



**Fruits in Your USDA Food Box**

Some fruits you may find in your food box include:

**Juices**

- Apple, cranberry, grape, or cherry juice
- Juices provide hydration, vitamins, and minerals

**Canned fruit**

- Peaches, pears, plums, or apricots
- Canned fruit contains fiber, vitamin C, vitamin A, and potassium, and helps with digestion

**Dried fruit**

- Raisins
- Dried fruit contains fiber and potassium, and provides energy

It is recommended to eat four servings of fruit a day:

**1 serving is equal to**  
½ cup CSFP fruit juice  
½ CSFP canned fruit  
¼ cup dried fruit

**Cereal**

Cereal is part of the grain food group. Cereal can be eaten hot or cold and is usually eaten for breakfast. Whole grain cereals are a healthy breakfast or snack option. They contain fiber to help with digestion and vitamins and minerals such as folate, iron, B vitamins, and magnesium. Whole grain cereal is good for heart health and provides energy for the day.

- Ready-to-eat cereals are dry and made from a variety of grains. Just add milk!
- Rolled oats are made from whole grains and need to be cooked. Rolled oats do not have added sugar. Add fruits or nuts for extra flavor.
- Farina is a type of wheat cereal that can be cooked and has a creamy, smooth texture. Nuts and fruit can also be added to farina.
- Grits is a warm cereal made from ground corn. It can be cooked with milk and eaten warm. Grits are a healthy option for gluten-free diets.

Cereals that list whole grain as the first ingredient on the ingredient label are the healthiest option.

**Upcoming Distributions**

Call or text your local office

- Bay City: 989-894-9060
- Big Rapids: 231-660-0271
- Farwell: 989-386-3805
- Gladwin: 989-426-2801
- Hart: 231-923-3066
- Midland: 989-832-7377
- Muskegon: 231-557-7622
- Reed City: 231-791-7078

Residents of Gratiot, Ionia, Isabella, & Montcalm Counties should call 616-754-9315

For a complete list of distributions, call 989-229-0849.

**Spotlight on LFPA Farmers**

Thank you to our Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) program farmers who provide fresh and prepared foods for your food boxes:  
Arnold Farms, Far Hills Maple Syrup, Gavin Orchards, Gregory Asparagus Farm, JNelson Farms, McMillan's Honey Bees, M&M Farm Marker, MOO-ville Creamery, The Recipe Farmstead, Traditions Apiary and Produce, Tom's Taters, Van Ooteghem Brothers Farm, and Wagner Farms!

**Michigan Produce Spotlight**

**Asparagus**

In Michigan, asparagus grows in May and June. Asparagus is a vegetable that grows nearly ½ inch every hour from the ground during peak growth. When asparagus is picked, it is over 6 inches tall and is plucked at the bottom of the stem. Asparagus is best cooked, baked, or steamed.

Vitamins and minerals from asparagus include folate, vitamin A, vitamin K, and thiamin. These vitamins and minerals keep our bodies healthy by improving our eyesight, bone health, and immune system.

**Warm Oatmeal**

**Ingredients**

- ½ cup dried rolled oats
- 1 cup UHT milk or milk of choice
- ½ cup diced fruit, canned, dried, or fresh
- ½ teaspoon of cinnamon, optional, to taste
- 1 tablespoon of sugar or honey, optional, to taste

**Directions**

1. In a small saucepan over medium heat, cook oats and milk until a low boil.
2. Reduce heat, cover, and simmer until liquid is absorbed, about 5 minutes.
3. Top with fruit, cinnamon, and sweetener.
4. Enjoy!

**Patio Gardening**

Patio gardening is ideal for growing vegetables in small spaces such as a patio or deck. To get started, you'll need potting soil, containers that are at least 12 inches deep, and your favorite vegetable seeds. Most vegetables should be planted after the last frost, typically in April.

The best vegetable choices for container gardening include peppers, vine tomatoes, cherry tomatoes, lettuce, spinach, and radishes. Herbs also grow well in containers. Water each plant according to the dryness of the soil, the amount of sunlight it receives, and its growth stage.

It is important to pay attention to the directions on the seed packets that tell you how deep to plant the seeds and if the vegetable plant needs sunlight or shade.

Patio gardening is a great way to grow vegetables and then eat a variety throughout the warm Michigan months!

The material provided in intended to be used as general information only and should not replace the advice of your physician. Always consult your physician for individual medical care.

The contents of the USDA food boxes are intended for consumption only by the program recipient and no other person(s). USDA foods are specifically chosen to supplement the nutritional needs of the population served by this program.