

# winterfresh

Top tips, quick meals, best buys and nutritional advice about seasonal fruit and vegetables



**SYDNEY MARKETS** Supplying quality fresh fruit & vegetables



## fennel

**to buy** Choose firm fennel with fresh feathery leaves still attached. Avoid dry or damaged bulbs.

**to prepare** Trim the base, remove thick outer leaves and trim tops. Slice or chop bulb as desired.

**to store** Store fennel in a plastic bag in the crisper section of the fridge. Use within 5 days.

**cook's tip** Add sliced fennel to rich meat or chicken casseroles. Pan-fry with fish or thinly slice and toss into a salad with parmesan. Use the feathery leaves instead of dill in recipes.

## leeks

**to buy** Choose small to medium-sized leeks with firm, long white stems and bright green tops.

**to store** Trim tops and store unwashed leeks in a plastic bag in the fridge. Use within 1 week.

**to prepare** Trim and discard roots, the tough outermost layer of the stem and dark green tops. Cut leek in half lengthways. Wash well, lightly fanning the layers under cold running water to remove any dirt. Slice or chop as desired.

**cook's tip** Use only the white part of the leek. Substitute mild-tasting leeks for onion in risotto, frittatas, soups, braises and casseroles.



## parsnips

**to buy** Select small to medium sized firm parsnips with pale cream skin. Large parsnips may have a woody core.

**to store** Store parsnips in the crisper section of the fridge. Use within 1 week.

**to prepare** Trim the stem end and root. Thinly peel using a vegetable peeler. Chop, halve lengthways or leave whole for cooking.

**meal in a flash** Roast whole small or halved medium parsnips in a little olive oil until golden and tender. Sprinkle with grated parmesan and black pepper and serve with roasted meat.

## potatoes for roasting

**to buy** Choose Bintje, Coliban, Desiree, King Edward, Pontiac, Spunta and Russet Burbank varieties for roasting. Select firm, dry potatoes with no signs of greening skin or sprouts.

**to store** Remove potatoes from plastic bags. Store in a cool, dark, well-ventilated place. Do not store in the fridge. Use unwashed potatoes within 1 week and washed within 3–4 days.

**cook's tips** For perfect roast potatoes, peel and halve potatoes lengthways. Boil for 5 minutes or until just softening. Drain. Roughly scrape potatoes using a fork. Place into a little heated oil and roast in a hot oven until crisp and golden.



## jerusalem artichokes

**to buy** Choose firm, dry artichokes with thin skin. The smoothest, least knobby Jerusalem artichokes are the easiest to peel.

**to store** Store Jerusalem artichokes in a paper or loose plastic bag in the fridge for up to 2 weeks.

**to prepare** Scrub well and leave skins on for cooking as the skin adds flavour. Thinly peel using a vegetable peeler if preferred.

**cook's tips** Roast whole scrubbed Jerusalem artichokes until tender with a golden crust. Or cook them with potatoes and mash until smooth to enjoy their nutty flavour.

## cabbage

**to buy** Choose firm cabbage that feels heavy for its size. Leaves should be crisp and tightly-packed. Colour and shape varies with variety.

**to store** Store cut or whole cabbage in a plastic bag in the fridge. Use within 1 week.

**to prepare** Remove and discard tough outer leaves. If whole, cut in half. Trim hard stem and core. Slice or shred leaves as required.

**cook's tip** Cook rapidly and briefly for maximum flavour. Stir-fry, pan-fry, steam or add cabbage to soups. Use finely shredded raw cabbage in salads and coleslaw.





## custard apples

**to buy** Choose plump custard apples with firm green skin.

**to store** Leave custard apples to fully ripen out of direct sunlight at room temperature. Skin loses its sheen with ripening. It's ready to eat when it yields to gentle pressure. Fruit with black skin is over-ripe.

**to prepare** Simply halve the fruit and dislodge the sweet white flesh with a spoon.

**meal in a flash** Toss custard apple flesh with a drizzle of lemon or orange juice and serve with thick natural yoghurt for breakfast.



## tangelos

**to buy** Choose vibrant orange tangelos that feel heavy for their size. Skin may feel loose as the fruit is a cross between a mandarin and a grapefruit.

**to store** Store tangelos in a cool, well-ventilated place out of direct sunlight for up to 2 weeks. Refrigerate fruit to extend storage.

**to prepare** Peel and segment tangelos like a mandarin.

**meal in a flash** For a quick dessert, toss tangelo segments with halved hulled strawberries. Squeeze over tangelo juice, refrigerate for 15 minutes and serve with mascarpone and a drizzle of liqueur.

## kohlrabi

**to buy** Choose firm kohlrabi no larger than a tennis ball with undamaged skin. Leaves should look fresh. Colour can vary from white to pale green or purple.

**to store** Store kohlrabi in a plastic bag in the crisper section of the fridge. Use within 3 days.

**to prepare** Wash and gently scrub the bulb. Trim the base and remove top protruding stems. Thinly peel or leave the skin on for cooking. Chop the crisp white flesh as desired.

**meal in a flash** Stir-fry finely sliced kohlrabi with a little oil and garlic until just tender, add sliced rump steak and oyster sauce. Serve with noodles.



## granny smith apples

**to buy** Choose firm apples with vivid-green glossy skin and a distinct fresh aroma.

**to store** Apples keep their crispness best when stored in the crisper section of the fridge.

**cook's tip** Crisp, tart and fresh-tasting Granny Smith apples are excellent for baking and sautéing. Use for sweet apple pies, tarts and cakes and for old-fashioned apple sauce.

**meal in a flash** Fill cored Granny Smith apples with fruit mince. Spray with oil spray, sprinkle with brown sugar and roast until tender. Serve with ice-cream.



## tamarillos

**to buy** Choose firm tamarillos with glossy deep maroon or orange skin. Avoid very soft or bruised fruit.

**to store** Leave at room temperature out of direct sunlight to ripen. Fruit yields to gentle pressure when ripe.

**to prepare** Simply halve the fruit lengthways and scoop out the flesh using a spoon. Leave fruit whole for poaching. If eating fresh, sprinkle flesh with a little sugar to serve.

**meal in a flash** Poach whole tamarillos in a sugar syrup with a split vanilla pod for 3–5 minutes or until tender. Cool fruit in the syrup, slip off the skin and serve with ice-cream.

## blood oranges

**to buy** Select plump blood oranges with ruby-red tinged skin. Rich skin colour indicates the fruit has full coloured flesh. Fruit should feel heavy for its size and have firm skin.

**cook's tip** Blood oranges are ultra juicy. Segment fruit over a bowl and reserve the juice. Use blood orange juice in marinades, salad dressings or drizzle over pan-fried fish or chicken.

**meal in a flash** Toss blood orange segments in a salad with shredded smoked chicken and baby spinach leaves. Drizzle with an olive oil dressing and serve with crusty bread.



## best buys in winter

### JUNE

#### fruit

Apples  
Avocados  
Custard apples  
Grapefruit  
Kiwifruit  
Lemons  
Limes  
Mandarins  
Nashi  
Oranges – Navel  
Passionfruit – Panama  
Pears  
Pomelo  
Quince  
Rhubarb

#### vegetables

Beetroot  
Broccoli  
Brussels sprouts  
Cabbage  
Carrots  
Cauliflower  
Celeriac  
Celery  
Fennel  
Jerusalem artichokes  
Kohlrabi  
Leeks  
Kohlrabi  
Leeks  
Okra  
Olives  
Onions  
Parsnips  
Potatoes  
Pumpkin  
Silverbeet  
Spinach  
Swede  
Sweet potato  
Turnips

### JULY

#### fruit

Apples  
Avocados  
Custard apples  
Grapefruit  
Kiwifruit  
Lemons  
Limes  
Mandarins  
Oranges – Navel  
Pomelo  
Quince  
Rhubarb  
Tangelo

#### vegetables

Beetroot  
Broccoli  
Brussels sprouts  
Cabbage  
Carrots  
Cauliflower  
Celeriac  
Celery  
Fennel  
Jerusalem artichokes  
Kohlrabi  
Leeks  
Okra  
Olives  
Onions  
Parsnips  
Potatoes  
Pumpkin  
Silverbeet  
Spinach  
Swede  
Sweet potato  
Turnips  
Witlof

### AUGUST

#### fruit

Apples  
Cumquat  
Grapefruit  
Kiwifruit  
Lemons  
Mandarins  
Oranges – Blood and Navel  
Pomelo  
Rhubarb  
Strawberries  
Tangelo

#### vegetables

Beetroot  
Broccoli  
Brussels sprouts  
Cabbage  
Carrots  
Cauliflower  
Celeriac  
Celery  
Fennel  
Jerusalem artichokes  
Kohlrabi  
Leeks  
Okra  
Onions  
Parsnips  
Potatoes  
Pumpkin  
Silverbeet  
Spinach  
Swede  
Sweet potato  
Turnips  
Witlof

# low-fat roasted vegetables

by **Rosemary Stanton** OAM PhD

There can no longer be anyone who hasn't heard that vegetables are good for them. Most people know vegetables provide vitamins, minerals and dietary fibre. Some are also aware they are a great natural source of hundreds of valuable antioxidants – leaving antioxidant pills behind for variety and potency.

The major problem with vegetables is to encourage people to eat more of them. Roasting vegetables with just a touch of quality oil keeps them healthy, low in fat and tasting delicious. Extra virgin olive oil is first choice, but sesame oil or nut oils can also be used.

## The secrets to healthy and successful roasting are to:

1. pre-heat the baking tray (preferably an old one with shallow sides)
2. use only a minimum quantity of oil
3. use a moderately hot oven (the time will depend on the size of the pieces)
4. roast most vegetables cut-side down, or for small chunks or cubes, shake or turn several times.

To keep the fat content low and the texture crisp, use extra virgin olive oil in a small sprayer or a can of olive oil spray or simply swirl a teaspoon or two of oil in a hot baking dish, add the vegetables and shake so they get a light coating of oil.

Vegetables cooked this way will have only about 1 gram of fat per serve and if it's extra virgin olive oil, the small amount of fat will make some of the antioxidants from the carotenoid family more easily absorbed into the body.

## Suitable vegetables for roasting include:

- **chunks of peeled pumpkin or sweet potato (small cubes are excellent to serve on a risotto or use over pasta)**
- **peeled, halved onions**
- **garlic bulbs (cut in half across the whole bulb and when cooked, squeeze out the soft flesh)**
- **baby beetroot or halved larger beetroot (slip off the skins after roasting)**
- **carrots, halved or quartered lengthwise**
- **baby fennel bulbs, halved and roasted cut side down**
- **zucchini, halved lengthwise**

# home-made soups

by **Rosemary Stanton** OAM PhD

**Home-made winter vegetable soups are the ideal way to warm and nourish the body and soul. They're also a great way to encourage any reluctant vegetable eaters into getting a great natural source of nutrients – vitamins, minerals, fibre and antioxidants.**

Home-made vegetable soups have a special place for those trying to lose weight. Make up a big pot of soup and put it in the fridge so that anyone needing nourishment with few kilojoules can simply heat up a bowlful at any time of the day or night and appease their hunger with a clear conscience.

The lowest kilojoule soups are based on a quality stock, plenty of one or more vegetables and some herbs for extra flavour. For more flavour and only an insignificant addition of kilojoules, you can also start by gently cooking onions or leeks and garlic in a small quantity of olive oil, then adding the vegetable(s) of your choice, tossing with the onions for a few minutes before adding stock and herbs. Once the soup has simmered enough to soften the vegetables, place it in the fridge or freeze individual portions ready to take to work for reheating (a microwave makes it easy).

Vegetable soups can also include pearl barley, pasta or rice for extra substance. Or cook up some lamb or veal shanks with onions, garlic, peeled eggplant, capsicum and any other vegetables you have on hand plus lentils or barley for a delicious peasant style full-meal soup.

Vegetable soups not only taste good, but you get any vitamins that escape from the vegetables into the surrounding liquid. You get good nutrition, low kilojoules and warming winter comfort in the one bowl.

**If children are reluctant to eat their vegies, a pureed soup is often the solution. As well as the familiar pumpkin soup, try sweet potato, carrot, zucchini, broccoli or spinach and potato.**

**Cook the vegetables in stock and puree with milk for a creamy soup. Those watching their weight or wanting some extra protein can use skim milk plus a couple of tablespoons of skim milk powder.**