

Carruthers seasonal news

Suppliers of fresh fruit and vegetables



OUR ETHOS

The majority of the UK population grow up in urban areas, with little or no awareness of when and where various foods are produced. Imports from around the world ensure that supermarket shelves look the same week in week out. There are many reasons why you should aim to eat local and seasonal food; to reduce the energy needed to grow and transport the food we eat, to avoid paying a premium for food that has travelled a long way and to support the local economy. But most importantly, because seasonal food is fresher and tastes SO much better!

We at Carruthers aim to promote an understanding of food seasons. Each month we will focus on the fruit and/or Veg, which is currently in season, and share enlightening facts, useful tips and enticing recipe ideas picked from the web and our favourite publications. When a food is in season its quality can vary dramatically. Food produced locally is likely to be a lot fresher than its supermarket equivalent. Each fruit or vegetable has a prime time when it's at its seasonal best. Some are great for over half of the year; others only hit their peak for a month.

Throughout September, October and November the “stew” vegetables come into season, which is good news for those of us living in colder countries who want a filling meal! Carrots, fennel, leeks, marrows and squashes thrive in the autumnal climate. And of course not forgetting-The Potato. Scotland's main crop potatoes and now in supply and being stored in temperature controlled environment ready for consistent supplied throughout the Winter. Our potatoes at Carruthers are supplied locally from farms in Ayrshire, Fife and Stranraer as is our other sustainable produce such as Scottish Cabbage, Leeks, Parsnips, Cauliflower, broccoli to mention a few. Wherever possible we aim to supply schools with Scottish Fruit and Vegetables.

A few examples of this seasons UK grown fruit and Vegetables



Whilst not definitive, below is a list of all imported and uk produce which are in season in Autumn.



Fruit in season this Autumn

Apricots, apples, bilberries, blackberries, blueberries, damsons, figs, grapes, lemons, melons, nectarine, oranges, peaches, pears, plums, raspberries, redcurrants

Vegetables & Herbs in season in Autumn

Artichoke, aubergine, basil, beetroot, broccoli, butternut squash, cabbage, carrots, celery, chillies, chives, coriander, courgettes, cucumber, fennel, French beans, garlic, horseradish, kale, kohlrabi, leaf beet, leeks, lettuce, mange-tout, marrow, mint, mushrooms, nettles, onions, oregano, parsley (flat leaf and curly), parsnips, peppers, potatoes, pumpkin, radish, rocket, rosemary, runner beans, sage, shallots, sorrel, spinach, spring onions, squash, swede, sweetcorn, Swiss chard, tarragon, thyme, truffles (black and white), tomatoes, turnips, watercress, wild mushrooms

This month we highlight broccoli bursting with nutritional content and the luscious leek that can add flavour and compliment many dishes with their subtle flavour. Leeks can be used to enrich soups or stews and they partner brilliantly with potato and with cheese to form tasty side-dishes and suppers that comfort and satisfy throughout the autumn and winter. While broccoli can stand alone with fish, chicken or meat as tasty side dish and delicious in a stir - fry.

What's New and Beneficial About Broccoli

Broccoli is a result of careful breeding of cultivated leafy cole crops in the northern Mediterranean starting in about the 6th century BC. Since the Roman times broccoli has been considered unique and valuable. It was brought to England from Antwerp in the mid-18th century and first introduced to the United States by Italian immigrants, but did not become widely known there until the 1920s.

Broccoli is an edible green plant in the cabbage family whose large flowerhead is eaten as a vegetable.

Broccoli can provide cholesterol-lowering benefits, it has positive impact on our body's detoxification, boosts vitamin D uptake and recent research has also shown unique anti-inflammatory and cancer-preventative benefits.



For these beneficial effects it is essential that the Broccoli cooked gently and NOT over cooked, with best results from steaming or stir frying. you will cook it by steaming.

Studies have shown that even kids like broccoli and one way to ensure that they enjoy it is to cook it properly by using Healthy Steaming method. Overcooked broccoli

becomes soft and mushy, an indication that it has lost both nutrients and flavour. Ideally steam for 5 minutes.

Chicken and broccoli curry casserole.

Ingredients

2/3 teaspoon curry powder

Cooked chicken- 3/4 sliced chicken breasts

Cream of chicken soup

Lemon juice-2 teaspoons

Sour cream 1cup

1 tablespoon of mayonnaise.

Broccoli cut into florets(keeping some stem)

Salt and ground black pepper to taste

1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese

1 cup crushed corn flakes cereal

1/4 cup slivered almonds (optional)



Directions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Spray a baking dish with cooking spray.

Place broccoli into a microwave-safe dish with a lid, pour in a small amount of water, cover, and cook on high in microwave until broccoli is steaming and bright green for about 2 to 3 minutes.

Carefully remove lid and spread broccoli into the bottom of the prepared baking dish. Spread cooked chicken in a layer over the broccoli.

Whisk cream of chicken soup, sour cream, mayonnaise, lemon juice, curry powder, salt, and black pepper in a bowl and pour sauce over the chicken and broccoli. Spread the Cheddar cheese over the sauce and sprinkle casserole with corn flake crumbs and almonds.

Bake uncovered in the preheated oven until the casserole is bubbling, the cheese has melted, and the crumb topping is browned, about 30 minutes.

[Learn about leeks](#)

Leeks are related to garlic and onions but have a much subtler, sweeter and more sophisticated flavour.

Leeks have been cultivated at least since the time of the Ancient Egyptians and are depicted in surviving tomb paintings from that period and the Romans considered the leek a superior vegetable. Legend has it that the Welsh adopted the vegetable as a national emblem in the seventh century when a Welsh army triumphed against the Saxons

after wearing leeks in their hats to distinguish them from their enemy.

Today the leek is grown widely across northern Europe and Asia - from Ireland to northern China - and delicious regional dishes such as cock-a-leekie and vichyssoise have spread across the globe.

The European version of the leek cultivated throughout Europe thrives in cooler climates and is tolerant of frost, hence its great popularity as a winter vegetable.

When buying go for small or medium size leeks; large leeks are likely to be tough and woody. Leaf tops should be fresh and green, the root end should be unblemished and yield very slightly to pressure. Store loosely wrapped in plastic (to keep them from drying out and to contain their smell) they will keep in the fridge for a week.

Undercooked leeks are tough and chewy and overcooked leeks can take on an undesirable squidgy texture. Cook until just tender, testing by piercing the base with a knife. Braising in a moderate oven will take anything from 10 to 30 minutes depending on size. They can also be boiled or steamed.

Leeks don't just taste great, they can also provide many health benefits;

1. Leeks have been found to steady the blood sugar levels in the body.

2. Leeks have also been proven to decrease bad cholesterol in the body and instead raise High Density Lipoprotein or good cholesterol thus helping people avoid stroke, diabetes and other heart ailments.

3. Because of its rich iron content, leeks help fight anaemia.

4. Leeks are rich in Vitamin C, a good source of dietary fibre which regulates intestinal function and repopulates the good bacteria in the colon.

5. Additionally according to studies, leeks help fight cancer, particularly prostate and colon cancer.

The next recipe idea includes 5 seasonal favourites and is a tasty and nutritious autumnal soup.

Celeriac and apple soup with bacon and parsley

Eating apples give a sweet note to this root vegetable soup, topped with crisp pieces of bacon and crème fraîche.



Ingredients

3 eating apples (peeled)
50g butter
1 tbsp sunflower oil
2 onions, chopped
1 celeriac (roughly 750g), cut into chunks
1 large carrot (roughly 120g), cut into slices
2 garlic cloves, crushed
2 medium potatoes (roughly 250g), peeled and cut into chunks
1 small bunch fresh thyme (3-4 sprigs)
1 bay leaf
1.3 litres vegetable or chicken stock, made with 1 stock cube
flaked sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

For the garnish

1 tsp sunflower oil
4 rashers rindless smoked streaky bacon
4 tbsp crème fraîche
2 tbsp milk
small handful flat leaf parsley, leaves roughly torn.

Preparation method

Cut the apples into thick slices. Melt 25g of the butter in a large saucepan and fry the apple pieces over a medium heat for five minutes, or until lightly browned, turning regularly. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the apple pieces to a plate and return the pan to the heat.

Add the remaining butter and oil to the pan and as soon as the butter melts, gently fry the onions, celeriac and carrot for 15 minutes, or until the onions are softened and very lightly browned, stirring occasionally. Add the garlic, apples, potatoes, thyme and bay leaf and cook for three minutes more, stirring.

Pour the stock into the pan, season with black pepper and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat to a simmer and cook for about 25 minutes, or until the celeriac and carrots are very soft, stirring occasionally.

Remove the pan from the heat. Remove the thyme stalks and bay leaf and discard. Cool slightly and then blend the soup with a stick blender until very smooth. Add a little extra water if necessary until the right consistency is reached. Alternatively, allow the soup to cool for a while and then blend in a food processor until smooth and return to the pan.

Adjust the seasoning with salt and pepper to taste. Set aside until ready to serve.

To make the garnish, brush the oil over the inside of a small non-stick frying pan and fry the bacon for 2-3 minutes on each side over a medium-high heat until browned and crisp. Drain on kitchen paper.

Mix the crème fraîche with the milk in a small bowl until smooth.

Reheat the soup gently just before serving, stirring constantly. Ladle into warmed bowls.

Drizzle the crème fraîche mixture into each bowl of soup.

Carefully snip the crisp bacon into pieces with kitchen scissors and scatter on top. Sprinkle with the parsley, season with a little freshly ground black pepper and serve.

Top tips to get 5 A DAY on a budget

Buy fruit and vegetables loose rather than pre-packaged. Loose fruit and veg can be as little as half the price.

Replace your morning or afternoon snack with a piece of fruit. A banana or an apple costs around 20p at the supermarket, about half the price of most chocolate bars or packets of crisps. The savings add up and so do the health benefits.

Fruit and vegetables are usually cheaper if they're in season.

Don't throw away vegetables that are about to go out of date. Use them in stews, soups and casseroles, which you can freeze and eat another time.

Look for supermarket deals on fruit and vegetables, such as buy one get one free offers.

Look for good deals on frozen and dried fruit and veg, such as frozen peas and dried pulses and beans. They are often cheaper than fresh varieties.

Swap ready meals for homemade alternatives. Vegetables in dishes such as stews, bakes, casseroles and curries count towards your 5 A DAY, and cooking these dishes yourself is often cheaper than buying them ready-made.

Stock up on canned fruit and vegetables. They count towards your 5 A DAY and won't go off, so you can buy them in bulk. Buy canned fruit and veg, in water or fruit juice, without added salt or sugar. Supermarket own-brand varieties are usually the cheapest.

NOVEMBER MEANS HALLOWEEN

It can be hard to avoid sugar at Halloween. The kids are all geared up for the toffee apples and pick n mix that are everywhere you turn. While it would be cruel to completely deny kids sweets at Halloween, here are a few fun ways to sneak something nutritious into children's Halloween diet. Each one takes less than 5 minutes to make...

Pumpkin Tangerines



Turn satsumas into really cute pumpkins. Simply draw on some pumpkin-style faces onto the orange peel with a black marker pen to make them look like mini carved pumpkins.

Banana Ghosts



These banana ghosts are so easy to make and they even have a little bit of chocolate in them – because it wouldn't be trick or treat without the treat!

Simply cut your bananas in half and use three chocolate chips to make the eyes and mouth. They're the perfect thing for coaxing kids into eating some fruit in amongst all the sweet treats.

Halloween Jokes

What does a hungry ghost want?
Ice scream!

What kind of girl does a mummy take on a date?
Any old girl he can dig up!

What was written on the hypochondriac's tombstone?
"I told you I was ill"!

Why did it take the monster ten months to finish a book?
Because he wasn't very hungry.

What do monsters call human beings?
Breakfast, lunch and dinner!

How do you make a witch itch?
Take away her w!

Why didn't the skeleton cross the road?
Because he had no guts!

What runs around a cemetery but doesn't move?
A fence!

Why didn't the skeleton go to the party?
Because he had no body to go with!

What does a witch ask for when she goes to a hotel?
Broom service!

Why are graveyards so noisy ?

Because of all the coffin !

Why did the witch travel on a broom?
She couldn't afford a Vacuum Cleaner.

Who did Frankenstein take to the prom?
His ghoul - friend!

What do you call a vampire that's always feeling peckish?
Snackula!

FOR SCHOOLS

Love British Food
Good collection of resources and links for teachers

Food For Life Partnership
Project to transform school and community food culture

Soil Association
Range of educational materials for primary and secondary schools

Food Ethics Council
Ethical issues in food and agriculture

GOOD READS

The Oxford Companion to Food
The gastronome's definitive reference guide

McGee on Food and Cooking: An Encyclopaedia of Kitchen Science, History and Culture
Acclaimed, influential, impressive

The Omnivore's Dilemma
Enlightening and thought-provoking study of food production: highly recommended for anyone interested in food
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