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Colorado Produce

Colorado's climate offers a great environment for growing world-class vegetables and our fruit is second to none. Colorado's climate allows planting from April through May. Harvest begins in May and continues through October with a wide range of vegetables and fruits.

Colorado's dry climate helps our onions and potatoes cure in the field and makes our storage crops ideal for storage and shipment through most of the year. See our harvest and marketing calendar for individual crop market seasons.

Colorado Vegetables

Colorado's largest vegetable crop is potatoes, grown in both the San Luis Valley and northeastern plains. Colorado's potato industry includes our summer potato harvest, second largest in the nation, and our fall crop, which typically ranks Colorado as the fifth largest potato-growing state in the nation. Also key to our potato industry is the seed potato industry in the San Luis Valley, where seed potato research and production are recognized around the world.

Colorado Vegetable Calendar

	May	June	July	August	September	October	November
Asparagus	May						
Beets			July 1 - October 1				
Bell Peppers			August 1 - October 1				
Broccoli			July 1 - October 15				
Cabbage			July 15 - November 1				
Carrots			August 1 - December 1				
Cauliflower			August 1 - November 1				
Celery			July 15 - October 15				
Chile Peppers			August 1 - October 15				
Cucumbers			July 15 - October 15				
Dry Beans	Pinto and kidney beans are shipped year-round						
Eggplant			August 15 - October 15				
Green Beans			July 15 - October 1				
Herbs			August 1 - October 15				
Lettuce (leaf & head)		June 1 - November 1					
Onions			August 1 - March 15 (Storage included)				
Potatoes	Year-round (Harvest begins July 15)						
Pumpkins					September 1 - November 1		
Rhubarb	May 1 - October 1						
Squash			August 1 - December 1 (Storage included)				
Sweet Corn			July 15 - October 15				
Tomatoes (field)			July 15 - October 15				
Tomatoes (hothouse)	Year-round						

Onions are the state's second largest crop and Colorado is known for storage onions. Our dry climate yields high-quality onions, which are allowed to air cure at harvest. This combination yields onions that supply America and export markets from July to April.

Colorado's dry bean industry is our third largest vegetable crop, with pinto and kidney beans harvested in the fall and marketed year-round. Carrots are ranked fourth, followed by cabbage and sweet corn. Supporting the sweet corn industry is a growing industry of sweet corn seed production, using the latest in plant-breeding technology to keep Colorado farmers in the forefront of the vegetable industry. Spinach, lettuce and cucumbers wrap up our top crops.

Colorado Fruits

Colorado's orchard production is located in Delta, Mesa and Montrose counties. The season begins in mid-June when cherries are harvested. Each fall customers throughout the U.S. anxiously await the harvest of our peaches, as well as apples, cherries, plums and apricots.

Apples are Colorado's largest fruit crop. Colorado's high-quality apple production is centered on the state's Western Slope. Major varieties include Red Delicious, Golden Delicious, Jonathan, Gala, Fuji and Rome. Colorado Golden's were the first of their kind with a prominent red blush. This quality, along with their unique flavor, makes them the most outstanding of their type in the nation. The Colorado difference is easily noted in the taste! Colorado apples are also available as Colorado Supreme apples, which are graded to a standard higher than the USDA #1 grade, representing the highest quality of apple available.

Colorado's melon production is centered in the Arkansas Valley around Rocky Ford, a name that is synonymous with cantaloupe melons. People throughout the U.S. ask for Rocky Ford melons. This same region produces watermelon for the market as well as cantaloupe and watermelon seeds, which are now shipped worldwide.

Colorado Fruit Calendar

	May	June	July	August	September	October	November
Apples				August 15 - October 15 (Storage to June 1)			
Apricots				8/15 - 9/15			
Cantaloupe				August 15 - October 15			
Cherries		6/15 - 7/15					
Grapes					Sept 1 - October 15		
Peaches				Aug 1 - Sept 15			
Pears					Sept 1 - October 15		
Plums				8/1 - 9/1			
Raspberries				August 1 - October 15			
Strawberries		June 1 - October 1					
Watermelon					Sept 1 - October 15		

Colorado farmers are returning to wine grape production. Colorado now has two American Viticultural Areas, distinct growing regions recognized by the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Firearms and Tobacco. The Grand Valley AVA, between Grand Junction and Palisade, produces a majority of the state's wine grapes, specializing in Bordeaux and Rhone varietals, while the West Elks AVA, around Hotchkiss and Paonia, offers outstanding Riesling and other Alsace varietals.

The number of licensed wineries in Colorado has grown proportionately faster than any other state or province in North America over the past decade and now numbers over forty. The Colorado Mountain Wine Fest in Palisade celebrates the state's grape harvest the third weekend of every September.

