



have a
plant[®]
fruitsandveggies.org

HAVE A PLANT[®]
INFLUENCER TOOLKIT
FALL 2023

Food Rooted In Feel-Good Flavor

**The Role Of Enjoyment In
Creating Fruit & Vegetable
Cravings & Habits**

Share The Have A Plant[®] Love:
Ideas & Inspiration

What's In Season In Fall?
Fruit & Veggie Highlights

Retail Roundup:
Create A Season Of "More, Please!"

Dial Up The Delicious:
The Science Behind Powerful
Produce Pairings

Food Rooted In Feel-Good Flavor

Ring in the holiday cheer with fruits and veggies! We'll focus on flavor and fun to keep our spirits high with flavorful feasts and feel-good eats.



BY KATIE CALLIGARO
DIRECTOR, HAVE A PLANT® MARKETING
& COMMUNICATIONS

When we think something is delicious, that perception is not only based on our sense of taste, but also on what we can see, touch, hear and smell. The sights, sounds and smells of the fall and the holiday season is a notable time to celebrate all of the glorious feasts that can be accomplished with delicious fruits and vegetables.

As we are working towards instilling habits that last a lifetime that incorporate more fruits and vegetables, let's give 'em something to talk about!

Whether its experimenting with new spices to make something delicious or pairing a fruit or vegetable with something else you already know and love, there are many ways to get creative so that something is enjoyable. After all, when something tastes good, you're going to want to eat it again!

In this toolkit you will find a variety of science-based facts that arm you with reasons to focus on flavor this holiday season. There are insights from our coveted experts, including Chief Behavioral Scientist Jason Riss, PhD on how to create memorable experiences with flavor that help instill habit changing behaviors. An excerpt from Culinary & Foodservice Specialist, Amy Myrdal Miller, offers the science behind powerful produce pairings and why foods pair well together. Annette Maggi, Retail Specialist, offers three unique ideas to implement at retail each month to get shoppers to start saying "yes more" rather than thinking they need to cut things out. Tailoring produce-centric meals that are applicable to multiple meal plans could be an effective approach!

And lastly, I wanted to call your attention to the What's In Season section. According to our Google analytics, that is one of the most frequently searched terms directly driving consumers to fruitsandveggies.org. If you want to get in with consumers (whether its to boost your own web traffic or get people to put fruits and veggies in their carts on ecommerce sites), give them what they're looking for and highlight produce that's in season! Fall is a great time to champion a variety of produce, including also canned, frozen, dried and 100% juice.

I love this time of year, celebrating all the joys of the seasons with friends and family. The smells that take you back are the ones that we want to repeat, right? So hold onto those traditions, keep the flavors and smells coming, and maybe even start new traditions with more fruits and veggies or a new spin on an old family favorite by adding one more fruit or veg. Whatever your palate desires, we hope you feel inspired and ready to share all the flavors of fall with our sample social media posts, monthly themes, images and ideas to prompt you in your communications to consumers.

We thank you for all you do each and every day to promote, share, and encourage consumers to eat more fruits and vegetables for better health, and happiness. Cheers to the flavors of fall and the nature's bounty to carry us through memorable, delicious and flavorful feasts this holiday season! And remember, every time you eat, Have A Plant®!

Cheers,

Katie Calligaro
Director, Have A Plant® Marketing & Communications



Food Rooted In Feel-Good Flavor

The Role Of Enjoyment In Creating Fruit & Vegetable Cravings & Habits



BY JASON RIIS, Ph.D.
FOUNDER AT BEHAVIORALIZE



There are certain foods that emanate from experiences, like family traditions of grilling veggie kabobs, burgers with grilled onions at annual summer barbeques or the sweet taste of biting into a juicy piece of watermelon after a long day at the pool or beach. These experiences cultivate cravings that leave us wanting more, and ultimately recreate the feelings those memories instilled in us.

When it comes to increasing fruit and vegetable consumption, parents can play on the emotional connection that comes with eating certain fruits and veggies by creating moments that trigger feelings or craving those experiences that will instill habits in children that could last a lifetime. Let's take a deeper dive from a behavioral science standpoint.

People tend to do things that they enjoy. That's obvious. What's less obvious is that the causality works in the other direction too. People will come to enjoy things that they do, even if they don't enjoy them at first. Both sides of this relationship are important for understanding fruit and vegetable consumption and for informing efforts to increase it.

We Repeat Things We Enjoy

People do things they enjoy, but the nuances of enjoyment have been discussed at least since the ancient Greeks. Fruit and vegetable consumption will be repeated if it produces a variety of positive sensory and emotional experiences.

Quotes For You To Use

"We know from behavioral science that if we want someone to do something it has to be easy. When something makes you feel good, you want to do it again. When something tastes good, you want to eat it again. This is where we can tap into moments that are already happening, so it's easy for everyone!"

- Katie Calligaro,
Director, Have A Plant® Marketing
& Communications

"Aged dairy products and fermented foods are umami-rich ingredients that will boost flavor. Topping roasted veggies with freshly grated Parmesan cheese, adding chopped kimchi to a whole grain and vegetable salad, or adding a dash of soy sauce to sauteed vegetables will make those dishes even more delicious."

- Amy Myrdal Miller, MS, RDN, FAND
Founder & President, Farmer's
Daughter Consulting

"Fruit and vegetable consumption will be repeated if it produces a variety of positive sensory and emotional experiences ... Let's not forget, 'taste is king'."

- Dr. Jason Riis,
Chief Behavioral Scientist



Taste Is King

Let's not forget "taste is king". We all know this, and yet consumers often complain about the taste experiences of vegetables, and to a lesser extent, fruits. Because fruits and vegetables are healthy, we sometimes lower our taste expectations and assume that others should too, but for children it's hard to give up on taste. And children may experience taste differently than adults do.

Consumption increases when food tastes better. Juliana Cohen and her colleagues increased veggie consumption at a school cafeteria by hiring professional chefs to make the lunch veggies taste better. By providing low-income elementary and middle school students with chef-enhanced meals in a repeated, and long-term setting, they were able to almost double the percentage of students that selected and consumed vegetables.

We should encourage consumers to innovate and experiment to find things that they (and their children) actually like.

Take The Easy Route

Easy things are more likely to become habits because they are more likely to be repeated. This is often overlooked because easy is quite subjective. What is "easy" food preparation for an experienced chef is very different from what is easy for a young parent who themselves didn't grow up cooking and who has very limited time and resources for food preparation. Things do get easier over time, but only once they are easy will they be repeated in a habit-like manner.

Easier Through Repetition

People often underestimate just how much better they can get at things with repetition. This is partly because they underestimate how much easier things get with repetition. Even something as simple as preparing instant soup or microwaving a frozen packaged entrée gets easier when you no longer have to read the 8-point font instructions. As things become easier through repetition, they then become even more likely to be repeated, because we are more likely to choose easy food preparation over less easy food preparation.

The consumption experience needs to be enjoyed, or at least it needs to become effortless. Enjoyable and effortless things are more likely to be repeated. And things that get repeated are more likely to become enjoyed and effortless. Pro-Tip: find some fruit and vegetable preparations that will be sufficiently enjoyable and effortless even at the outset. Create experiences that are enjoyable and connect the moments with the food. Those are the preparations that are most likely to stick. #haveaplant



Key Consumer Messages

When we think something is delicious, that perception is not only based on our sense of taste, but also on what we can see, touch, hear and smell.

If you're trying to eat more fruits and vegetables, focus on flavor! If something is delicious you're going to want to eat it again.

Spicy ingredients contain a compound called capsaicin that heightens our perception of sodium in food. Using spicy ingredients is a great way to boost flavor.

All our senses are important elements of creating flavor, but the most important is our sense of smell.

Use umami-rich ingredients such as mushrooms, tomato paste, Parmesan cheese or soy sauce to boost savory flavors in fruits and veggies.

Use aromatic ingredients such as garlic, onion, herbs and spices to boost flavor perceptions.

Research & Insights



Sensory scientists estimate that 80% of our perception of flavor in foods and beverages come from the volatile aromatic compounds that create aromas.¹



Relative to other foods, fruits are chosen more frequently for healthfulness, routine and availability; vegetables are chosen more frequently based on healthfulness and availability. “Favorites” and “Cravings” present opportunities for improvement.²



A perfect flavor pairing is created when two ingredients share one or more aroma compound, like apples and peanut butter. A “flavor bridge”, an ingredient that shares flavor molecules with the other two ingredients can also be used to create a successful pairing such as using beef to bridge between garlic and strawberries.³

REFERENCES:

1. Spence, C. Just how much of what we taste derives from the sense of smell?. *Flavour* 4, 30 (2015). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13411-015-0040-2>
2. PBH State Of The Plate: America's Fruit & Vegetable Consumption Trends, 2020
3. <https://inspire.foodpairing.com/>



Share The Have A Plant® Love: Ideas & Inspiration

As we get ready to enjoy the flavors of fall, we wanted to share our Editorial Calendar plans to help inspire content to share on your own channels. These themes were designed to help break through the clutter and serve as a guidepost to help create content that tells a compelling story.



OCTOBER

Fabulous Fall Flavors

Celebrate fall and the feel-good flavors of seasonal faves. Whether you're cozying up with a blanket, heading out to enjoy the leaves or trick or treating, be sure to enjoy an autumn inspired plant-packed treat.

Additional Weekly Themes

What's In Season In Fall?

Your guide to what's in season and all the tips and recipes you need for creating awesome autumn inspired plant-packed snacks and meals.

Fantastic Flavors Of Fall Fruit

Cooler weather calls for something sweet and spicy in the kitchen, so put your apron on and whip up one of these fruit-filled treats.

Boards, Boos & Brews

Scare up a spooky good time with some frighteningly fun produce-packed entertaining inspo! Boo!

Promotion Ideas

Get Cozy With Desserts

Fall is the start of cozy, baking season! Create a weekly series sharing plant-forward dessert recipes with followers. Encourage them to bake along with you and tag your account when sharing their creations.

Trick Or Treat Yourself

We all could stand to eat a few more veggies! Create an infographic or social post that lists which veggies pair well with different sauces, seasonings or condiments to highlight flavor pairings and encourage everyone to Have A Plant®.

Embrace What's In Season

Create an in-store display that features seasonal produce. This display could also highlight locally grown produce, along with grower stories and/or images to share the origin story of the items being sold.

National Food & Beverage Observances

American Cheese Month

National Apple Month

National Chili Month

National Dessert Month

National Pasta Month

National Pickled Peppers Month

National Pizza Month

National Pork Month

National Taco Day (Oct. 4)

National Kale Day (Oct. 4)

National Pumpkin Seed Day (Oct. 4)

Southern Food Heritage Day (Oct. 11)

National Dessert Day (Oct. 14)

National Pasta Day (Oct. 17)





NOVEMBER

GrateFALL November

We're grateful for a lot of things and fruits and veggies are two of them! Show your gratitude and gather around the table to celebrate the seasons' bounty with flavorful produce pairings. There's a seat at the table for everyone.

Additional Weekly Themes

Flavorful Friendsgiving

Gather around the table and celebrate the seasons' bounty with flavorful produce pairings and elevated Thanksgiving classics!

Cookin' With Kids

What better way to keep the kiddos entertained AND eating their fruits and veggies while home for the holidays than to make it fun!

YESvember

All foods can fit this holiday season so give yourself permission to bake a cake and eat it too!

Promotion Ideas

Capture Family Favorites

Gather family favorite recipes that are produce-centric from fellow co-workers, clients, followers, loved ones, etc. and share them for others to enjoy in an in-store magazine or circular, e-book, blog post or social post.

Cookin' With Kids

Host a kid-friendly cooking class that teaches children basic cooking skills and a couple fun and tasty recipes along the way.

Friendsgiving Flavor Challenge

Share recipe inspiration or a sample menu of upgraded Thanksgiving dishes for consumers to make for their friendsgiving get-togethers. Think outside the box and push the flavor limits outside of the norm. Spice up your sweet potatoes with sriracha and lime, shred up some brussels sprouts for latkes, mix up a pomegranate glaze for your turkey!

National Food & Beverage Observances

- Banana Pudding Lovers Month
- National Fun with Fondue Month
- National Peanut Butter Lovers Month
- National Pepper Month
- National Raisin Bread Month
- National Roasting Month
- National Stuffing Month
- National Spinach and Squash Month
- National Cinnamon Day (Nov. 1)
- National Nachos Day (Nov. 6)
- National Split Pea Soup Week (Nov. 12-18)
- Apple Cider Day (Nov. 18)
- Eat A Cranberry Day (Nov. 23)
- National Cashew Day (Nov. 23)
- National Parfait Day (Nov. 25)
- National Cake Day (Nov. 26)





DECEMBER

Joyful Holiday Flavors

Cheers to the holiday season! We've got you covered with all the fruit and veggie inspo you need for flavorful celebrating and memory-making.

Additional Weekly Themes

Plant-Packed Cocktails

When it's time to toast, be the coolest host! These produce-packed cocktails and mocktails bring festive flavor and cheer for your next gathering.

Party Planning 101

From holiday boards to plant-forward apps, we're all about keeping party planning easy and our spirits joyful this season.

New Year #Goals: Have A Plant®

Get ready to start the New Year with a new 'tude. It's as easy as incorporating your favorite plants into daily meals and snacks. Let's get started!

Promotion Ideas

Party Planning Basics

Share your best secrets and go-to party planning tips with consumers so they can spend more time enjoying the shindig and less time stressing! Inspire them with plant-forward appetizer recipes, plant-packed party cocktails and stress management tips.

Plant-Forward Gift Giving

Host a cooking class that focuses on all the various plant-centric gifts consumers can give this holiday season. Think bigger than produce-packed desserts – infuse olive oils, ferment or can produce to share, create potpourri, make a basket of locally grown produce to gift.

New Year #Goals

The new year doesn't have to be a time of total reset or lofty goals. Help consumers break down their intentions into simple, bite-sized (pun intended!) habits. Focus on actionable hacks that boost fruit and vegetable appeal to share with followers or in-store consumers. Think – suggesting easy produce items to keep on hand, storage hacks, how to use certain seasonal produce items, 2-ingredient recipes.

National Food & Beverage Observances

Exotic Fruits Month

National Pear Month

Root Vegetables Month

Eat a Red Apple Day (Dec. 1)

National Green Bean Casserole Day (Dec. 3)

National Cookie Day (Dec. 4)

National Brownie Day (Dec. 8)

National Pastry Day (Dec. 9)

Lemon Cupcake Day (Dec. 15)

National Chocolate Covered Anything Day (Dec. 16)

National Oatmeal Muffin Day (Dec. 19)

National Date Nut Bread Day (Dec. 22)

National Pumpkin Pie Day (Dec. 25)

National Fruitcake Day (Dec. 27)



Sample Social Media Posts • #haveaplant

This social content is designed to help you easily share the fruit and veggie love — eating more plants is delicious and fun!

OCTOBER

Fabulous Fall Flavors

Instagram & Facebook

It's officially #sweaterweather! 🍂
No matter if you're cozying up with a blanket, heading out to enjoy the leaves or trick or treating, be sure to enjoy the fabulous fall flavors with an autumn inspired plant-packed treat. bit.ly/3PAf5ss #haveaplant

Twitter

It's officially #sweaterweather!
🍂 No matter if you're cozying up with a blanket, heading out to enjoy the leaves or trick or treating, be sure to enjoy an autumn inspired plant-packed treat. bit.ly/3PAf5ss #haveaplant

Instagram & Facebook

Throwing a #spooky bash?!
Celebrate with boards, boos & brews! 🧛‍♀️ Seasonal #produce faves can be the star of your fall-inspired board and your fun cocktails. Get inspired all autumn long: bit.ly/3PAf5ss #haveaplant

Twitter

Seasonal #produce faves can be the star of your fall-inspired board and your fun cocktails. Get inspired all autumn long: bit.ly/3PAf5ss #haveaplant

NOVEMBER

GrateFALL November

Instagram & Facebook

Whether its grandma's #sweetpotato pie 🥧 or your aunt's #greenbean casserole, everyone has a family favorite! Show your gratitude for your loved ones, gather around the table & celebrate the seasons' bounty with flavorful produce-packed dishes. There's a seat at the table for everyone. bit.ly/3JxUW2E #haveaplant

Twitter

Show your gratitude for your loved ones, gather around the table & celebrate the seasons' bounty with flavorful produce-packed dishes. There's a seat at the table for everyone. ❤️ bit.ly/3JxUW2E #haveaplant

Instagram & Facebook

This November, say YES to all foods! Fuel & feed your body with #plants, #protein & sweet treats. Focus on the enjoyment of tasty meals shared with friends & family. We've got you covered with tons of plants-piration: bit.ly/3JxUW2E #haveaplant

Twitter

Fuel & feed your body with #plants, #protein & sweet treats. Focus on the enjoyment of tasty meals shared with friends & family. We've got you covered with tons of plants-piration: bit.ly/3JxUW2E #haveaplant

DECEMBER

Joyful Holiday Flavors

Instagram & Facebook

The holidays can be a stressful time! Keep yourself happy with the joyful holiday flavors of #fruits & #veggies. ❄️ Whether it's sipping your favorite holiday cocktail, makin' memories with music & meals, we've got you covered for the ultimate end-of-year celebration! bit.ly/3PBU0Op #haveaplant

Twitter

Keep yourself happy this holiday season with the joyful flavors of #fruits & #veggies. ❄️ Whether it's sipping your favorite holiday cocktail, makin' memories with music & meals, we've got you covered for the ultimate end-of-year celebration! bit.ly/3PBU0Op #haveaplant

Instagram & Facebook

What's the perfect formula for a joyful holiday party? Fabulous food 🍷 + delicious drinks 🍹 + a perfect playlist! 🎵 We've got you covered for all your party planning needs this holiday season. bit.ly/3PBU0Op #haveaplant

Twitter

Fabulous food 🍷 + delicious drinks 🍹 + a perfect playlist 🎵 = joyful holiday party. We've got you covered for all your party planning needs this holiday season. bit.ly/3PBU0Op #haveaplant



Social Media Graphics — Click to download

Instagram & Facebook



Twitter



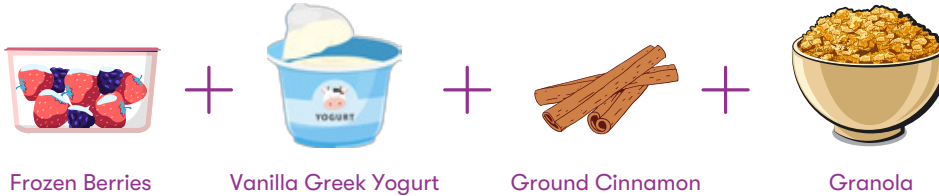
Infographic

Click on the infographic to download and share. Be sure to use #haveaplant and tag @fruitsandveggies in all your awesome posts!

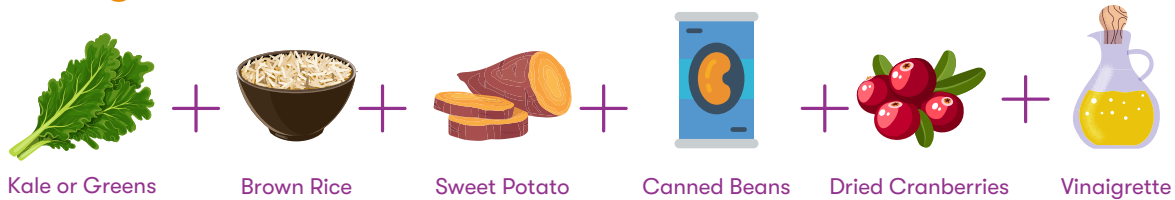
Flavorful Fall Pairings

When you fuel & feed your body with plants, protein, and sweet treats you're better able to enjoy the people you're with and all the feel-good flavors!

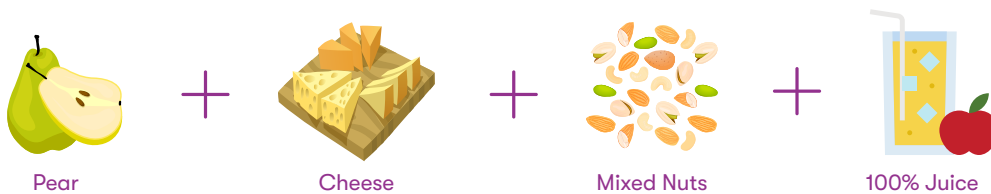
Fabulous Fall Yogurt Bowl



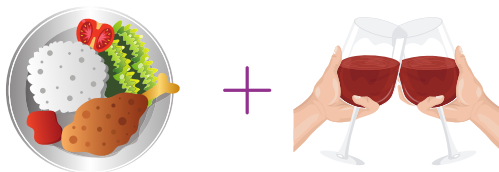
Cozy Autumn Grain Bowl



Pear-fect Snack Plate



The Holiday Feast!



have a
plant.
fruitsandveggies.org



Pumpkin No-Bake Cookies

Quick, easy, delicious, and made with only 8 ingredients.

Courtesy of
Sarah Schlichter, MPH, RDN



Ingredients

- ½ cup pumpkin puree
- ⅓ cup coconut oil (or butter)
- ⅓ cup brown sugar
- 2 Tbsp peanut butter
- 2 cups rolled oats
- ¼ tsp pinch salt
- ½ tsp pumpkin spice
- ¼ tsp vanilla extract

Instructions

1. Layout a baking sheet and cover it with parchment or wax paper.
2. Add the pumpkin puree, coconut oil, brown sugar and peanut butter to a small pan and heat over medium-high heat. Heat and then let it cool.
3. In a small bowl, add your dry ingredients (oats, salt, pumpkin spice) and vanilla extract.
4. Pour the wet mixture (once it's cooled) into the bowl and stir to combine. Make sure you stir so the oats all become wet and absorb the mixture.
5. Spoon the mixture into small cookie shapes and gently flatten on the parchment paper. Finish and sprinkle with sea salt.
6. Enjoy! You can also toss them in the fridge for a quick 10 minutes before enjoying to let them firm up a bit more.



What's In Season In Fall?

Acorn Squash	Butternut Squash	Daikon Radish	Jujube	Pomegranate
Apples	Cactus Pear	Endive	Key Limes	Pumpkin
Asian Pear	Cape Gooseberries	Feijoa	Kohlrabi	Quince
Barbados Cherries	Cardoon	Garlic	Kumquats	Radicchio
Black Crowberries	Cauliflower	Ginger	Muscadine Grapes	Sapote
Black Salsify	Chayote Squash	Grapes	Mushrooms	Sharon Fruit
Belgian Endive	Chinese Long Beans	Guava	Ong Choy Spinach	Sunflower Kernels
Broccoli	Crab Apples	Hearts of Palm	Passion Fruit	Sweet Dumpling Squash
Brussels Sprouts	Cranberries	Huckleberries	Pear	Sweet Potatoes
Butter Lettuce	Date Plum	Jalapeno Peppers	Persimmons	Swiss Chard
Buttercup Squash	Delicata Squash	Jerusalem Artichoke	Pineapple	Turnips

Seasonal Highlights

Delicata Squash



Select

Select a squash that is firm, heavy for its size and has an even cream color. A ripe delicata squash will be yellow with green striations on its rind. Unripe delicata squashes are light green. Avoid squashes that have soft spots, dull and wrinkled skin or that are extremely light for their size.

Store

Store squashes in a cool dry place for up to 3 months.

Serve

[Roasted Autumn Vegetables With Harissa Yogurt Dip](#)

[Roasted Delicata Squash With Pomegranate](#)

[Roasted Delicata Squash With Walnut Crumble](#)

Grapes



Select

When selecting fresh grapes, choose plump, firm grapes firmly attached to the stem.

Store

Store grapes in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for up to 1 week.

Serve

[Fennel & Grape Potato Salad](#)

[Spinach Miso Holiday Salad Wreath](#)

[Waldorf Pear Salad](#)

[Fruit Salad With Citrus Sauce](#)



Create A Season Of “More, Please!”



BY ANNETTE MAGGI, MS, RDN, LD, FAND
RETAIL SPECIALIST

As we merge into the fall season, with its bounty of holidays and treat-infused occasions, consumers will hear language about taking something away, like eating less meat, cleansing your house of butter, or avoiding full fat dairy. Then there are the swaps, like veggie burgers instead of hamburgers; plan Greek yogurt in place of sour cream or oil; brown rice instead of white rice.

Instead of all this “no” language, what if you presented your shoppers with reasons to “add to” or say “more, please”? It’s an opportunity to focus on the inherent flavor and goodness of fruits and vegetables, helping consumers feel pride, happiness, and satisfaction along the way.

Consider these activation ideas to encourage shoppers to say yes to more fruits and vegetables as we head towards year end:

October

Inspire shoppers to try new recipes using produce that is abundant this fall by featuring five great ways to use that ingredient each week. As a thought starter, think pumpkin in chili, whole wheat pumpkin pancakes or muffins, pumpkin puree in a sauce, condiment, or dressing, pumpkin overnight oats, and pumpkin puree and spices swirled into plain Greek yogurt. The next week, choose another seasonal produce item, such as apples or Brussel sprouts.

November

Individuals recently diagnosed with type 2 diabetes can be hesitant to eat fruits or starchy vegetables given their carbohydrate and sugar amounts. As you counsel these individuals, focus on produce pairings that balance the carbs in fruits with protein from meat, eggs, tofu and dairy foods. Provide tips in the produce aisle such as choosing smaller-sized pears and apples and choosing high fiber options like pomegranate and oranges. Share insights on the plentiful nutrients in fruits and starchy vegetables that benefit diabetes management and longevity.



December

With the swirling scheduling of parties and family gatherings during December, it’s likely your shoppers are hosting at least one loved one who has a preferred eating plan. The good news is that fruits and vegetables can fit into many plans, including gluten-free, Whole 30, low carb, flexitarian, and heart-healthy to name a few. Help your shoppers meet the needs of the “no vote” by leaning into the various eating plans as you promote fruit and vegetable recipes and entertaining ideas. Include specific dietary tags on recipes; offer a landing page with produce recipes targeted at a specific healthy living plan; or in social, feature an employee who follows that eating plan and some of their fav high-produce recipes.



The Science Behind Powerful Produce Pairings



BY AMY MYRDAL MILLER MS, RDN, FAND
CULINARY & FOODSERVICE STRATEGIST

Have you ever wondered why some foods taste so good when paired with others? Think about apples and peanut butter or French fries and ketchup. What is it about these combinations that make them so delicious? The secret lies in the science of food pairings.

When we think something is delicious, that perception is not only based on our sense of taste from the sweet, sour, salty, bitter, and umami properties in food, but also on what we can see, touch, hear, and smell.

Think about a juicy, red ripe tomato. You first see the gorgeous bright red color. As you bring the tomato to your lips, you will feel the smoothness of the skin, and then you'll start to smell the ripe tomato aromas. As you bite into it, you might feel the sensation of tomato juice running down your chin. And as you chew and swallow, you will detect the balanced flavor coming from the natural sweet, sour, and umami properties in the tomato.

While all our senses play a role in our perception of flavor, research shows that most of the flavor experience—more than 80%—comes from our sense of smell. The aromas we detect in food and beverages are created by volatile aromatic compounds. Each food has its own aroma profile, which can be made up of thousands of aromatic compounds.

Our ability to detect aromatic compounds can be influenced by many factors, including the degree of ripeness, how a food is cooked, and even the temperature at which we eat it. A green tomato or peach, for example, contains far fewer volatile aromatic compounds compared to a ripe tomato or peach. As fruit ripens, more of these natural compounds are created.



Aromatic compounds must be volatilized or released for us to detect them. There are many ways to release the compounds. Here are some examples:

- Swirling a glass of wine
- Chopping fresh herbs
- Crushing a clove of garlic
- Grinding whole spices
- Macerating a fresh strawberry

So, what do these compounds have to do with creating powerful produce pairings? Research shows that a perfect food pairing is created when two ingredients share one or more aroma compound. Sometimes these pairings are quite surprising. One example is blue cheese and chocolate; the two foods share an aroma molecule. A talented chef could combine these two ingredients to create an amazing dessert or a sauce to accompany roast pork loin.

Sometimes two foods can't be successfully paired without using a "flavor bridge", an ingredient that shares flavor molecules with the other two ingredients. An example of this is using beef to create a flavor bridge between garlic and strawberries.

Feeling overwhelmed? Don't worry! We have compiled a collection of recipes in a [Power Couples](#) series on [fruitsandveggies.org](#) to help you create amazing flavor pairings or flavor bridges in your home kitchen. These five recipes feature the following fruits and vegetables paired with other nutrient-rich ingredients:

- Apples and peanut butter
- Avocados and eggs
- Pears and walnuts
- Potatoes and milk
- Tomatoes and beef

Want to learn more about food pairings? Check out the free tool at www.inspire.foodpairing.com

**Experts estimate
80% of our
perception of
flavor in foods
and beverages
come from the
volatile aromatic
compounds that
create aromas.**





Follow us and our Have A Plant[®] Ambassadors on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn.

And don't forget to use #haveaplant in all your awesome posts!



[@fruitsandveggies](https://www.facebook.com/fruitsandveggies)



[@fruitsandveggies](https://www.instagram.com/fruitsandveggies)



[@fruits_veggies](https://twitter.com/fruits_veggies)



[Have A Plant[®]](https://www.linkedin.com/company/have-a-plant)



fruitsandveggies.org