Which of the following winter vegetables do you eat regularly during the winter months?

- potatoes
- winter squash
- carrots
- onions
- turnips
- beets
- cabbage
- rutabagas
- parsnips
- Jerusalem artichokes

How many did you check?

- a. 1-3
- b. 4-7
- c. 7-10

Scoring: Give yourself 3 points for each (c), 2 points for each (b), and 1 point for each (a) you chose.

If your total score was

12-15: You are a seasonal expert and a real champion of local foods. Keep up the good work!

9-11: You are probably fairly dependent on imported produce during the winter. Use the Northeast Regional Food Guide to help you learn more about which foods are available locally at different times of the year. The fact

sheet "Becoming a Regional and Seasonal Eater" can help you make the transition. You may already practice some of the first few steps—if so, try the more difficult ones further down the list.

5-8. Your diet probably changes little throughout the year. But because of our northeastern seasons, different produce is available at different times of the year. Refer to the fact sheet "Becoming a Regional and Seasonal Eater" for ways—some easy, others more difficult—to make small changes in your eating habits that can add up to a northeastern diet. To learn more about agriculture in the region, study the Northeast Regional Food Guide Pyramid to discover which northeastern foods are available at different times of the year. Eating foods that are produced in our region can be a fun and exciting challenge.



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Food Guide

Becoming a Regional and Seasonal Eater



If you're wondering how to become a more regional and seasonal eater, the following steps are for you.

Tips for Eating Foods from the Northeast

- When you choose produce in your supermarket or food store, notice where it was grown. This may sound simple, but not many people do it. If you have the option of buying a locally grown item, do so.
- Several juices and ciders are made from fruits grown in the Northeast—particularly cranberry, grape, and apple. Try to find ones made from regional sources.
- If you're not sure where produce was grown, find out. Ask your supermarket produce department to post signs identifying where produce is from and to offer items from northeastern farms whenever possible.
- Become a member of a community-supported farm. To find out more about community-supported agriculture, see the fact sheet "Resources for Regional Eating."
- When you eat in a restaurant, order foods that are or can be grown or produced in the region.

- Get involved in food planning committees at schools and other institutions in your area. Help identify local and regional alternatives to current purchases.

Tips for Seasonal Eating

- During the summer buy produce from a farmers' market, roadside stand, or U-pick farm or from produce labeled "local" at your supermarket or food store. Sweet corn is fresher—and usually sweeter—right after it's picked, and tomatoes can be tastier and juicier when they're vine ripened.
- During the winter months include some of the following familiar fruits and vegetables in your diet: potatoes, winter squash, carrots, cabbage, onions, beets, turnips, garlic, apples, and pears.
- In the winter try at least two of these less familiar vegetables: Jerusalem artichokes, kale, parsnips, rutabagas, or kohlrabi. Find tips on how to prepare them in the "Seasoning Your Kitchen" fact sheet.
- In the summer and fall enjoy the abundance of the Northeast's fresh fruit and vegetable harvest. During the winter explore the wide variety of northeastern-grown produce that is canned, frozen, dried, and stored.

- Use the Northeast Regional Food Guide to learn which foods are not available fresh in the Northeast during the winter. Chances are that you eat some of these foods regularly. Start replacing one or two non-regional foods that you eat often during the winter with alternatives that are produced locally. If you usually eat an imported item once a day, try cutting back to once a week and so on. Use the Northeast Regional Food Guide to find nutritionally compatible substitutes that are available regionally.
- During the summer visit a U-pick farm, and pick enough to can or freeze some of what you pick. Berries are easy to freeze: put them on a cookie sheet and place it in the freezer; after they're frozen, store them in small airtight plastic bags in the freezer. Your county's Cooperative Extension office is a good source of information on freezing and canning.



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Eating Seasonally

What Does Eating Seasonally Mean and Why Is It Important?

Perhaps you've seen the words "in season" at your supermarket or on a restaurant menu. Have you ever wondered what that means?

Because of the varied climate of the Northeast, different foods are available from local sources at different times of the year, and foods in season here may not be in season in other regions and countries. By looking at what's available in the produce department of your local supermarket, you may not be able to tell if it is July or January outside! That's because in most of the United States we have become accustomed to having the same foods available year round. Fresh produce from across the country and around the world is shipped to our supermarkets throughout the year. But though we depend on and enjoy this convenience, it contributes to hidden costs that are not usually considered. These include loss of farms and environmental concerns.

Regional Economic Viability

Supporting farms in the Northeast is not only good for farmers, it is good for the area's economy. Studies have shown that rural communities with many family farms have the healthiest economies and that with the loss of each farm three to five *other* rural jobs are also lost.

Getting food from farm to table involves many steps—from planting and harvesting crops, to processing, transporting, packaging, storage, and marketing. The complex food system of the Northeast increases economic stability and security in the region. The foods that consumers choose every day have important impacts on this system.

Local Agriculture

When customers buy foods that are produced in distant areas, they weaken the local market for northeastern farmers. A recent survey found that 98 percent of northeastern consumers agree that keeping farms viable in the Northeast is important, yet according to the Census of Agriculture the Northeast loses farms at an alarming rate—about 3,300 each year. The farms that dot the northeastern landscape can make the area vibrant and healthy. And though farms fail for different reasons, many northeastern farmers would be unable to stay in business without the strong support of regional consumers.

Natural Resources

Transporting fresh produce to the Northeast from other regions requires a significant amount of energy. Currently, the price of fuel is low enough that it is economical to ship food great distances. But some environmental costs, such as air pollution and damage to our roadways, are not accounted for in the price of our food. When food is transported from far away, it needs to be kept cool.

The refrigeration needed to keep food fresh during its long journey to market uses energy and may require chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) or other ozone-depleting gases.

The Joy of Eating Local Foods

There are other, less tangible benefits to regional and seasonal eating. Eating foods that are grown in the Northeast can help you become more aware of local agricultural cycles and of the seasons and weather. Eating in season leads to a heightened sense of awareness and excitement as the season for your favorite local produce arrives. Once you've tasted a juicy, local vine-ripened tomato at the peak of the season, it may be difficult to recognize the pink, hard tomato you'll find in stores in the middle of winter. When asked to compare local produce with imported, most northeastern consumers think that local fruits and vegetables are fresher, taste better, and look better. Of course, as with any dietary changes, eating regionally and seasonally will be easier if you make changes gradually. Use the fact sheet "Becoming a Regional and Seasonal Eater" to help guide you.



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Resources for Regional Eating

If you would like to learn more about foods that are grown and processed in the Northeast, there are several sources of information about the region's food and agriculture system.

Your local Cooperative Extension office is a good place to start. Extension staff can provide information about farmers' markets, roadside stands, and U-pick farms in your area. Some extension offices have publications and programs on gardening and composting as well as guidelines for home food preservation and may be involved in the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program. There is a Cooperative Extension office in every county; to reach the office in your county contact the main office in your state (listed below).

Direct Marketing

Direct marketing is the selling of produce by farmers directly to the people who eat the food. Farmers in the Northeast market directly to consumers in several ways:

- *U-pick* means you go to the farm and pick produce yourself.
- *Roadside stands* sell produce, usually at or near the farm.
- *Farmers' markets* are prevalent in the Northeast, even in major cities.
- *Community-supported agriculture* (CSA) is a new way of marketing in which consumers and farmers team up.

For information on U-pick, roadside stands, and farmers' markets in your area, contact your county extension

office or your state's department of agriculture (listed below). For information on community-supported agriculture, contact the BioDynamic Farming Association (800-516-7797).

Preserving the Harvest

You may decide you'd like to can, freeze, or dry summer produce for use in the winter. These methods are practiced less frequently than in the past, but with a little time and guidance you can enjoy local strawberries in February. Several resources are available to help you get started. Your local Cooperative Extension office may offer helpful, low-cost publications. Many books are available on the subject—look for them in your library.

Growing Your Own Garden

One of the best ways to learn about what can be grown in the region is to plant your own garden. In addition to Cooperative Extension, many organizations and groups are devoted to educating the public about home gardening. If you don't have backyard space, your area may have a community garden that offers individual plots for a minimal fee.

Resources for Learning More about Nutrition, Food, and Agriculture in Your State

Connecticut

Cooperative Extension System
University of Connecticut
1376 Storrs Road
Storrs, CT 06268-4036
203-486-4125

Department of Agriculture
State Office Building
165 Capitol Ave.
Hartford, CT 06106
203-566-3671

Delaware

Cooperative Extension System
University of Delaware
Townsend Hall
Newark, DE 19717
302-831-2506

Department of Agriculture
2320 S. Dupont Highway
Dover, DE 19901
302-739-4811

District of Columbia

Cooperative Extension Service
University of the District of Columbia
901 Newton St. NE
Washington, DC 20017
202-576-6993

Maine

Cooperative Extension
University of Maine
5741 Libby Hall
Orono, ME 04469-5741
207-581-3188

Department of Agriculture,
Food, and Rural Resources
State House Station 28
Augusta, ME 04333
207-287-3871

Maryland

Cooperative Extension Service
University of Maryland
2120 Symons Hall
College Park, MD 20742
301-405-2907

Department of Agriculture
50 Harry S. Truman Parkway
Annapolis, MD 21401
410-841-5700

Massachusetts

Cooperative Extension System
212C Stockbridge Hall
University of Massachusetts
Amherst, MA 01003
413-545-4800

Department of Food and Agriculture
100 Cambridge St.
Boston, MA 02202
617-727-3000

New Hampshire

UNH Cooperative Extension
59 College Road
Durham, NH 03824
603-862-1520

Department of Agriculture, Markets,
and Food
P.O. Box 2042
Concord, NH 03302-2042
603-271-2505

New Jersey

Rutgers Cooperative Extension
Cook College
P.O. Box 231
New Brunswick, NJ 08903
908-932-9306

Department of Agriculture
CN 330
Trenton, NJ 08625
609-292-8853

New York

Cooperative Extension
Roberts Hall
Cornell University
Ithaca, NY 14853
607-255-2237

Department of Agriculture and Markets
55 Hanson Place
Brooklyn, NY 11217
718-722-2830

Pennsylvania

Cooperative Extension Service
Pennsylvania State University
217 Ag Administration Building
University Park, PA 16802
814-863-3438

Department of Agriculture
2301 Cameron St.
Harrisburg, PA 17110-9408
717-787-4737

Rhode Island

Cooperative Extension Service
University of Rhode Island
Woodward Hall
Kingston, RI 02881
401-792-2474

Department of Environmental
Management
22 Hayes St.
Providence, RI 02908
401-277-2781

Vermont

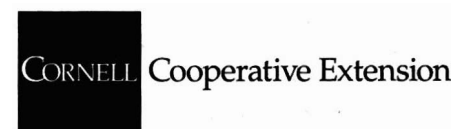
Extension System
University of Vermont
601 Main St.
Burlington, VT 05401-3439
802-656-2990

Department of Agriculture, Food, and
Markets
116 State St.
Montpelier, VT 05620-2901
802-828-2500

West Virginia

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Food Guide

The Northeast: An Abundant Food Producer

From apples and chickens in West Virginia to fish caught off the coast of Maine, the Northeast region produces a variety and abundance of food. Cattle, sheep, and goats are raised to provide dairy products and meat; chickens furnish meat and eggs; pigs, turkey, and deer supply meat; and fish farms add to the area's natural supply of freshwater fish, ocean fish, and shellfish. Our region also yields a wide variety of fruits and vegetables, including many types of dry beans. Grains such as wheat, oats, rye, barley, corn, and buckwheat are cultivated in the Northeast, and sweet treats such as honey and maple syrup are regional specialties.

Meats, grains, and dairy products with many low-fat options are usually available year round. But because of the northeastern climate, fruits and vegetables have definite seasons—specific periods of time when crops are planted, when they grow, and when they are

harvested and taken to market. But no matter what the season, plenty of northeastern produce is always available in a variety of forms—fresh, canned, frozen, dried, or stored.

The Northeast Regional Food Guide poster can help you get an idea of the diversity available in each group of foods that come from the region. Fresh produce is listed under the season(s) in which it is available.

What Is a Season?

The Northeast region spans several latitudes and varies in geography and climate. Thus spring in northern New England can begin much later than spring in the Mid-Atlantic states.

Although the calendar defines seasons by the length of the days, a

practical agricultural definition is based on frosts, or freezing temperatures. The last frost date for your area (the last date, on average, that the temperature falls below freezing) marks the time when *spring produce*, which is planted in very early spring, will begin to mature and be ready for harvest. As spring progresses, look for peas, asparagus, lettuce, rhubarb, radishes, and all kinds of greens; early-maturing broccoli, cauliflower, turnips, and beets are ready in later spring. Around this last frost date, many vegetable farmers plant summer crops such as tomatoes, corn, beans, squash, and peppers. Also notice that in the springtime some dairy cows are put out on pasture to graze the lush grass. Many farmers make their first cutting of hay at this time as well.





Summer produce is ready six weeks (green beans) to eight or nine weeks (tomatoes) after planting. During the summer be sure to enjoy a wide array of ripe northeastern fruit, including peaches, plums, cherries, melons, and berries.

The first frost, marking the end of summer and the transition to fall, may slip by unnoticed because it may occur at night while it is still warm during the day. Pay close attention to your local weather forecasts or call your county Cooperative Extension office to get information on frost dates for your area. Most summer vegetables cannot survive freezing temperatures, whereas fall crops thrive in cooler weather. Fall broccoli, cabbages, Brussels sprouts, and grapes

actually get "sweeter" after a frost. Depending on your area, *fall produce* may be available for one to several months before very cold weather sets in. Most farmers plant garlic in mid-October for spring greens and summer bulbs.

Once there is a long stretch of severely cold weather and winter has arrived, *winter produce* begins to take the place of fall produce. Some winter crops, such as kale or leeks, are available only for the first month or two of the winter in harsher climates. In milder climates, these more tender crops may be available all winter. Most winter favorites such as potatoes, onions, carrots, cabbage, winter squash, apples, and beets, as well as less familiar

vegetables such as burdock, rutabagas, and Jerusalem artichokes, are harvested in the late fall and stored throughout the winter. Several crops are also available from greenhouses, and there is always a wide variety of canned and frozen alternatives from which to choose. As winter ends and the temperature warms up again, watch out for the last frost date in the spring. It's time for spring produce and the beginning of another cycle.

Food Guide

“Seasoning” Your Kitchen

Many foods listed in the Northeast Regional Food Guide are available year round—milk, yogurt, and cheese; dry beans, nuts, eggs, poultry, fish, and meat; and bread, cereal, pasta, tortillas, and whole grains. But the foods from the fruit and vegetable groups are available seasonally. Thus eating fruits and vegetables from the Northeast means learning about the different forms in which they are available—fresh, canned, frozen, dried, or stored—during different seasons.

This fact sheet provides ideas for how to use fruits and vegetables as they become available season by season. Bon appetit!

Spring

It's exciting when spring produce becomes available because it means the long winter is really over. Enjoy eating lots of greens during the spring—they're very healthy. Turnip and mustard greens are an excellent source of vitamin A and calcium, as are oriental vegetables such as bok choy. Spring is the best time to enjoy local rhubarb and strawberries.

Try the following ideas:

- Stir fry bok choy (Chinese cabbage): separate the leaves from the stalks and chop both coarsely. Cook quickly in a hot wok or frying pan with sesame oil, adding the stalks first and then the leaves. Season with soy sauce and serve over rice. For additional flavor and protein, try adding tofu, beef, pork, or chicken to the stir fry.
- Sauté mustard or other greens with garlic, onions, salt, and pepper. Serve as a side dish or over pasta or rice.
- Enjoy fresh salads made with many greens. Lettuce, spinach, mustard, arugula, tat soi, mizuna, and dandelion can all be mixed together (sometimes called “mesclun”) for a healthy and tasty spring salad.
- Savor the first peas of the season raw at lunchtime or as a snack.
- Many local herbs are at their peak in spring—use them in salad dressings and seasonings and in sauces for meat, fish, or poultry.

Summer

Summer is the peak of the season for northeastern fruit such as peaches, cherries, raspberries, blueberries, and melons. Many of our favorite vegetables such as tomatoes and sweet corn are best when picked at the peak of ripeness and eaten while still very fresh.

This is a great time of year to visit a farmers' market, roadside farm stand, or U-pick farm.

Summer treats:

- Eat fruit salad for breakfast, or for a dessert treat top it with nonfat vanilla yogurt.
- Try a salad of fresh local tomatoes sliced and topped with chopped fresh basil and pressed garlic, or one of chopped peppers, cucumbers, tomatoes, onions, and crumbled feta cheese.
- Grill fresh sweet corn in the husk with your summertime barbecues. If the corn is very fresh, it needs very little cooking and can even be eaten raw.
- Steam summer squash and top with Parmesan cheese and fresh basil for an easy summertime side dish.
- Add fresh vegetables—onions, peppers, tomatoes, squash, and eggplant—to kebobs, or try all-vegetable kebobs at summer picnics and barbecues.
- In very hot weather enjoy gazpacho—cold soup made from tomatoes and cucumbers.
- Make pancakes with buckwheat, an important northeastern grain, and top with fresh northeastern berries for breakfast.

Fall

Fall is the peak time for broccoli, cauliflower, and cabbage. Broccoli thrives in the cool weather and is a good source of vitamin A and vitamin C. Fall is also a good time to enjoy many northeastern fruits such as grapes, pears, and apples.

Savor fall produce:

- Warm up with leek and potato soup.
- Roast pumpkin seeds in a hot skillet, adding a little salt. But beware—this tasty treat is very high in fat and calories. So even though these seeds contain some important vitamins and minerals such as folic acid and iron, enjoy this snack only in moderation.
- Cut fat from apple pie by avoiding fat-laden crust—make apple crisp instead. It's quicker, too.
- For an easy meal sauté chopped broccoli with garlic (add thinly sliced beef or chicken if you like) and toss with pasta.
- Toss steamed cauliflower with chopped parsley and a little vinegar.
- Drink hot apple cider for a real treat on a cool fall day.

Winter

Winter vegetables grow during the summer, are harvested in the fall, and can be stored for use throughout the winter. Some fruits, such as apples and pears, also store well during the winter. Many winter vegetables are old standards such as potatoes, onions, carrots, cabbage, beets, and winter squash. But many more that may be less familiar are nutritious and can add variety to your winter diet. Have you ever tried Jerusalem artichokes, parsnips, burdock, kohlrabi, celeriac, turnips, or rutabagas?

Winter vegetables are nutritionally important. One whole potato supplies one-third of the RDA for vitamin B₆ and vitamin C. One cup of cooked beets supplies one-quarter of the RDA for folic acid. One-half cup of baked butternut squash provides nearly 100 percent of the RDA for vitamin A, 50 percent of the RDA for vitamin C, and is a good source of potassium. One cup of raw Jerusalem artichoke provides 5.1 mg of iron, which is 50 percent of the RDA for men and children and 33 percent of the RDA for women. With good planning, it is possible to eat a nutritionally adequate diet by eating seasonally, even during the northeastern winter.

Winter vegetables are easy to use:

- Cut winter squash in half, scoop out the seeds, place upside down in one inch of water in a baking pan, and microwave for 10–15 minutes on high or bake in a conventional oven at 350° for 30–45 minutes until soft. For a real treat, drizzle maple syrup over baked squash.

Winter Squash

Acorn	Hubbard
Buttercup	Kuri
Butternut	Pumpkin
Delicata	Spaghetti

- Shred carrots and red cabbage for a colorful winter salad—no lettuce necessary!
- Cut root vegetables such as carrots, parsnips, and rutabagas into half-inch rounds and steam or roast together for a tasty—and healthy—side dish. Season with dried rosemary for a real treat.
- Combine potatoes, parsnips, carrots, and onions with chicken, beef, or beans to make a wonderfully nutritious and hearty stew.
- Sauté garlic and onions, add cubed carrots and turnips, and season with thyme and oregano for a delicious winter side dish.

- Bake potatoes and top them with nonfat yogurt, chopped red onions, and shredded cheese for a quick and easy light meal or side dish.
- Boil beets, peel them, then marinate in vinegar and garlic or try shredding raw beets into a salad for a healthy and colorful addition.
- Use canned tomato paste or puree as a good source of vitamin C during the winter.
- Peel and slice kohlrabi to replace broccoli (which is not harvested in the Northeast during the winter) in most recipes. Kohlrabi can be used cooked or raw and is excellent with carrot sticks at lunchtime or as a snack.
- Replace celery, a summertime crop in the Northeast, with celeriac, a closely related root vegetable, as a seasoning in soups.
- Blend fruits frozen from summer with low-fat yogurt to make a refreshing treat in the winter.



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NORTHEAST REGIONAL

Food Guide

Ideas for Nutrition Educators, Dietitians, and Food Service Managers

- Use the Northeast Regional Food Guide as a tool to encourage regional eating, and give examples of local foods in educational materials and counseling advice.
- Consider making educational presentations about regional eating at supermarkets, farmers' markets, or other places where people buy food. Also make presentations to local civic, environmental, and religious groups about the importance of regional eating.
- Plan seasonal menus and recipes for clients that feature northeastern foods and emphasize different forms of produce during different seasons. Stress canned, frozen, dried, and stored northeastern produce during the winter and fresh produce at other times of the year.

Encourage hospitals, schools, and restaurants in your area to purchase local foods whenever possible. Some states, such as New York, have laws to help make this easier. If you are in charge of purchasing food for an institution, explore the feasibility of switching to local suppliers for at least some items.

- Support policies that preserve and maintain northeastern farmland and enhance the local food supply.
- Let suppliers know that you want to purchase northeastern foods, and encourage them to carry northeastern foods whenever possible.



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NORTHEAST REGIONAL

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Seasonal Produce Lists*

Because of the varied climate in the Northeast, different fruits and vegetables are available at different times of the year. In the winter, emphasize canned, frozen, dried, and stored produce in your diet, as well as year-round produce such as sprouts and mushrooms. During the spring, summer, and fall enjoy our region's abundant fresh produce.

Spring

Spring is the time to enjoy a wide diversity of nutritious greens, several other vegetables, and the year's first fruits.

Vegetables

asparagus	mizuna
beets	mustard
broccoli	sorrel
cabbage	tat soi
cauliflower	turnip
fiddleheads	lettuce
garlic greens	mushrooms
greens	parsnips
arugula	peas—snap
beet	and snow
bok choy	radishes
chard	rhubarb
collard	scallions
cress	spinach
dandelion	sprouts
kale	turnips

Fruits

apples
strawberries

Season with

chives	oregano
cilantro	parsley
dill	sage
marjoram	thyme
mint	

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Summer

Summer is the peak of the season for many northeastern fruits and a great time to enjoy a wide variety of fresh vegetables.

Vegetables

beets	mushrooms
broccoli	okra
cabbage	onions—red and yellow
carrots	and yellow
cauliflower	peppers—hot and sweet
celery	potatoes—new
cucumbers	radicchio
eggplant	scallions
endive	sprouts
fennel	summer squash
garlic	sweet corn
green beans	sweet corn
kohlrabi‡	tomatoes
lettuce	

Fruits

apricots	gooseberries
blackberries	melons
blueberries	nectarines
cherries	peaches
currants	plums
elderberries	raspberries

Season with

basil	parsley
cilantro	rosemary
dill	savory
marjoram	tarragon
mint	



Fall

Fall, the traditional harvest season, is the time to enjoy the bounty of northeastern fruits and vegetables.

Vegetables

beets	turnip
broccoli	horseradish†
Brussels sprouts	kohlrabi
burdock (gobo)	leeks
cabbage	lettuce
carrots†	mushrooms
cauliflower	onions—red and yellow†
celeriac	parsley
daikon†	parsnips
fennel	potatoes†
garlic†	pumpkins
greens	radishes
arugula	rutabaga
beet	scallions
bok choy	shallots†
chard	sprouts
collard	sweet potatoes
kale	turnips
mustard	winter squash†
mizuna	
tat soi	

Fruits

apple†	grapes
apple cider†	pears†
Asian pears	quince
cranberries	raspberries

Season with herbs dried from the spring and summer harvests.

Winter

At this time of year a wide variety of northeastern foods can be found canned, frozen, dried, and stored.

Vegetables

beets	leeks‡
burdock (gobo)	mushrooms
cabbage	onions—red and yellow
carrots	parsnips
celeriac	potatoes
daikon†	rutabagas
garlic	shallots
horseradish	sprouts
Jerusalem artichoke	sweet potatoes
kale‡	turnips
kohlrabi‡	winter squash

Fruits

apples
apple cider
pears

Season with herbs dried from the spring and summer harvests.



* The fruits and vegetables listed reflect the availability of fresh and stored produce. In addition, many regional fruits and vegetables can be found canned, frozen, dried, or stored year round.

† This is the peak harvest season. However, this fruit or vegetable can be found in other seasons stored from local sources.

‡ Available early in this season only.