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Cooking on Campus: HALLO-WEEK
Tuesday, 10/30 @ 5:15-6:30pm @ UA Outdoor Rec. Only \$7! Registration info: cookingoncampus.arizona.edu

FOOD FACE-OFF: Fresh vs. Frozen Produce

When it comes to eating fruits and vegetables, we've all heard the phrase "fresh is best." There is no debating the fact that fresh produce is nutritious. There's also no debating the convenience of frozen vegetables, but are they as nutritious? Let's crack open the freezer on this one and investigate!

Produce facts. As soon as fresh fruits and vegetables are picked from the ground or off a tree, the quality of that food changes. The typical time frame between farm-to-grocery store is about two weeks. Oftentimes, produce ripens in a box while being transported by truck, train, boat, or airplane, and then delivered to market for purchase. In contrast, frozen fruits and vegetables are allowed to fully ripen on the plant, are harvested, and then quickly transported to a nearby facility where they're flash frozen and packaged. This farm-to-freeze process happens in less than 12 hours making these foods truly "fresh" frozen.

In defense of fresh. Fresh fruits and vegetables not only look bright and beautiful, they're nutritionally best and taste best, especially when eaten during their respective season.

Choosing produce that's grown close to where it's purchased supports a healthy body, and supports a healthy environment (less food miles) and the local farming community. The downside? Fresh food spoils quickly, so avoid wasting food and money by purchasing in quantities you will eat.

In defense of frozen. Freezing is nature's way of putting the pause button on fresh (and cooked) foods. With a standard shelf life of 8-10 months, the convenience and low prices of frozen fruits and vegetables make them a healthy, affordable alternative to fresh. Since they are packed and processed at peak freshness, the nutritional quality is almost identical to (and in some cases, surpasses) that of fresh!

The takeaway. Including a combo of both fresh and frozen produce in your diet can help contribute to a wider variety and larger consumption of all fruits and vegetables. To help keep your mind sharp and your body strong, aim for eating a total of five servings every day. Find out more about Arizona's seasonal produce by visiting Arizona Farm Bureau's Fill Your Plate website: fillyourplate.org/produce-season.html



CAMPUS HEALTH

NutriNews is written by Lisa MacDonald, MPH, RDN, Sarah Marrs, RDN, and Christy Wilson, RDN, Nutrition Counselors at the UA Campus Health Service.

Food and nutrition services (including healthy eating, cooking skills, weight management, digestive problems, hormonal and cardiovascular diseases, and eating disorders) are offered year-round at Campus Health. Call (520) 621-6483 to make an appointment.