

Ask *the* Expert

Shopping Healthy at the Farmer's Market

If I have diabetes is shopping at a farmer's market better for me?

As a diabetic the more healthy foods you can eat, the better! Fresh fruits and vegetables are loaded with antioxidants and phytochemicals. Antioxidants are chemicals that interact with and block the activity of free radicals. Studies have shown that free radicals have the potential to harm cells, including damage that may lead to cancer.

Non-starchy vegetables are full of vitamins, minerals, and fiber and the more we can add to our diet, the better. Examples of non-starchy vegetables are green beans, summer squash, tomatoes, greens, broccoli, cauliflower, and cucumbers to name a few.

These foods do have a small amount of carbohydrates, but since most of the carbs are coming from fiber, you typically do not have to count the carbs! More is better! It helps to fill our stomachs with good things, so we don't over eat the other foods.

What foods have carbohydrates and how many should I have?

Foods that contain carbs are breads, cereals, pasta, rice, snack foods like chips and popcorn, milk, yogurt, fruit, and starchy vegetables like potatoes, beans, peas, and corn.

Also all sweets contain carbohydrates. Most foods are measured in ½ cup serving size to equal 1 carb serving or 15g.

Women should eat about 2-3 servings (30-45g) of carbs per meal.

Men need about 3-4 servings (45-60g) per meal.

If foods have carbs, should I avoid them?

No! Our bodies need carbohydrates. Carbs are our bodies main source of energy. We just have to watch the amount! Make sure the foods with carbs you are choosing are healthy carbohydrates. Examples of healthy carbs are: starchy vegetables, fruit, low fat milk and yogurt, and our whole grain foods, such as whole wheat bread and brown rice.

Buying these foods at local farmer's markets ensure these were freshly picked and that the foods will be at their peak flavor and

nutrition.. Shopping at farmer's markets also helps support our local farmer's and keeps the money you spend closer to your neighborhood.

What does "eat from the rainbow" mean? How do I do it?

We should fill our plates with foods of many rich colors. The more color variety, the better! The powerful disease fighting nutrients give fruits and vegetables their many colors.

Research has shown regularly eating many of these foods together will strengthen your immune system, reduce high blood pressure, maintain heart health, lower risk of some cancers, improve memory, and help ward off type 2 diabetes.

Many of us eat diets that are high in fat and calories without enough fruits and vegetables. Most adults need about 4 servings of vegetables and 3 servings of fruit per day.

The next time you are at your local farmer's market, try eating from the rainbow. Here are some examples:

Red: red apples, cranberries, tomatoes, red onion, radishes, radicchio.

Blue/Purple: purple cabbage, blueberries, plums, eggplant, blackberries, purple figs.

White: onions, bananas, cauliflower, white peaches, garlic, mushrooms, potatoes.

Green: green apples, green grapes, cucumbers, broccoli, zucchini, okra, artichoke, celery, asparagus.

Yellow/orange: apricots, cantaloupe, oranges, peaches, pineapple, yellow peppers, pumpkin, corn, yellow tomatoes, sweet potatoes.

Are there any other benefits from shopping at a local farmer's market?

YES! You get to speak to the grower/farmer! Find out what they used. Ask questions. Ask for recipes. These are the experts for their own foods.

Many other items can be found at farmer's markets. You may find handmade pottery or handmade jewelry. Farmer's market shopping can be a fun experience. Education is usually always abundant, you just have to ask.

Farmer's markets can be a great place for kids. Let the kids pick out a new food and help prepare it! You never know if you like a new food until you try it.



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**NEA Baptist Farmer's Market
Thursday, Sept. 11th**

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