

Menu Planning Around Farmers Market Selection



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MENU PLANNING
AROUND
FARMERS MARKET
SELECTION

How do you plan your weekly menu and shop at your local farmers market, without knowing what exactly you might find there? Follow these tips to help you plan a more flexible menu, and take advantage of the fresh local produce at the farmers market.

Farmers markets are known for offering an ever-changing variety of fresh fruits and vegetables. Although variety is a benefit of shopping at local farmers markets, it can be difficult and overwhelming to come up with a menu for the week without knowing beforehand what will be available. Yet, being flexible allows you to choose the produce that looks the best and is offered at a good price. Below are some tips for planning meals around the unpredictable availability at the farmers market.

1. Reverse your menu planning schedule. Shop at the market first, then build a menu for the week based on what you purchased. This will also help ensure that you use what you bought, reducing food waste.
2. Plan the non-vegetable portion of the meal, and then add the vegetables after seeing what looks best at the market.
3. Have a general sense of when different fruits and vegetables are usually in season and available. Plan your menu with at least two different options and then buy the one that is offered at the best price.
4. Bring your menu to the market. If there is something that looks great, but isn't in your plan revise your menu on the spot to incorporate it.
5. Include some meals that use a wide variety of produce in like stir-fry, soup, or omelets.
6. Be open to making last minute substitutions to your favorite recipe. Here are some ideas of fruits and vegetables that are good substitutions for each other.

Recipe calls for	Try this instead
Apples	Pears, grapes, cherries
Beets	Radishes, turnips, rutabaga, potatoes
Blueberries	Strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, pitted cherries
Broccoli	Cauliflower, cabbage, Brussel sprouts
Cucumbers	Zucchini, celery
Zucchini	Yellow squash, patty pan squash, eggplant
Potatoes	Carrots, sweet potatoes, beets, rutabaga, turnips
Spinach	Kale, Swiss chard, bok choy
Onions	Shallots, leeks, scallions
Peaches	Nectarines, plums, pears

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