



A nutrition Fact Sheet



Montana-Grown Food

Plant a Backyard, Community, or School Garden

For the best results with a backyard or community or school garden in Montana, consult resources like the MontGuides produced by Montana State University Extension, available at www.msueextension.org – Yard and Garden Publications:

- *Planting a Home Vegetable Garden*
- *Can I Grow that Here? Vegetable Seed and Transplant Schedules for Garden or Container*

A few tips for planting gardens are below.

- **Determine the frost dates for your area.** Find the last frost date in the spring for your area at <http://www.mtmastergardener.org/climate.html>.
- **Buying and planting seeds and plants.** Seeds and plants that will produce food for a household can be purchased with SNAP benefits. When you plant, make sure to follow the spacing instructions on the seed packets or MontGuides for each kind of vegetable.
- **Start vegetables inside.** Many vegetables don't have time to mature in Montana's short growing season. Start these plants indoors or buy transplants from a local nursery or garden center.
- **Plant the right things at the right time.** Consult a schedule like the ones in the MontGuides mentioned above for planting times based on the last frost date in the spring in your area.
- **Hardy to Very Hardy Vegetables:** Plant 2-3 weeks before the average last frost date.
 - Plant seeds: Beets, carrots, Swiss chard, kale, lettuce, parsnips, peas, and turnips.
 - Plant transplants: Cabbage.
- **'Half Hardy' Vegetables:** Plant 2 weeks before the average last frost date.
 - Plant seeds: Radishes.
 - Plant transplants: Broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, and celery.
- **Warm Season Vegetables:** Plant around the average last frost date.
 - Plant seeds: Bush beans, pole beans, cucumbers, and summer squash (including zucchini).
 - Plant transplants: Eggplant, bell peppers, and tomatoes.



Food Grown in Montana

Montana ranks second in the nation for the amount of land in farms and ranches. By buying Montana-grown food, you support farmers, ranchers, and the local economy. Some of the most commonly grown or produced foods in Montana are described below; many other Montana-grown foods are also available.

Grains: Montana fields grow an impressive amount of grains including wheat, barley, oats, and corn. Look for flour made in Montana and whole grain products made with Montana flour. Whole grain products can help you meet the *MyPlate* goal of making half your grains whole.

Beef: Montana has more cattle than people! Beef is a good source of iron. Look for lean beef products to follow the *MyPlate* recommendation of choosing low fat or lean sources of protein.

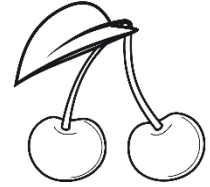
Apples: Consider trying familiar and unfamiliar varieties of Montana-grown apples. You may be able to pick your own apples at a farm in your area. Apples are a good source of fiber and vitamin C.



Lentils: Montana is the top producer of lentils in the United States, producing almost 40% of the lentils grown in this country! Lentils are a good source of fiber, folate, and iron. *MyPlate* suggests choosing low fat or lean sources of protein; lentils are a great choice for a low fat protein source.

Cherries: Cherries grow along the east side of the Flathead Lake in Montana.

Montana produces about 2 million tons of sweet cherries each year! Fresh cherries are only available for a short time in Montana, so get them while you can! Cherries are a good source of fiber and vitamin C.



Buying Montana-grown products

You may be able to find Montana-grown products at retailers that accept SNAP benefits. You can find out where SNAP benefits are accepted at:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/retailerlocator>

You can also go to <http://agr.mt.gov> and search for 'Farmer's Market Directory' to see a list of Montana farmers' markets. The Farmers' Market Directory indicates which markets accept SNAP and WIC benefits.



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This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – SNAP. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact the Montana Public Assistance Helpline at 1-888-706-1535 or www.apply.mt.gov. Montana State University Extension is an ADA/EO/AA/Veteran's Preference Employer and Provider of Educational Outreach.