

University of Nebraska - Lincoln

**DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln**

---

Historical Materials from University of Nebraska-  
Lincoln Extension

Extension

---

1965

## EC65-940 Buying Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

Ethel Diedrichsen

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/extensionhist>

---

Diedrichsen, Ethel, "EC65-940 Buying Fresh Fruits and Vegetables" (1965). *Historical Materials from University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension*. 3750.

<http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/extensionhist/3750>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Extension at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in Historical Materials from University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

AGRI  
S  
85  
E7  
65-940

E.C. 65-940



**BUYING**

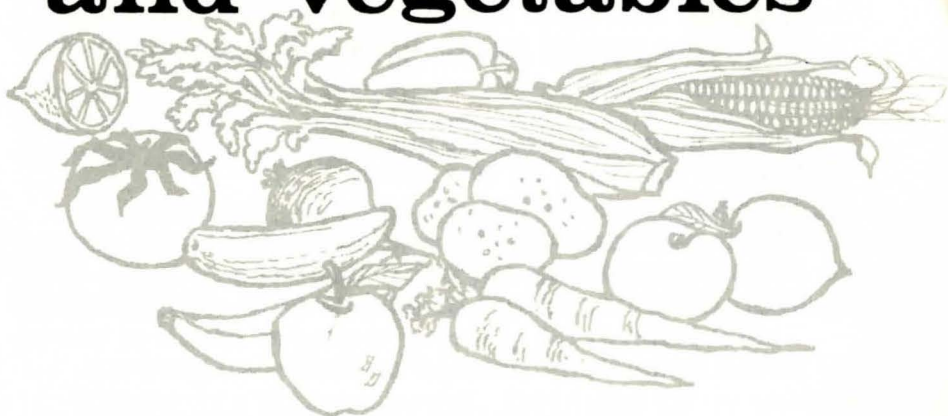
RECEIVED

OCT 18 1972

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE  
LIBRARY

A line drawing of a citrus fruit, possibly an orange or grapefruit, sliced in half to show its internal segments.

# **FRESH Fruits and Vegetables**



EXTENSION SERVICE  
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS  
AND U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE COOPERATING  
E. F. FROLIK, DEAN      E. W. JANIKE, DIRECTOR

# Buying Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

Ethel Diedrichsen  
Extension Specialist  
Food and Nutrition

At any supermarket you will find counters filled with tempting fresh fruits and vegetables. Many of these are available the year round at prices you can afford to pay. How can you decide which ones to buy? What qualities will you look for?

Your selection will depend upon your experience and the condition of the fruit or vegetable. The condition will be affected by the ripeness of the produce at time of harvest, care given it in handling, kind of packaging used, and the time and temperature at which it is held. Size, shape and color will also influence your choice. The following general suggestions will help you in buying.

- Make your own selection.
- Handle as little as possible.
- Select according to use.
- Buy fruits and vegetables in season.
- Shop when stores are not crowded.
- Watch for best buys in newspapers, on radio and television.
- Avoid underripe, bruised or shriveled produce.



IN BUYING

# FRUITS...

LOOK FOR:



Apples that are firm, crisp and well colored for variety. Medium-sized are best for general use. Select tart and juicy apples for sauce; those that hold their shape for baking. Overripe apples are mealy, lack flavor and do not keep well.

Apricots that are tree-ripened, plump and fairly firm with juicy flesh and uniform golden-yellow color. Avoid soft fruit.

Avacados that are heavy, medium-sized and just beginning to soften with rich, delicate, nut-like flavor. Texture should be soft and buttery; color, green to dark purple.

Bananas that are firm, plump and well developed, free from cracks or bruises. For eating, choose solid yellow with small brown flecks and mellow flesh. For cooking, select yellow with green tips and firm pulp.

Blackberries, Boysenberries, Loganberries, Raspberries that are fresh in appearance and plump with uniform color of particular berry. Look for berries with adhering caps, free from dirt, leaves or stems. Stained boxes indicate overripe or moldy berries.

Blueberries that are plump, fresh and fairly uniform in size and color. Berries should be clean, dry, free from leaves and sand.

Cherries that are fresh with firm skin and free from damage.

Sweet Bings should be dark mahogany; Royal Annes, light golden with slight pronounced pink or light red blush.



Sour: Cherries should be clear medium red and fairly firm. Examine at stem end for worm injury, decay and bruises.

Cranberries that are firm, plump and shiny; bright to blackish-red. Dark fruit is usually sweeter.

Grapefruit that is round, firm, but springy to the touch, smooth-textured and heavy for size. Surface defects, scars, scratches and discoloration do not affect eating quality. Fruits pointed at stem end are apt to be thick-skinned, light in weight and not juicy. Decay appears as soft, discolored area on peel at stem end.

Grapes that are plump, sound, fully ripe and compact with fruit firmly attached to stem. High color indicates well developed sugar content and flavor.

Lemons that are firm, heavy for size with fine-grained waxy rind. Choose lighter color for high acid flavor. Avoid soft, shriveled, spongy lemons.

Oranges that are firm, not spongy, heavy for size with reasonably fine-textured skin free from spots. Small oranges often have more juice than large ones.

Peaches that are firm but not hard, well filled and smooth with creamy or yellowish color. Red color is not a true sign of ripeness. Immature fruit is shriveled with rubbery flesh and no flavor. Bruised flesh is soft and discolored.

Pears that are light green to yellow in color, firm but not hard, with no cuts or bruises. Texture is fine rather than coarse or woody. They are best if picked green and allowed to ripen. Light-brown russeting does not affect quality.

Pineapple that is heavy for size, free from soft spots, clean in appearance with distinctly fragrant, fruity, pineapple odor. Color is orange-yellow or reddish-brown. Leaves pull out easily when ripe.

Plums and Prunes that are plump, soft enough to yield to slight pressure and fully colored for the variety. Pleasing aroma indicates full ripeness. Immature fruit are hard and shriveled with poor color and flavor.

Rhubarb that has a fairly thick stalk which is fresh and crisp, not wilted or flabby. Large leaves indicate old stalks. Color varies with variety.

Strawberries that are solid red with attached green stems and caps, free from moisture or dirt. Small berries are often sweeter than large ones. Stained container indicates soft, damaged or decayed berries.

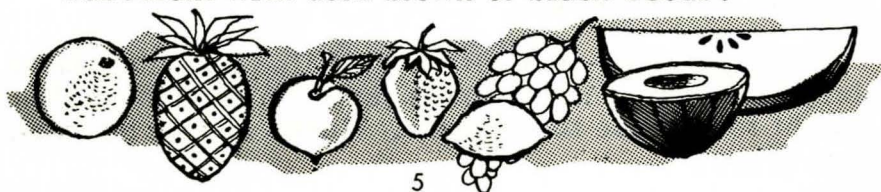
Tangerines that are small, slightly flattened, deep yellow to orange in color. They should be heavy in relation to size, but not necessarily firm to the touch because of loose skin.

### Melons

Cantaloupe that is yellow-gray in color, with coarse netting and sweet musky odor. Vine ripened is best in flavor. Scar on stem end should be sunken and calloused. Shreds of stem indicate the melon was picked before it was ripe. Surface mold is not harmful.

Honeydew with a smooth satiny rind, whitish-green to creamy white when ripe. Blossom end can be slightly soft. Melon will have faint, pleasant fruit aroma with sweet, juicy and fine-textured flesh.

Watermelon that is symmetrical in shape, with velvety bloom over surface, and underside changing from white to yellow tinge when ripe. A thin skin which peels easily indicates ripeness. Most certain test is plugging. Flesh is red-colored, firm and succulent with dark brown or black seeds.



# IN BUYING **VEGETABLES**

## LOOK FOR:

Asparagus with a straight, tender stalk and closed compact tip. Avoid woody or shriveled stems.

Snap Beans that are crisp, fairly straight, free from scars. They should snap readily when broken. Avoid wilted, stringy or rusty beans.

Beets that are globular in shape, relatively smooth and firm, with unwilted tops. Medium-sized ones are most apt to be tender.

Broccoli that is dark green, deep sage green or purplish-green in color. Stems and branches should be tender and firm with clean, compact, unopened bud clusters.

Brussels Sprouts that are firm and compact, bright in appearance with good green color. Avoid worm eaten leaves with smudgy, dirty appearance.

Cabbage that is closely trimmed, reasonably solid and compact. Select one that is heavy in relation to size. Avoid worm injury, burst heads and decay.

Carrots that are firm, smooth, well-shaped, bright in color. Pale color and coarse green shoulders indicate poor quality.

Cauliflower with white or creamy white flowerets, free from black specks or bruises. Select clean, firm, compact head with outer leaf portions fresh and green.

Celery that is fresh, crisp and free from blemishes. Look for good heart formation and stalks that are brittle enough to snap easily.

Corn-on-the-cob with well-filled ears that have bright, plump, milky kernels just firm enough to offer slight resistance to pressure. Husks should be fresh and green.



Cucumbers that are straight, not too thick, with good green color; sometimes whitish-green on tip or ridges. They should be fresh and firm with immature seeds. Shriveled cucumbers are apt to be tough and bitter.

Eggplant that is solid, heavy in relation to size, glossy with uniform dark rich purple color, free from scars, cuts or brown spots on skin. Soft eggplant is bitter in flavor.

Greens (spinach, beet tops, turnip tops, chard, cress, chicory, endive, escarole) that are fresh, young, tender and green. Avoid insect injury, coarse stems, dry or yellow leaves, excessive dirt or poor development.

#### Lettuce:

Head lettuce that is crisp, clean and tender. Heads should be heavy for size, free from rust, decay and excessive outer leaves.

Loose leaf that is fresh, crisp, green; not excessively dirty.

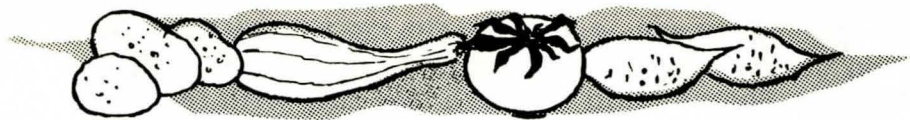
Dry Onions that are clean, hard, well shaped with dry, shiny, crackly skins. Avoid thick, tough or open necks and discolored or moldy areas.

Parsnips that are smooth, well shaped, small to medium in size. Large, soft, flabby roots may be pithy or decayed. Waxed coating prevents drying.

Peas that are young, tender and sweet. Size of peas depends on variety. Pods should be fresh, well filled, uniformly light green in color, slightly velvety to touch.

Sweet Peppers that are glossy, firm, well shaped, thick-fleshed. Immature peppers are soft, pliable, thin-fleshed and pale green.





Potatoes that have sound, relatively smooth surface with shallow eyes, free from cuts or bruises. Medium-sized potatoes are most desirable. Avoid withered, soft or sprouted potatoes. Green spots below skin may cause bitter flavor. Skins of some varieties may be artificially colored.

Summer Squash that is young, tender and not too large. Select those free from cuts or bruises.

Winter Squash that has yellow flesh with hard, tough rind and no decay.

Sweet Potatoes that are clean, smooth, regular in shape. Sweet potatoes may be deep yellow, soft and moist when cooked or light yellow with somewhat mealy flesh. Decay appears as soft wet rot with mold or shriveled, sunken areas of dry rot.

Tomatoes that are vine-ripened for best flavor. Choose well formed, smooth and plump ones with uniform red color. Avoid those with bruise marks and over-ripe or soft tomatoes.

Turnips that are smooth and firm with few leaf scars around the crown and very few fibrous roots at base. Large, coarse turnips may be tough, pithy, hollow or strong in flavor.