



Plant Powered
Metro New York

Whole Plant Foods Shopping Notes

Fresh & Frozen Vegetables

When you shop, buy an assortment of vegetables that gives you a variety of colors, each of which offer different nutritional benefits. Aim to include dark leafy greens, mushrooms, and onions -- specifically helpful for a healthy immune system. Options include:

- Dark leafy greens: Kale, spinach, collard greens, red/green leaf lettuce, romaine, Swiss or rainbow chard, arugula, and many others. You can buy bagged or boxed salad mixes, often pre-washed, to make it easier to eat your greens.
- Cruciferous vegetables: Broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, brussels sprouts, and some of the greens above (like kale, arugula, bok choy)
- Starchy vegetables: Sweet potatoes, white potatoes, a wide variety of squash, root vegetables like carrots, turnips, parsnips, cassava, and more
- Non-starchy vegetables: Onions, shallots, zucchini, beets, celery, corn (choose organic when possible), eggplant, fennel, etc.
- Mushrooms: Not a vegetable but fungi; all varieties are good but need to be eaten cooked.
- Fresh herbs have lots of nutrients and can enhance many dishes as garnish, added at the end of preparing a dish, like parsley, thyme, rosemary, basil, and cilantro.
- Cascadian Farms' frozen potatoes: Hashbrowns, Root Vegetable Hashbrowns, Fire Roasted Sweet Potatoes -- all are made with vegetables only and crisp up great in the oven.

Fresh & Frozen Fruits

These are most flavorful and cheapest to buy when in season. Look for inexpensive imported tropical fruits in the winter when there's less variety in our domestic harvest. Fruit-selling vendors in NYC often have a great selection of ready-to-eat produce at low cost.

- *Berries*: Strawberries, blueberries, raspberries, blackberries, cranberries (winter) etc.
- *Melons*: Cantaloupe, honeydew, watermelon, wide variety
- *Citrus*: Orange, grapefruit, clementine/mandarin, lemon, lime
- *Stone fruit* (available in the summer): Peaches, plums, apricots, nectarines
- *Tropical fruits*: Bananas, papayas, persimmon, pineapples, mango.
- *Cucumber and tomato*: Botanically, these are fruits, not vegetables.
- *Avocado*: Also botanically a fruit, avocado is primarily composed of healthy fats (monounsaturated) but very high in fat and calories; for weight loss, limit what you eat to no more than ½ avocado per day.

Legumes: Beans, Peas, and Lentils

Dry beans are very inexpensive, and canned beans can be cheap and convenient but often include added salt. Choose “no salt added” varieties, or rinse off some of the salt before eating. Different kinds of legumes provide different consistencies, and although they can be interchangeable, specific recipes may call for specific beans. Dried lentils are quick and easy to cook (in a pot or pressure cooker) and don’t need to be soaked, while most other legumes should be soaked prior to cooking in order to aid in digestion.

- *Beans*: Chickpeas/garbanzo beans, cannellini (white kidney), red kidney, black beans, pinto, edamame (soy), etc.
- *Lightly-processed soy foods* like tempeh (fermented soybeans) and tofu, both of which absorb the flavor of anything you marinate them in
- *Lentils*: Red, black, green, beluga, mung dal (yellow)
- *Peas*: Split green and yellow peas, frozen or canned sweet peas (without salt)

Whole Grains

There are many varieties of whole grains, each imparting different flavors and textures.

- *Intact whole grains*: Brown rice, black/forbidden rice, wheat berries, kamut, spelt, farro, millet, quinoa, barley, sorghum, oat groats, buckwheat groats, amaranth
- *Hot breakfast cereals* like oatmeal (choose oat groats, steel cut, or rolled oats rather than instant/quick oats), grits, whole-grain cream of wheat, Bob’s Red Mill’s Creamy Buckwheat and Brown Rice Farina
- *Lightly-processed grain options*:
 - WFPB-compliant boxed cereals: Bob’s Red Mill cereals and mueslis, Arrowhead Mills puffed whole grain cereals, Kashi’s 7 Whole Grain Puffs, Ezekiel brand cereals, and Post whole-grain shredded wheat (“Wheat & Bran”). Note that granola is usually very high in added sugars and oils, but mueslis can provide a similar texture.
 - Whole-grain pastas: whole wheat, bean, and gluten-free pastas. Note that not all GF pastas are whole grain, specifically those with corn and rice -- unless it says “brown rice.” Try different kinds, as you may be surprised at how much you like different varieties.
 - Whole-grain wraps like corn tortillas
 - Whole-grain pizza crusts: look for those without oil
 - Brown rice cakes or oil-free crispbreads, like Wasa
 - 100% whole grain bread: be sure to read labels and choose breads with very few ingredients. Examples: sprouted whole wheat Ezekiel Bread, whole-wheat sourdough breads, Dave’s Killer Bread.

Nuts and Seeds

These are a great source of healthy fats, but limit to one small handful or 1-2 oz. to keep your calorie intake low. Those who are underweight or who have high metabolism may eat nuts and seeds more liberally.

- *Flax and chia seeds*: Grind before eating for better absorption of their omega-3 fats, and store in the fridge or freezer.

- Hemp seeds and walnuts: More great sources of omega-3's
- Almonds
- Cashews: Soak first before using in "creamy" sauces and dressings
- Brazil nuts: Good source of the mineral selenium
- Hazelnuts (filberts), macadamia nuts, etc.
- Pumpkin seeds (pepitas) and sunflower seeds
- Tahini: Sesame seed paste (high in fat but good in small amounts in certain dressings and sauces; unhulled tahini is high in calcium)
- Nut butters: Limit how much you consume due to calorie density and always read ingredients to look for added sugar, salt, and oils. Even brands that are touted as "natural" often have additives.

Other Staples

Although fresh produce and shelf-stable grains and legumes will predominate in the whole food, plant-based kitchen, these staples add flavor and variety.

- *Plant Milks*: Choose unsweetened milks, those without added oils and carrageenan, and minimal salt -- soy, oat, hemp, almond, etc. Rice milk often has added oils. Read labels carefully.
- *Herbs & Spices*: The spices you choose to have are often based on the type of cuisine you eat. If you buy spice mixes, read the ingredients list for added salt, rice concentrate (a de-caking agent), and other additives.
 - Garlic powder, onion powder, cinnamon, basil, oregano, bay leaves, cumin, black pepper, turmeric
 - Look for salt-free seasonings like Benson's or Mrs. Dash blends, or look for those with salt as the last ingredient, like Ca Ri Ni an Do's madras curry powder.
 - Start with herb/spice blends instead of spending money on many individual spices
- *Dried Fruit*: While dried fruit can be calorically-dense, it's a great addition to your dishes for added sweetness and useful for sweet baking projects in lieu of added sweeteners. Raisins, dates, and apricots are particularly good to stock, though many options abound.
 - Try sun-dried tomatoes from Trader Joe's without oil or salt
 - Fruit bars made with all-fruit ingredients. Sample brands: That's It, certain Larabars (look for those made with only nuts and dried fruits)
- *Sweeteners*:
 - Try more wholesome sweeteners like date syrup, blackstrap molasses, or dried fruit pastes
 - Maple syrup is a fine option for those on a budget
 - Erythritol, stevia, and monk fruit are reasonable in small quantities
 - 100% juice or juice concentrates
 - Applesauce or other fruit sauces (with no added sugar/syrups)

- *Condiments:* Be sure to read the ingredients!
 - Mustards: Look for salt-free options such as Westbrae
 - Ketchup: Look for sugar-free varieties such as Primal Kitchen, or low-sugar options
 - Salsa without added sugar, and low-sodium
 - Sriracha or hot sauce, for those who like a kick
 - BBQ sauce: Most will have added sweeteners; choose more wholesome varieties. Sample brands: Primal Kitchen, Good Food for Good, Tessemae, Pitmaster LT “lower sugar”
- *Tomato Products:* Most jarred tomato sauces will have oil, sugar, and salt. Build your tomato sauces at home with plain strained/pureed tomatoes like the boxed Pomi brand, or opt for good-enough options like Trader Joe’s oil-free Spaghetti Sauce with Mushrooms (not salt- or sugar-free) or Brad’s Fat-Free sauces (not sugar-free).
- *More Flavorings:* Choose what you like to flavor or texture your food.
 - Vinegars: Balsamic, red wine, white wine, rice vinegar, etc.
 - Vegetable stock/broth: Look for oil-free and low-sodium/sugar options like Kitchen Basics, or make your own from your veggie clippings
 - Low-sodium soy sauce, or gluten-free tamari
 - Bragg’s Liquid Aminos (soy-based), or coconut aminos
 - Miso paste: High in salt, but benefits outweigh the drawbacks of the salt, and typically used in small quantities
 - Worcestershire sauce: Choose anchovy-free varieties
 - Nutritional yeast: Adds a delicious cheesy flavor to foods
 - Vanilla extract
 - Thickening agents like arrowroot powder or organic corn starch: Use in limited quantities