



## Conscious Cuisine: Uncovering the Powerful Health Benefits of Eating Seasonally



The best way to enjoy delicious, nutritious meals is to cook with seasonal ingredients. Not only does this give your dishes fantastic flavour, but it also has powerful health benefits. Seasonal eating helps you stay in sync with nature's rhythms and provides your body with the nutrients it needs to function optimally. Here's a closer look at why conscious cuisine is essential to a healthy lifestyle.

According to a study by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) in the UK, seasonal eating has many benefits. The study found that eating seasonal fruits and vegetables is linked to improved health. Regular consumption of seasonal produce can help reduce obesity, diabetes, heart disease, stroke, cancer and other chronic diseases.

### Not only more delicious but also more nutritious

Eating seasonally is the perfect way to enjoy delicious and nutritious meals. Eating fruit and vegetables in season means they have had more time to ripen and develop their natural flavours. Not only does this guarantee a higher-quality flavour experience, but also a much higher level of nutrition. To top it off, because produce is generally cheaper in season, seasonal eating is usually easier on your wallet too.

### The benefits to eating seasonally include:



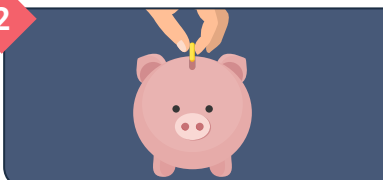
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#### Health benefits

As fruits and vegetables are in season when they are the freshest and most ripe, they contain more nutrients than those that have been stored or imported out of season.



2



#### Cost Savings

Seasonal produce is generally cheaper to buy as it is in abundance during its harvest period and right after.



3



### Supporting local produce and farmers

Buying local seasonal produce helps support local farmers and also reduces our environmental impact as fewer resources are used for transportation and packaging compared to imported produce from other parts of the world.

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### Variety and flavour

Eating with the seasons encourages us to try new and different types of fruits and vegetables, which means more variety on our plate. Because seasonal produce is fresher, it generally tastes better too.

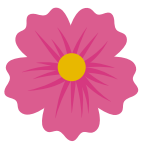


## A short guide to seasonal produce

Seasonal produce is nature's gift to us all year round. Its nutrient-dense levels are unparalleled, packed with all the vitamins and minerals we need for a healthy diet. Eating seasonally allows us to enjoy these nutritional benefits, as when produce is picked at the peak of ripeness, it generally contains higher levels of nutrition than if it had been picked early.

### Spring

(March-May)



Artichoke, beetroot, carrots, chicory, leeks, parsnip, purple sprouting broccoli, radishes, rhubarb, sorrel, spring greens, spring onions, watercress.

### Summer

(June-August)



Strawberries, raspberries, cherries and apricots, salads, tomatoes, courgettes, cucumbers and runner beans.

### Autumn

(September-November)



Apples, pears, plums, grapes, pumpkins, squash, kale, cauliflower, mushrooms, bilberries.

### Winter

(December-February)



Chestnuts, cobnuts, cranberries, elderberries, pears, quince, brussels sprouts, swedes, turnips and parsnips.





## How to know if what you're buying is seasonal and local

If you're looking to buy local produce from supermarkets, here are some tips on how to identify it:



Look for logos such as the British Leaf Logo, which is registered by the UK's Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra).



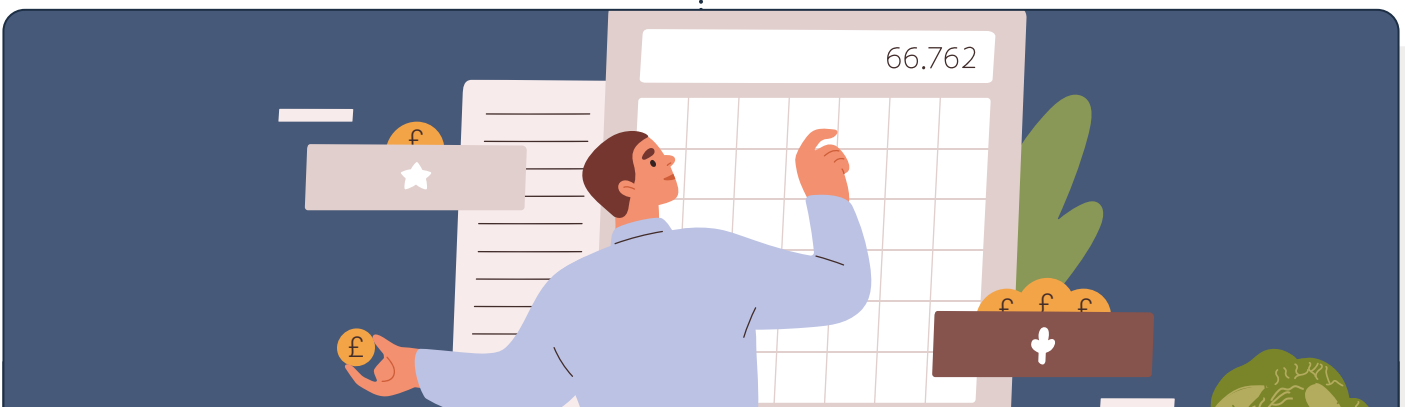
Read the country of origin labelling carefully. In UK supermarkets, certain products like potatoes must be labelled with their place of origin.



If you can't find a logo or label, check shelf tags and point-of-sale displays – these are often used to highlight seasonal local produce.



Ask store staff about local sourcing policies – many supermarkets have them in place and will be able to tell you if something is produced locally or not.



## Often less expensive than out-of-season options

Seasonal fruits and vegetables can be an excellent option for stretching food budgets. They are often less expensive than many out-of-season produce options because they are abundant when harvested locally. The taste of seasonal produce is also much better - since it hasn't had to travel long distances to get to your plate. Whether you're a wise shopper or a gourmet cook, choosing seasonal produce ensures the freshest, most delicious ingredients available. Making seasonal fruits and vegetables the preferred choice can provide greater nutrition while keeping more money in your pocket.



## Connect more to the natural world



Eating seasonally can provide a powerful connection to the natural world and the cyclical rhythms of life that drive it forward. It allows us to be in tune with what's available at any given time, providing insight into the ebb and flow of nature as one season gives way to another. Seasonal eating not only helps us stay nourished more holistically as our bodies adjust to warmer or cooler climates, but it also helps support smaller, regional farmers and develop a closer relationship with where your food is coming from. Seasonal eating offers an opportunity to pause and appreciate the beauty of life's impermanence, ever-changing; it allows us a chance to slow down and savour each moment.



## Your food has travelled a shorter distance



Eating seasonally is the best way to get the freshest and most nutrient-dense food out there. Food grown in its natural season will be at its peak for flavour, texture, and nutritional content. The shorter distance between harvesting and eating decreases your carbon footprint significantly by greatly reducing transport emissions. Furthermore, you have the benefit of supporting small family farms in your area, which helps strengthen local economies while protecting rare breeds of plants and animals that would otherwise be lost because of monocultural farming practices.

Looking for more support and advice about nutrition and seasonal eating?  
Contact your HealthHero or Validium service today.

