Sustainable Futures: World Food Day 2016   
Seasonal Produce in Australia

Part 1: Shopping for lunch

Australians are lucky. We can access a wide range of foods all year round from our local markets and supermarkets. But not all fruits, vegetables and herbs grow all year round.

To ensure we have access to many of these foods in every season, they are often grown in heated greenhouses, transported long distances from other areas, or stored in big refrigerators. This uses a lot of energy and resources.

One way to eat in an environmentally-friendly way is to buy foods that are ‘in season’. This means they have been recently harvested from the paddock, field or orchard, and sent to the market or supermarket for you to enjoy fresh in your lunchbox. It’s also a good idea to select foods that have been grown locally, and to buy ‘nude food’ without polystyrene trays or plastic cling-wrap.

Generally in Australia, four seasons are identified. List the months that correspond to each season in the table below.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Summer** |  |
| **Autumn** |  |
| **Winter** |  |
| **Spring** |  |

**Western seasonal food calendar**

* Use the information below to create a seasonal calendar of when these foods are best to eat.
* Include both the name of the food and a photo or drawing in your calendar.
* You may wish to use the internet to find photos of foods that you may not be familiar with.
* If you know of any other seasonal produce, include it in your calendar.
* Remember to indicate the months and the seasons in your calendar too.

Vegetables

Capsicums are best in summer while in summer and autumn tomatoes, cucumbers, pumpkins and beans are ripe. In autumn and winter potatoes are good, while spring offers peas. Mushrooms and broccoli are available in every season.

Fruit

Summer offers strawberries, rockmelon and blueberries. Watermelon and nectarines are available in summer and autumn. Apples are at their best in autumn while kiwifruits are available in autumn and winter. Oranges and grapefruits are available in winter and spring, while zesty lemons are available in winter, spring and autumn. Enjoy bananas all year round.



Herbs

Rosemary and thyme are good to eat all year. Coriander is best to eat in spring, summer and autumn. Basil is available in summer, spring and autumn.

Part 2: Harvesting food

Many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities maintain a traditional diet that has been in place for tens of thousands of years.

Indigenous Australians recognise a different set of seasons to the western calendar of summer, spring, autumn and winter. Indigenous seasonal calendars are more specific to regions and Indigenous language groups across the country. These calendars show the wealth of knowledge Aboriginal people have of the environment and its natural resources.



***Kunwinjku***

The *Kunwinjku* people are traditional owners of the land and live in Western Arnhem land, Northern Territory. They eat a variety of foods throughout the year, using their knowledge of six seasons: *Kudjewk, Bangkerreng, Yekke, Wurrkeng, Kurrung, and Kunumeleng.*

*Kudjewk*

February and March is a time of heavy monsoonal rain, flooding and strong winds.

*Bangkerreng*

April brings stormy weather and rains later in the season.

*Yekke*

During May and June the rains have finished and the north east to west wind signals that the dry season is beginning.

*Wurrkeng*

July and August bring cooler temperatures and the dry wind blows from the east.

*Kurrung*

September and October is the hot and dry time.

*Kunumeleng*

November to January it is very humid and cloudy, with periods of lightning and thunder.

*Want to learn more about our series of Indigenous seasons calendars? Follow this link:*

*[http://www.csiro.au/en/Research/Environment/Land-management/Indigenous/Indigenous-calendars/About-the-calendars](http://www.csiro.au/en/Research/Environment/Land-management/Indigenous/Indigenous-calendars/About-the-calendars" \o "CSIRO website - Indigenous seasons calendars)*

***Kudjewk* seasonal food calendar**

* Use the information below to create a seasonal calendar of when these foods are best to eat.
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* Remember to indicate the months and the seasons in your calendar too.

During *Kudjewk*, bush sugar cane and spear grass are ripe, along with many bush fruits like types of plums. Black Wallaroos are a good size for hunting. During this time and into *Bangkerreng*, fishing is good especially for black bream and barramundi.

When there are lots of grass hoppers around during *Bangkerreng* this means that the yams are ready. Magpie goose eggs are ready for collecting and bush fruits, including Mandjordmo, are ripe.

As the weather becomes dry in *Yekke*, *Kunwinjku* people know that billy goat plums are tasty and crocodile eggs are ready to be collected. During *Yekke* and *Wurrkeng* seasons, kangaroos are fat and good for eating. In *Wurrkeng*, emu eggs are nice to eat.

*Kurrung* is hot and signals the time for harvesting freshwater mussels and prawns. Magpie goose are ready to be hunted. As the weather becomes more humid in *Kunumeleng*, *Kunwinjku* people gather many fruits like *Mandjarduk* and catch Arafura File Snakes from freshwater streams.

