



the seasonal 7:

healthy nest's guide to spring produce

*what to buy, why to buy &
how to make it delicious*





Hi there! I'm Robin, the founder of Healthy Nest Nutrition. I am a huge proponent of seasonal eating, and I'm excited to share my picks for the season's best with you.

why eat seasonally

Fruits and vegetables **taste better** when you purchase them in season. Their vitamins and minerals are way more **powerful** eaten closer to when they were picked. They are normally less expensive & we should be eating **so many fruits and veggies** that a bit of variety goes a long way toward getting everything you need from your food.

This list is what is on my radar for this current season. It is a bit subjective, and there are many great options that didn't make this list, but it's a **good start** at seasonal eating.

what to buy

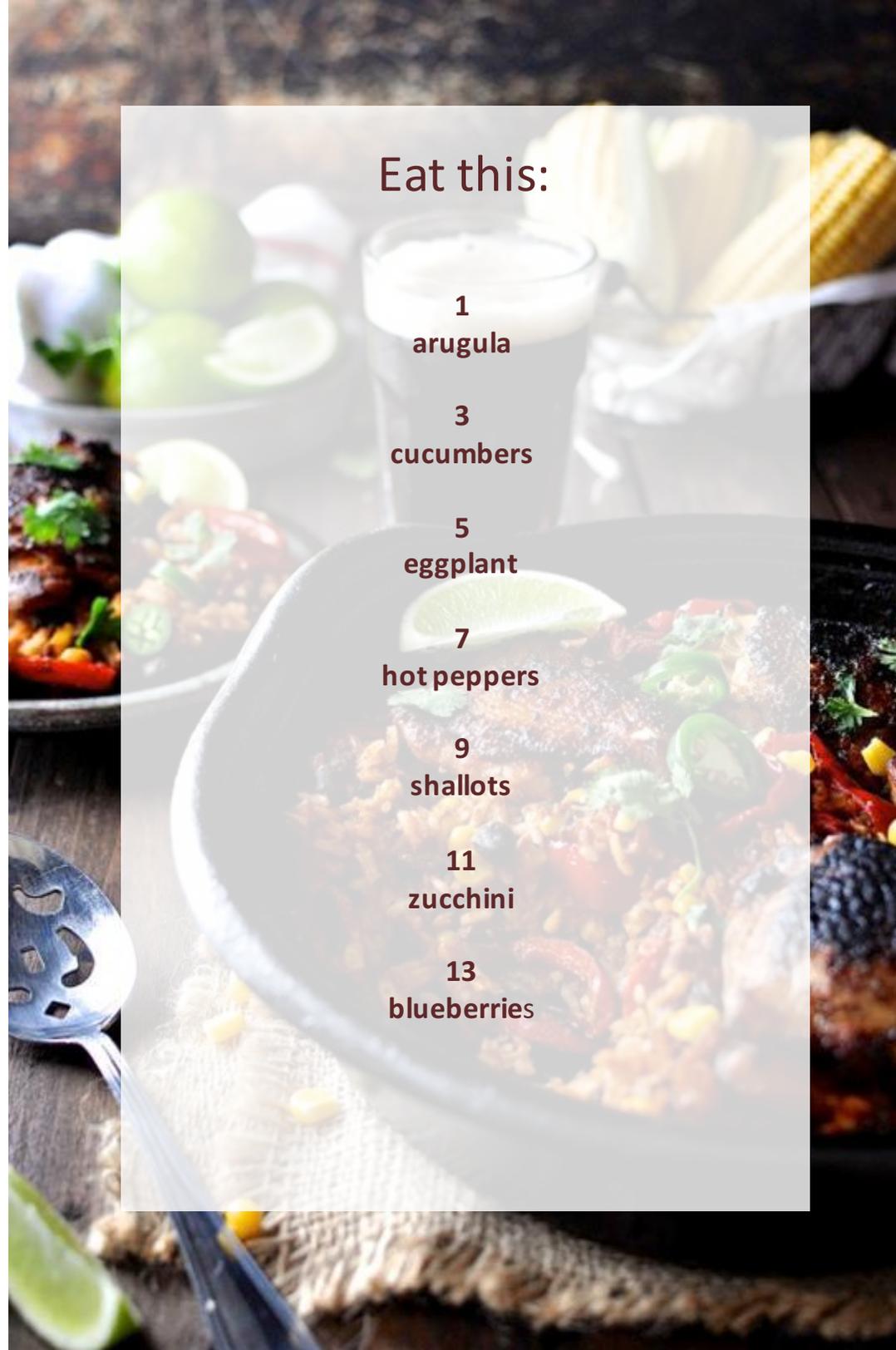
These vegetables (and at least one fruit that shouldn't be missed!) will be plentiful in the coming months. Put this food on your plate for color, variety & **lots of nutrients** your body will love. I hope you enjoy!

- Robin

For more recipes, please visit us at:
www.healthynestnutrition.com

Eat this:

- 1 arugula
- 3 cucumbers
- 5 eggplant
- 7 hot peppers
- 9 shallots
- 11 zucchini
- 13 blueberries



arugula (my favorite)



The smaller younger leaves of arugula have a mild, delicate, peppery flavor. The larger leaves have a much bigger zing.

Arugula is an excellent source of folate and vitamin C as well as a good source of calcium.

This delicate green spices up the summer salad and pairs well with sliced eggs & scallions as well as creamy olives. Dress with a lemon vinaigrette or serve with a bit of red wine (their acid content brings out the flavor of arugula).



lovely & peppery arugula is one of the season's bountiful greens

cucumbers

A member of the squash family, cucumber's high water content makes it a refreshing (and hydrating) addition to lunch, dinner or snack. Cucumber is also a good source of vitamin C and silica, which is important for connective tissue health and does wonders for the skin (both when ingested or applied topically to reduce swelling or redness).

In addition, the skin of the cucumber is a great source of fiber, potassium and magnesium. So, wash it thoroughly and don't peel.

Cucumbers can be added raw to salads, sandwiches, soups or dips and are most flavorful when paired with chives, dill, mint and salt and vinegar. Hands down my favorite cucumber salad is the Mediterranean version. Combine tomatoes, cucumber, red onion, scallions, flat leaf parsley, lemon & olive oil, S&P. Delicious.

versatile cucumbers make summer salads easy-peasy



eggplant



eggplant is an amazing nutritional powerhouse

Eggplants are plentiful in summer gardens. Filled with vitamin B, fiber & phytonutrients, they have phenolic compounds and protect us via their free radical scavenger activity.

The skin of young eggplant is edible, but the skin of older eggplants is bitter. If this is the case, slice the eggplant, salt it and set it out to “weep” for 20 minutes. Be aware that as a member of the nightshade family, eggplant could cause inflammation and joint pain in some people.

Eggplant is tasty grilled or roasted and seasoned with oregano. It is also terrific mashed with garlic, tahini, lemon and olive oil.



hot peppers

Hot peppers boast a healthy dose of capsaicin, a compound that can alleviate the symptoms of migraine headaches, arthritis, inflammation & gastric issues as well as reduce the risk of cancer AND speed up metabolic activity.

In addition, hot peppers are high in antioxidant carotenes and flavanoids and contain about twice the vitamin C as oranges.

Due to the intense flavor of peppers, they are best used to spice up summer stir fries, salads & salsas.



spicy peppers rev up both recipes and metabolism

shallots



Of all the vegetables in the onion and leek family, shallots have one of the highest concentrations of antioxidants.

In addition, they have also shown to have anti-bacterial, anti-inflammatory and anti-allergic properties.

I LOVE using the shallot as a base for sauces or most cooked meals that start with the onion/garlic combo. Just sub out your onion and garlic for the same amount of shallots.



shallots bring yummy hints of both onion and garlic

zucchini

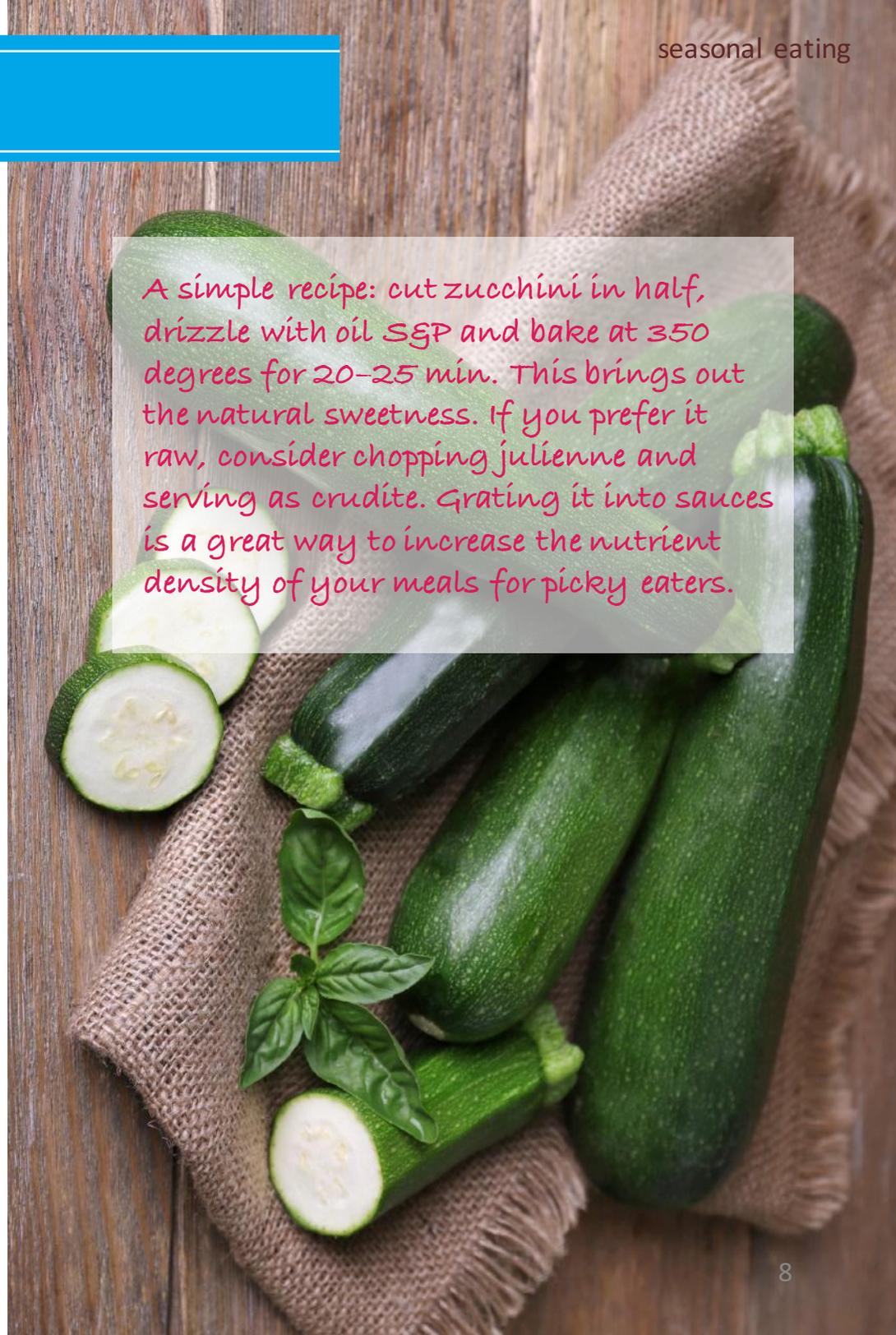
Zucchini is bountiful at farmer's markets starting in May all the way through July. They are an excellent source of vitamin C and manganese as well as dietary fiber, magnesium, vitamin A, potassium, copper, folate, phosphorus, omega-3 fatty acids, protein and several B vitamins.

Choose zucchinis that resemble cucumbers in size and have smooth, thin yellow or green skin. This mild veggie takes on whatever flavors and spices that accompany it, so get creative!

although zucchini is often cooked, it's also divine raw



A simple recipe: cut zucchini in half, drizzle with oil, salt and pepper and bake at 350 degrees for 20-25 min. This brings out the natural sweetness. If you prefer it raw, consider chopping julienne and serving as crudite. Grating it into sauces is a great way to increase the nutrient density of your meals for picky eaters.



blueberries



blueberries are packed with antioxidants

Although technically a fruit, blueberries are just too darn delicious to pass up for the summer season. Relatively low in calories and carbs, blueberries boast a ridiculously high level of antioxidants, making them true protectors. Blueberries are also rich in vitamin C, manganese and dietary fiber. At the market, select blueberries that are firm and deeply hued.

Blueberries are delicious alone, added to breakfast smoothies or protein shakes, sprinkled on top of a salad or served as a dessert.





I hope you enjoyed this seasonal eating guide!

We have so much more to share about food, nutrition and health on our website. Visit us at:

healthynestnutrition.com

- robin