

August, 2020



Nutrition News for the Central Sierra

A monthly newsletter about food, nutrition, and healthy living in the Central Sierra.

Find Your Local Farmers Markets

FARMERS' MARKET FINDER

One of the best ways to improve our health is to eat more fruits and vegetables. Many people know this, but it's often one of the most difficult changes we can

make in our daily habits, especially since fresh fruits and vegetables are highly perishable and can be difficult to keep stocked on a regular basis. One way to make sure we keep fruits and veggies readily available is to preserve or buy them in frozen, dried, or canned forms. As long as these products don't have large amounts of added sugar or salt, this is a good way to keep more healthy foods available to incorporate into all our meals.

Another way to keep fruits and vegetables well-stocked in our kitchens is to buy them regularly from local sources. Usually, fresh produce purchased from local growers has been picked very recently and hasn't aged much during transportation or storage. It's also usually picked when ripe, and is often so delicious and beautiful we naturally want to eat more of it. When we buy locally, we also contribute to a thriving local economy and the preservation of land for agriculture.

For these reasons, frequenting a local farmers market is one of the healthiest habits we can develop. It allows us to make a connection to our food and with local growers, and to take home the most nutritious, freshest produce possible - often at very competitive prices. In the Central Sierra, most farmers markets also accept CalFresh EBT benefits and WIC farmers market coupons, although there are a few exceptions. Many markets will even double CalFresh EBT purchase amounts through the Market Match program.

Wondering when and where your local markets are happening, whether they accept EBT, or what measures they're taking to adapt to COVID-19? Visit the [Farmers Market Finder](#), hosted by the Ecology Center, where all certified farmers markets in California are easily viewable on a map. Information is available for each market about schedules, directions, what benefits are

accepted, and links to the markets' websites for more information about the markets and their COVID-19 procedures.

If you're looking to incorporate more produce into your life, take advantage of the wonderful farmers markets located in the Central Sierra and enjoy the late summer bounty!

August's Harvest of the Month



August brings many types of ripening produce to the Central Sierra, but some of the most striking summer colors and flavors come from peppers. Peppers come in sweet varieties, which include but aren't limited to bell peppers, and spicy varieties, which are also known as chiles. Few foods offer as much variety in color, shape, and flavor as peppers do, so look out for less common types in local markets or when choosing plants for your garden. All peppers start out green, and will ultimately become sweeter and change color as they ripen. Green bell peppers or green chiles are less sweet because they are less ripe; red, orange, or yellow colors indicate that a pepper has ripened and will be sweeter. Chiles become spicier as they ripen, although spice level also varies widely between chile varieties, growing conditions, and even from plant to plant in the same garden. Any type of pepper should be firm and glossy when fresh, although many chiles are also preserved and sold dried. Peppers contain fiber and Vitamin A, and are excellent sources of Vitamin C. A single serving of peppers usually provides all the Vitamin C recommended for an entire day. See below for pepper recipe ideas to try this August, or learn more about peppers and view their nutrition facts at the USDA's [Seasonal Produce Guide](#).

Recipe Ideas:

- [Roasted Chilies and Bell Peppers](#)
- [Moroccan-Style Stuffed Peppers](#)
- [Mango Chile Relleno al Carbon](#)
- [Bell Pepper and Vidalia Onion Strata](#)

New & Noteworthy

Visit these links for a round-up of recent health and nutrition news, information, and events. For general healthy eating information based on an expert analysis of nutrition research, visit [ChooseMyPlate.gov](#). For individual questions, consult a registered dietitian or medical provider.

Should the Dietary Guidelines Help Fight Systemic Racism? This article presents the case that the Dietary Guidelines for Americans needs to address racism directly in order to reduce health and nutrition disparities.

New study from Nutrition Policy Institute affiliated researchers shows sugar-sweetened beverage taxes have minimal or no impact on retailers, contrary to beverage industry claims. A summary of recent research on the impacts of sugar sweetened beverage taxes.

Just What the Doctor Ordered: Produce Prescriptions are More Important—and Popular—Than Ever. A look at innovative programs that recognize the direct benefits of fresh produce on health.

This series of flyers features information on food safety topics relevant to COVID-19:

- [Is Coronavirus a Food Safety Issue?](#)
- [Is Coronavirus a Concern at Grocery Stores?](#)
- [Is Coronavirus a Concern with Takeout?](#)
- [Is Coronavirus a Concern on Fresh Produce?](#)
- [Handwashing and COVID-19](#)

Nutrition Education Spotlight: Waste Less - Virtual Classes



There are many reasons to avoid food waste, from wanting to save money to concern for our environment. On average, 40% of food in the U.S. is wasted somewhere along the way between production and our plates. If you're interested in hearing about strategies to prevent food waste in your kitchen, and learning some great recipes, tips, and creative food ideas, a series of virtual classes is now available online from the people behind [EatFresh.org](#).

Visit their YouTube playlist to watch all of the recorded lessons here:

[Stay Healthy and Waste Less - Virtual Classes](#)

To read more about the issue of food waste and what to do about it, you can also visit [SavetheFood.org](#).

COVID-19 Community Resources

During the COVID-19 pandemic, you can help spread the word about Central Sierra resources to make sure everyone has enough to eat. **If your family, your neighbors, or anyone you know is in need of food, assistance is available!**

Links to information about Central Sierra food banks, WIC agencies, school meal sites, senior meals, how to [sign up for CalFresh/food stamps](#), and more are available on the following webpage: http://cecentralsierra.ucanr.edu/CentralSierraNutrition/Community_Resources/

About Us

As the State of California has issued a shelter-in-place order to reduce the spread of COVID-19, UC Cooperative Extension in the Central Sierra is now working remotely. We are still here to answer your questions and address needs during this unprecedented situation.

Nutrition, Family and Consumers Sciences (NFCS) in the Central Sierra conducts education, outreach, and applied research to support nutrition, food security, and public health in Calaveras, Tuolumne, Amador, and El Dorado Counties. NFCS includes the CalFresh Healthy Living-UC program, which teaches free classes in local schools, community centers, libraries, and other public places. Our classes show people how to choose, grow, cook, and enjoy affordable healthy foods, and how to make physical activity a regular and fun part of life. We also work to create environments where it's easier for people to make healthy choices by supporting wellness policies, community and school gardens, walking clubs, and more. For more information, visit our [website](#), [Facebook](#), or [Twitter](#), or email NFCS advisor Katie Johnson at ckrjohnson@ucanr.edu.



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