

fact sheet



Eating Green: The Environment Victoria Guide to Seasonal Food

Walking into a supermarket in the middle of a Victorian winter, it's easy to think that mangos and strawberries are in season. Being able to eat whatever we want whenever we want is convenient, but it isn't great for the planet, or even for the cost or flavour. Food that isn't in season has usually travelled huge distances to get to us — a typical selection of the foods we buy in Victoria has travelled an estimated 21,073 km. That's almost the same distance as travelling the whole coastline of Australia. In this fact sheet are three good reasons to eat produce which is meant to be ripe in your area when you buy it — food which is in season. And a calendar to tell you what's in season now.

1. Seasonal food is better for the climate

When your food travels around the world to get to you, it uses lots of energy which means lots of greenhouse gases. It's not just the distance, it's also the refrigeration along the way, and the energy that goes into packaging the food for the journey and storing it when it arrives. Produce which is in season tends to also be local food, which means much lower greenhouse gas emissions.

2. Trucks aren't good for flavour

Produce that is transported a long distance has to be harvested early so it doesn't rot during transit. Harvesting early doesn't allow the taste or nutrients to fully develop which means that while we can buy tomatoes all year round, a winter tomato is pale, flavourless and doesn't have the full nutritional content. The alternative — eating local, seasonal produce — means that produce is picked as close to the time it will be eaten as possible, which means lots of flavour, colour and nutrients.

3. Seasonal food is better for the hip pocket

Buying local seasonal produce also means you don't foot the bill for the transportation and storage which tends to be included in the cost of out of season foods. If you've ever tried to buy tomatoes in winter or mandarins in summer, you'll know what we mean.

See the list on the next page to find out what's in season now in Victoria





Use this handy list to find out what's in season in Victoria now

Summer

Apricots, basil, beans, beetroot, berries, capsicum, carrots, cherries, chillies, corn, cucumber, eggplant, figs, grapefruit, grapes, leeks, lettuce, melons, onions, oranges (valencia), parsley, peaches, pears, peas, plums, potatoes, rhubarb, silverbeet, spring onion, squash, strawberries, tomatoes, zucchini



Autumn

Apples, beans, beetroot, brussel sprouts, cabbage, capsicum, carrot, cauliflower, celery, chillies, corn, cucumber, eggplant, figs, grapefruit, grapes, leeks, lettuce, mandarins (imperial), melons, onions, oranges (valencia), parsley, parsnips, pears, peas, potatoes, rhubarb, silverbeet, spinach, spring onion, squash, strawberries, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, zucchini



Winter

Apples, beetroot, broad beans, broccoli, brussel sprouts, cabbage, carrot, cauliflower, celery, grapefruit, jerusalem artichokes, kiwi fruit, leeks, lemons, lettuce, limes, mandarins (imperial), onions, oranges (navel), parsley, parsnips, pears, potatoes, rhubarb, silverbeet, snow peas, spinach, spring onion, turnips

Spring

Artichoke (globe), asparagus, beans, beetroot, berries, broad beans, broccoli, capsicums, carrot, cauliflower, chillies, cucumbers, grapefruits, leeks, lemons, lettuce, limes, mandarins (imperial), onions, parsley, parsnips, peas, potatoes, rhubarb, silverbeet, snow peas, spinach, spring onion, squash, strawberries, zucchini



For some delicious inexpensive seasonal recipes go to:

http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhcsite.nsf/pages/bhc_recipes?opendocument#inseason