

Women's Nutrition Matters Monthly

Seasonal eating: Winter into Spring

By Diane Lassen, RN, HHC

Eating locally is all the rage these days. In fact, there are wonderful books such as Barbara Kingsolver's [Animal, Vegetable, Miracle](#) which really romanticize the idea of eating locally and growing your own food. I have to tell you, I am all for it. I grew up in suburban New Jersey with a Dad who dug up half the backyard for our garden, and we ate from it all year long.

Eating locally means eating seasonally. Even though nearly every conceivable food option is available 365 days a year in our global supermarket, we should know where our food comes from, and we should strive to minimize the traffic that our food must endure by eating foods grown close to home. I love the concept of seasonal eating because it is an intuitive way of eating. It dates back to the basis of Ayurvedic medicine, where with each season came plants that gave us exactly what we needed for that season. Let me explain this concept: In the summer where it is hot, we have succulent, juicy fruits and vegetables like melons, stone fruits and tomatoes and lettuces which naturally

cool the body and quench our thirst. As fall moves into winter, the fall harvest provides us with hearty and sustaining foods, foods that warm us and give us energy such as winter squash, root vegetables, beans and many seeds and grains. These foods are heavier and warming in nature, and give us a feeling of contentment and nourishment—much needed in the cold, dark days of winter! Then with the spring comes cleansing sprouts, young greens and berries which help to rid the body of excess weight that may have accumulated over the winter, and which cleanse the body of toxins and wastes, thus preparing us for another season of heat.

As we enter our final month of winter, we should continue to focus on our stores of local winter squash, pumpkins and sweet potatoes that are high in carotenoids, the antioxidants that have given us extra protection during the cold and flu season. Look to the Brassicas such as kale, cabbage and Brussel sprouts which, after a cold snap, have higher levels of phytonutrients and antioxidants which help protect us from

environmental stress. A good frost also sweetens their flavors considerably!

This Brassica family as well as members of the lily family –most notably garlic, onions and leeks—are also high in sulfur compounds which protect against cancer and other damage to our DNA. All of these vegetables were the winter

staples of our grand-parent’s “root cellars”



and should find a place in our basements as well.

Soon the winter winds will die down, and the sun will warm the earth enough to cause our spring bulbs to appear. What

a joyous time of year! And just when you can’t eat another acorn squash, it will be time for the spring greens to appear in the marketplace, and for wild mustard and chickweed to pop up in the woodlands, begging to be harvested. Our bodies will beg for the bitter greens of arugula and cress, so that the cleansing and detoxifying process can begin again. We will awaken from our long hibernation indoors ready to tackle the garden beds and other outdoor activities that beckon with the coming warm days. But as I write this, it is cold and gray, with a light snow falling outside my window. I think I’ll put on a pot of soup and toss another log on the fire.

Member Updates

Tuesday night group:

Going strong!! Eating more green vegetables, cooking more grains—there’s no limit as to what we can accomplish!

6-month Individual Programs:

Let me help you tune up for spring and summer with an individualized program that teaches you the skills you can use for a lifetime of good eating and good health! Email me at herbalmgem@gmail.com or check out my website: www.womensnutritionmatters.com.

Need a workshop for your Group?

Let me come talk with your group about eating well, cooking fresh, enhancing your self care and more. Affordable rates include handouts! Contact herbalmgem@gmail.com or call 908-377-0773.

“Above all, do not lose your desire to walk. Every day I walk myself into a state of well-being and walk away from every illness. I have walked myself into my best thoughts, and I know no thought so burdensome that one cannot walk away from it.”

Soren Kierkegaard

Individual Counseling sessions:

Not ready for the whole 6 month program? Meet with me for a single 90 minute session. I will look at your goals and design a short program for you, whether it's for more energy, weight loss or kicking up your health to the next degree! Cost is \$95 and includes a full set of notes and recommendations. Call or email: 908-377-0773 or herbalmgem@gmail.com.

Diane's Monthly Message

The days are getting longer, and the weather will be warming soon. It's time to get outside and dust off the cobwebs of winter. Get out for a 15 minute walk in the morning, and you'll be starting your day with a burst of energy—not to mention how good the cool air is for refreshing the complexion and reducing morning puffiness! Time, too, to be thinking about the spring diet, with its fresh greens and abundant sprouts. I ordered my sprouting seeds and so should you! Please check out the [Sprout People](#) for great sprouters and seeds. Sprouts are great to add to smoothies and salads, and are packed with nutrients and protein. This company has a great kid's sprouting kit, perfect to get kids into the practice of eating and growing cool sprouts! It can be found on their main page. Check it out. Sprouting is easy, cheap and fun!!!



Links of Interest for Good Health

- www.sunfood.com – a great site for raw foods including raw organic cacao!
- www.sproutpeople.com – the site for everything sprout! Seeds, sprouters, recipes and more
- www.purpledragon.com – an organic foods coop which guarantees good foods to you twice a month
- www.TheSynergyCompany.com – whole foods green supplement that I used for years!

And What's New with Diane?

- I am now in Face book, thanks to my friend, Karen. Visit me there!
- I have been invited to be a guest blogger on Dr. Joel Fuhrman's site, www.diseaseproof.com. How exciting for me! You can look for me there!
- I recently attended the [Integrative Healthcare Symposium](#) in NYC and learned a whole lot about healing and wellness. How great it was to be surrounded by hundreds of like-minded doctors and other practitioners, such as Dr. Mark Hyman, Dr. Larry Dossey, and Dr. Woodson Merrill. Very inspiring and educational!

- I will be meeting up with Sue from Dr. Fuhrman's office this week to talk about becoming an associate member and hopefully doing some work with him. I will then be carrying his products on my website, www.womensnutritionmatters.com
- Meetings continue with [Healing Ways](http://www.healinginthevalley.com) wellness center, located in Bethlehem, Pa. I will be holding workshops there in the near future, so any of you in the Pa. area, stay tuned!! It's a great place- they offer massage and biofeedback, my health counseling and many spa treatments as well. Check them out!! www.healinginthevalley.com

It's a pleasure and an honor to bring you this newsletter each month. I hope that you enjoy it and learn from it, and pass it along to others that they may learn and grow as well. Have a wonderful month!!

Namaste,

Diane