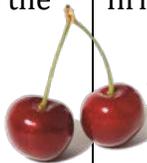
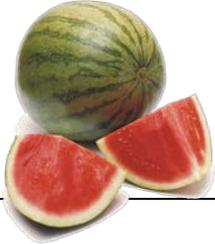


How to select, store, and use locally grown fruits

Remember to remove seeds and pits from fruit before serving to young children. In particular, whole grapes and cherries with pits are choking hazards for children up to age 4. Approximate harvest and availability dates listed below are for New York State.

FRUIT	SELECTION	STORAGE	HOW TO USE
<p>Apples- some varieties can be harvested as early as July. The harvest time can continue until the end of November. Apples can be put in cold storage and available from mid July until mid June.</p>	<p>Choose firm, blemish free apples with no soft spots or wrinkled skin.</p> 	<p>Apples should be stored in the refrigerator and are best if used within 2 weeks, although they can be kept for longer periods of time.</p>	<p>Wash well and eat plain or put in cereal or yogurt or use in your favorite recipe.</p>
<p>Blueberries- harvested and available mid July until the end of October.</p> 	<p>Choose berries that appear plump, unwrinkled, and are completely blue. They should be nearly free of leaves and stems. The box should not be stained or have any signs of mold.</p>	<p>Store in the refrigerator in the original container. Blueberries are best if used within a week.</p>	<p>Wash well when ready to use. Add blueberries to cereal, yogurt, pancakes, muffins, or fruit salad. Or just pop them in your mouth.</p>
<p>Cantaloupe- harvested and available from the beginning of August through September.</p>	<p>Choose a well rounded melon with sweet melon odor and a slight softness when pressed with your thumb. The skin should be creamy yellow or tan. Do not choose those that are dented or have soft spots or an overripe odor.</p>	<p>Ripened melons should be stored in the refrigerator and used within 3-5 days.</p> 	<p>Wash the outside of the melon well. Scrape the seeds out of the center. Cut into slices, wedges or cubes and serve or add to cereal, yogurt or fruit salad.</p>

FRUIT	SELECTION	STORAGE	HOW TO USE
<p>Cherries- harvested and available mid June until the end of July.</p> 	<p>Choose cherries that are colorful, firm, and shiny.</p>	<p>Cherries should be stored in the refrigerator and are best if used within 2-3 days.</p>	<p>Wash and remove pits before giving cherries to young children. Eat cherries plain or add cherries to fruit salads, chop and add to yogurt or use in your favorite recipe.</p>
<p>Grapes- harvested and available mid August until the end of October.</p>	<p>Choose grapes that are firm and attached to the stem.</p> 	<p>Store grapes in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.</p>	<p>Wash grapes and remove from stem. Remove any seeds. Cut into small pieces before giving to young children.</p>
<p>Peaches- harvested and available mid July until mid September.</p>	<p>Choose peaches with reddish velvety skins.</p> 	<p>Refrigerate ripe peaches up to 5 days.</p>	<p>Wash peaches, removing fuzz. Eat whole or add slices to cereal or yogurt or use in your favorite recipe. Remove pits before giving peaches to young children.</p>
<p>Pears- harvested mid August until mid October although available until the end of November.</p>	<p>Choose firm, well shaped pears that do not have any bruises. They are ready to eat when they are slightly soft.</p>	<p>Pears should be stored in the refrigerator or at room temperature and are best if used within 1 week.</p>	<p>Wash well, eat plain or use in your favorite recipe.</p> 
<p>Plums- harvested from July through September and available until mid October.</p>	<p>Choose slightly soft plums that do not have bruised or shriveled skin. Under-ripe fruit will ripen at room temperature.</p>	<p>Ripe plums should be stored in the refrigerator in a plastic bag and used within several days.</p>	<p>Wash well prior to eating. Eat plain or use in your favorite recipe. Remove pits before giving plums to young children.</p> 

FRUIT	SELECTION	STORAGE	HOW TO USE
<p>Raspberries- harvested and available the first 3 weeks of July and all of September and October.</p>	<p>Choose berries that are bright, uncrushed and free of mold. Make sure the box is not stained or leaking.</p> 	<p>Raspberries should be stored in the refrigerator in the box they come in, and are best if used within 1-2 days.</p>	<p>Wash the berries just before using them. Remove stem caps. Eat plain or add to cereal or yogurt.</p>
<p>Strawberries- harvested and available in June and the first part of July.</p>	<p>Choose berries that are brightly colored, firm and have hulls attached. Avoid boxes that are leaking or show signs of mold.</p>	<p>Berries should be stored in the refrigerator and are best if used within 2-3 days.</p> 	<p>Wash berries and remove hulls just before using. Eat plain or add berries to cereal, yogurt, or fruit salad.</p>
<p>Watermelon- harvested and available from the beginning of August until mid October.</p> 	<p>Choose a well-rounded melon with a smooth surface with a dullish sheen. The underside should be creamy yellow in color. To test ripeness, try slapping the melon – if the sound is flat and dull, it may be under-ripe, and if it sounds hollow, it may be too ripe.</p>	<p>Cut melon should be stored in the refrigerator and covered with plastic wrap. Whole melons do best there also, if they fit. If they don't fit, keep whole melons in the coolest part of the house. Use watermelon within a few days.</p>	<p>Wash outside of melon well. Cut into wedges or slices and serve after removing seeds. Makes a nice addition to a fruit salad.</p>

Adapted from [The Market Basket Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Guide](#), New York State WIC Program, Farmers Market Nutrition Program. New York State harvest and availability dates from www.agmkt.state.ny.us/HarvestCalendar.html and www.prideofny.com.