

Superfoods

Supercharge Your Health and Nutrition Naturally

Dr. Joseph Mercola



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Introduction



The Basics of Healthy Eating: How Superfoods Add a Super Boost to Your Diet

Are you suffering from the perils of poor health? Is your immune system constantly challenged, making you prone to illnesses and health hurdles that are getting in the way of living life to the fullest?

If you answered “yes” to these questions, then there’s probably one very crucial lifestyle factor that you’re overlooking: your diet.

I believe that your overall health – physical, mental, and emotional – is a direct reflection of what you put in your body. Unfortunately, much of the food most people eat today are highly processed and adulterated – very different from the fresh, wholesome foods that our ancestors consumed many years ago.

Consuming a Processed Food Diet Wrecks Your Health

Three decades ago, most of the food that people ate was fresh and grown locally. Today, the majority of meals served at home, restaurants, and even in schools are made of highly processed foods that are loaded with sugars, harmful processed fats, and chemical additives. Overall, at least 90 percent of the food budget of a typical American family is spent on processed foods, including restaurant foods and grocery fares that require little to no preparation time at all.

This, in my opinion, is what’s causing the incessant cycle of disease and poor health that many Americans are predisposed to today. Combine it with a sedentary lifestyle, poor stress

management, and constant exposure to toxic chemicals, and you've got the perfect recipe for a health disaster.

So what can you do to solve this problem? The answer is simple: **Eat fresh, healthy, organic, wholesome foods.**

Healthy organic foods will not only give you a variety of life-giving nutrients and will provide optimal fuel for your cells and tissues, but they will also help bolster your immunity and maintain your healthy weight.

But how would you know what the best foods to eat are? No need to look further.

The Superfood Advantage: Top Superfoods You Can Add to Your Meals

In this E-book, *Superfoods: Supercharge Your Health and Nutrition Naturally*, I've created a list of the best superfoods today – nutrient-dense foods that can provide you with body-wide benefits.

These superfoods – fruits, vegetables, and healthy fats – can not only provide you with a wide range of vitamins, minerals, and other essential nutrients, but can also be easily integrated into a balanced diet.

What's more, this superfood E-book will also enlighten you on numerous topics, such as:

- The definition of “superfood” and how to grow (and prepare) the best ones in the comfort of your home
- Lesser-known but equally nutritious superfoods you may have never heard of before
- Factors that might make your superfood consumption counterproductive and how to avoid them

I've also compiled several healthy and delicious recipes that use these superstar ingredients. Satisfy your family's taste buds as you nourish their bodies with these wholesome dishes.

If you're new to the idea of healthy eating, then I believe that you should incorporate as many of these superfoods as you can into your diet plan.

Start reading this E-book now and add high-quality superfoods to your meals. This simple but significant change in your eating habits may be the ultimate secret that will help you take control of your health.

— Dr. Joseph Mercola

Chapter I:

What Are Superfoods?

In 2004, Dr. Steven Pratt, author of *Superfoods Rx: Fourteen Foods That Will Change Your Life*, coined the term “superfood” – and much of what we knew about the food that we eat today began to change.

There is no official definition of the word “superfood,” but the Oxford Dictionary describes it as “a nutrient-rich food considered to be especially beneficial for health and well-being.”ⁱ

Contrary to popular belief, superfoods are not just limited to plant-based fruits or vegetables, but also include cuts of protein, dairy options, and certain grains. The superfood concept does not exist to serve as just a type of food that can help with weight loss, but promote overall health and wellness. “It’s the non-diet diet. It’s food you can eat for a lifetime,”ⁱⁱ Dr. Pratt told CNN a few years back.

As Dr. Pratt notes, there are three qualities that separate superfoods from the rest of the pack:

1. **Availability.** Superfoods should be accessible to everyone. You should be able to easily purchase it at a local supermarket, farmers’ market, or from a trusted source online, depending on your location.
2. **Presence of nutrients known to enhance longevity.** Superfoods commonly have above-average quantities of natural health-boosting and disease-fighting nutrients, including antioxidants, phytonutrients, and essential fatty acids, proving that they are a “bang for your buck” and are worthy of the superlative.ⁱⁱⁱ
3. **Health benefits backed by peer-reviewed and scientific studies.** To make the cut, claims of anti-aging, disease protection, and other health benefits coming from these incredible edibles must be supported by solid scientific evidence.

Chapter II:

Top 10 Superfoods You Need to Get into Your Diet

Nutrition is one of the most crucial pillars of health you definitely want to focus on if you're seeking to live a long and healthy life, as it has such a profound impact on your well-being.

What you fuel and nourish your body with on a daily basis not only says a lot about the current state of your overall health, but the way it performs and survives once the going gets tough. If you're used to eating pre-packaged processed and junk foods, which more often than not are deficient in essential nutrients and smothered with artificial chemicals, for the sake of convenience, then easily going down with a cold or infection every now and then may be a familiar scenario for you.

On the contrary, a diet of natural wholesome foods, densely packed with an array of remarkable vitamins and minerals, such as superfoods, can give you a well-nourished physique that is strong enough not only to fend off diseases, but to also help you live your life to the fullest.

To help you get started, I've listed down 10 of my favorite superfoods. Check them out:

1. **Kale** (*Borecole*)

Probably one of the healthiest leafy green vegetables you can munch on, kale has been around since the Roman times. Because kale is very easy to grow and even thrives during the cold winter season, its cultivation was highly encouraged in the United Kingdom by the Dig Victory campaign during World War II. ^{iv}



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Some of the more popular varieties of kale include curly kale, Lacinato kale (dino kale), red Russian kale, redbor kale, and Siberian kale. There are countless ways to enjoy kale. You can cut the smaller, paler green leaves to anchor or mix into fresh garden salad, while the larger, dark greens are great for stir-fries, pizza topping, or soup. You can even indulge in guilt-free kale chips!

What Makes It a Superfood?

A single cup of kale can trump a whole week's worth of other foods as it contains:

- 684 percent of the daily value of vitamin K
- 206 percent of the suggested daily amount of vitamin A
- 134 percent of vitamin C (and even more vitamin C in the Scottish curly-leaf variety)

Kale has been compared to beef, which is known as a “go-to” food for iron, protein, and calcium. It has anti-inflammatory properties linked to the prevention and reversal of certain diseases, which includes arthritis, heart disease, and several autoimmune diseases, at levels not seen in other green vegetables.

2. Tomato (*Lycopersicon esculentum* P. Miller)

A member of the nightshade family, the first species of tomato plants originated in the South American Andes, although its use as a food was initiated by the Mexicans and was spread all throughout the world during the Spanish colonization. ^v



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There are over a hundred of varieties of tomato – tiny types like grape, plum, and cherry for snacking pleasure; firm, petite Romas good for cooking; and hefty beefsteak, ideal for BLTs and burgers. These plump mouthwatering superfoods can be used in many ways: sun-dried, fried green, stew, sauce, paste, ketchup, juice, Bruschetta, veggie soup, pizza, salsa, salad... the list goes on and on.

What Makes It a Superfood?

Tomatoes are rich in flavonoids and other phytochemicals that have anti-carcinogenic properties. One of them is lycopene, a carotenoid antioxidant that gives fruits and vegetables like tomatoes and watermelons a pink or red color. More powerful than other carotenoids, lycopene may significantly reduce your risk of stroke and prostate cancer.

Other lesser known phytonutrients found in tomatoes include:

- Flavonols: rutin, kaempferol, and quercetin
- Flavonones: naringenin and chalconaringenin
- Hydroxycinnamic acids: caffeic acid, ferulic acid, and coumaric acid
- Glycosides: esculeoside A
- Fatty acid derivatives: 9-oxo-octadecadienoic acid

In daily value, tomatoes provide 38 percent vitamin C, 30 percent vitamin A, and 18 percent vitamin K – minus the fat and cholesterol.

3. Artichoke (*Cynara scolymus*)

Artichoke is a perennial thistle and is a member of the sunflower family of vegetables. First cultivated in the Mediterranean region, artichokes became scarce after the fall of the Roman Empire. They made a comeback in Italy in the 1500s, and then appeared in the Americas after introduction by French and Spanish gardeners. As of today, California is the largest producer of artichokes in the US.



Some popular types and varieties of artichokes include:

- Globe artichokes
- Elongated artichokes
- Purple baby anzio
- Oblong siena
- Fiesole artichoke
- Chianti

Artichokes can either be steamed and served with a dipping sauce, stuffed with all kinds of savory ingredients like vegetables, lightly steamed then grilled, mixed into salads, and added in stews and other hot dishes.

What Makes It a Superfood?

Artichokes are a good source of fiber, as it supplies at least 28 percent of the recommended daily value. Aside from helping you move waste out of your system regularly, fiber can help also:

- Lower blood sugar and blood pressure levels
- Prevent inflammation and protect heart health
- Reduce your lipoprotein or "bad" cholesterol levels

The cynarin in artichokes increases bile production in your liver, which in turn eliminate bad cholesterol from your body. It also offers 25 percent of the daily requirement of vitamin C, or ascorbic acid, which provides antioxidant action to protect cells from damaging free radicals. Vitamin C also supplies collagen to help wounds heal quickly and protects the body from disease by helping it absorb iron.

4. Acai berries (*Euterpe oleracea*)

Acai (pronounced ah-sigh-ee) berries look like an offspring of a grape and a blueberry with a taste reminiscent of wild berries and chocolate. These tiny, reddish-purple drupes consist of a cluster of seeds, with only 15 percent or so being edible. Native to South America, acai berries are harvested from the tall, slender palm trees found at the basin of the Amazon River.



Although acai berries can be found in large supermarkets and health food stores around the globe, they're only available as a juice or tea rather than fresh fruits. Because they're highly perishable, getting acai berries out of the Amazon with their nutrients still intact is nearly impossible.

As a food, acai pulp in the tribal Amazon belt is often blended with the starchy root vegetable manioc and eaten as porridge.

What Makes It a Superfood?

Acai is known for its extraordinary antioxidant properties similar to cranberries, but many times more than what is found in blueberries and strawberries. As a matter of fact, the Oxygen Radical Absorbance Capacity (ORAC) values measuring the antioxidant power of acai fruit pulp/skin powder reportedly have the highest ORAC value among fruits and vegetables, or 10 times more antioxidants than red grapes.

This is why it's not surprising to find that acai berries may help treat:

Diarrhea	Parasitic infections
Hemorrhages	Ulcers
Erectile dysfunction	Inflammation
Arthritis	Allergies

Acai berries are low in fructose, but contain excellent amounts of iron, calcium, fiber, and vitamin A. They also contain anthocyanin compounds, such as resveratrol, cyaniding, and ferulic acid, which not only give fruits and vegetables their distinct color, but also team up with flavonoids to defend your body against harmful free radicals. In fact, acai berries offer 10 to 30 times more anthocyanin power than red wine.

5. Broccoli (*Brassica*)

Broccoli is perhaps the most popular member of the cruciferous group of vegetables. The word “broccoli” means “branch” or “arm” for the cross-shaped stems, like mini trees bearing the blossoms.



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A valuable vegetable that’s loved by the ancient Romans, broccoli once grew wild on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. Its use can be traced to 16th century France and England in the 1700s, with commercial growth beginning in the US in the 1920s.

While there are many ways to prepare and enjoy this superfood – it can be steamed, roasted, baked, sautéed, or stir-fried – broccoli is best eaten raw, as cooking tends to destroy some of its antioxidant components.

What Makes It a Superfood?

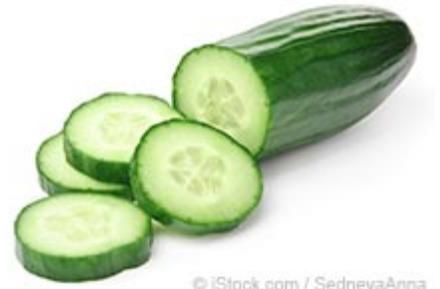
Broccoli has twice the vitamin C of an orange, almost as much calcium as whole milk (with a better rate of absorption), and offers anti-cancer and anti-viral properties with its selenium content. Just one cup of broccoli provides over 100 percent of your daily need for vitamin C and vitamin K, and is also a good source of vitamin A, folate, and potassium.

Some of the most sought-after health benefits of broccoli include: ^{vi, vii}

- Anti-cancer
- Anti-inflammatory
- Improved digestion and natural detoxification
- Cardiovascular support
- Protection from chronic diseases
- Enhanced bone health

6. Cucumber (*Cucumis sativus*)

Considered the most widely cultivated vegetable in the world, cucumber is technically a fruit from the Cucurbitaceae family of gourds, alongside different varieties of pumpkins and melons. Cucumber offers a refreshing flavor that blends beautifully with other fruits and vegetables.



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It originated in the Mediterranean and was brought to the Americas by European explorers in the 1500s. There are dozens of cucumber varieties thriving in both cool and warm climates, but three of the most prevalent ones are slicing, pickling, and burpless.

To get cucumbers into your diet, you can try pickling them or adding them to your salads, juices, and other cooked recipes. Infusing your water with slices of cucumber is another must-try.

What Makes It a Superfood?

Grown wild throughout India, cucumbers are used as a traditional medicine to treat headaches. The seeds have found a niche as a diuretic, and the juice is used as an acne cream and a soothing remedy for tired, puffy eyes. These early uses led scientists to investigate cucumber fruit, seeds, and extracts as an effective treatment in other areas of medicine.

Although it's actually 90 percent water, cucumber doesn't skimp on nutritional value. It's an excellent source of:

- Anti-inflammatory vitamin K
- Infection-fighting vitamin C
- Energy-producing pantothenic acid (vitamin B5)
- Bone-building manganese
- Heart-healthy potassium and magnesium

Recent studies also reveal that cucumbers also have lignans, the unique polyphenols in crucifers and alliums, such as cabbage and onions, known to lower heart disease risk. In cucumbers, these powerful lignans bind with estrogen-related bacteria in the digestive tract, contributing to a reduced risk of several cancers, including breast, uterus, ovarian, and prostate cancers. Other phytonutrients in cucumbers called cucurbitacins – part of a larger group known as triterpenes – are also known to strongly inhibit cancer cell development.

7. Avocado (*Persea Americana*)

Avocado is a cousin to cinnamon, camphor, bay laurel, and other members of the Lauraceae family. Spanish conquistadors had their own historian, Oviedo, who reported positively about avocados discovered in Mexico around 1519. But this interesting fruit has graced Central and South America for perhaps 10,000 years, according to the avocado-inspired drawings and artifacts found in early Aztec settlements.



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A judge from Santa Barbara took the first Mexican avocado trees to California in 1871. California now grows 90 percent of the US avocado crop in more than 6,000 groves.

What Makes It a Superfood?

When it comes to nutrition, avocados are a different breed, because of the extraordinarily huge quantity of benefits they offer. Loaded with fiber, a single avocado contains:

- 36 percent of the daily requirement for vitamin K
- 30 percent for the folate
- 20 percent each of the daily requirements for vitamins B5, B6, C, and potassium

More importantly, avocado is one of the few fruits that will provide you with "good" fats, which means it can help keep your cholesterol levels already in the healthy range and help lower your risk for heart disease.

8. Sprouts

Sprouts are the edible germinated seeds of flowers, beans, legumes, vegetables, or grains. Sprouts deserve to be called a superfood not only because they can be grown effortlessly and inexpensively, but also because they contain exceptional amounts of vitamins and minerals, sometimes way beyond what a mature plant can offer.



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This is because when sprouting seeds, nuts, beans, and grains you get:

- Higher amounts of vitamins and enzymes
- Increased essential fatty acid and fiber content
- Increased bioavailability of minerals and protein

A rising superstar in the raw food community, sprouts are typically eaten raw and added in salads, juices, sandwiches, and other recipes.

What Makes It a Superfood?

Despite their size, sprouts should never be underestimated. These little edibles are a powerhouse of nutrients. For instance, sunflower sprouts and pea shoots are known to be up to 30 times more nutritious compared to organic vegetables.

Here are a few more sprout options you can choose from and some of the nutrients they have in store for you:

- **Alfalfa** – vitamins A, B, C, D, E, F, and K
- **Wheatgrass** – vitamins B, C, and E
- **Mung bean** – protein, fiber, and vitamins C and A
- **Lentil sprouts** – 26 percent protein and can be eaten without cooking
- **Brussels sprouts** – fiber, manganese, potassium, choline, B vitamins, antioxidants, and other health-promoting phytochemicals

9. Coconut Oil

Coconut oil is the edible oil extracted from the white meat of mature coconuts. It is most commonly used in many tropical countries, particularly in India, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and the Philippines, where coconut trees thrive well. Because of the coconut's innumerable health and wellness boons, coconut oil and other coconut products, such as coconut water, are gaining popularity in the West.



Aside from being an ideal oil to use in all forms of cooking and baking (because it can withstand high temperatures without being damaged like many other oils), coconut oil can also be drizzled over salads, added in coffee or vegetable juices, or taken as is once or twice daily.

What Makes It a Superfood?

Coconut oil is an ideal replacement for non-vegetable carbohydrates, because it is comprised of medium-chain fatty acids (MCFAs) that are easily digested and readily cross cell membranes. These MCFAs are immediately converted by your liver into energy rather than being stored as fat.

Coconut oil also has potent antimicrobial properties, which make it a powerful destroyer of all kinds of microbes, from viruses, to bacteria, to protozoa. Coconut oil also helps:

- Promote heart health
- Support proper thyroid function
- Promote healthy brain function
- Strengthen your immune system
- Provide an excellent "fuel" for your body
- Support a strong metabolism that can aid in weight loss
- Maintain healthy and youthful looking skin

10. Homemade Bone Broth

Bone broth is made with bones and sometimes a small amount of meat adhering to the bones of different kinds of animal meat – whether it's beef, pork, chicken, or fish. It's typically simmered for a significant period of time, which can sometimes even go beyond as 24 hours, to produce a gelatinous soup. Basically, the more gelatinous the bone broth, the more nourishing it tends to be. The collagen that leaches out of the bones when slow-cooked is one of the key ingredients that make broth so healing.



A timeless superfood, according to Dr. Kaayla Daniel, vice president of the Weston A. Price Foundation and co-author (with Sally Fallon Morell) of the book *Nourishing Broth*, bone broth goes back to the Stone Age, when they were actually cooking broth in turtle shells and in skins over the fire. The great Greek physician Hippocrates was also known to be a big believer in its benefits.

Today, Los Angeles Lakers player Kobe Bryant is among those who swear by bone broth and who believes it has kept his NBA career sustainable, having it as a foundation of his pre-game meals. "I've been doing the bone broth for a while now. It's great [for] energy and inflammation. It's great," the NBA star reportedly said in one of his interviews with ESPN.

What Makes It a Superfood?

Bone broth contains a variety of valuable nutrients of which many Americans are usually lacking, in a form your body can easily absorb and use, such as:

- Calcium, phosphorus, and other minerals
- Components of collagen and cartilage
- Silicon and other trace minerals
- Components of bone and bone marrow
- Glucosamine and chondroitin sulfate
- The "conditionally essential" amino acids proline, glycine, and glutamine

Still not convinced? These additional health perks brought by bone broth might change your mind:

- Reduces joint pain and inflammation
- Inhibits infection caused by cold and flu viruses
- Fights inflammation
- Promotes strong, healthy bones
- Promotes healthy hair and nail growth

7 Equally Healthy But Lesser-Known Superfoods

If you want to try something new, you can satisfy your palate with these less-popular but equally nutritious superfoods featured in *Time* magazine:

1. **Limequat.** A cross between lime and kumquat, limequats are in season between July and November, and contain plenty of fiber and vitamin C. Like the kumquat, they have an edible rind, so it's a good choice for spicing up dishes with a citrusy flavor.



2. **Pomelo.** Yet another member of the citrus family that is typically overlooked, pomelos look a bit like oversized grapefruits, and the taste is similar too, although pomelos tend to be sweeter.



The significant vitamin C content in pomelo acts as an antioxidant that helps slow down aging. The rich supply of key nutrients in pomelo, such as potassium, dietary fiber, and magnesium, also helps: ^{viii}

- Prevent osteoporosis and bone weakness
- Fight microbial, viral, and bacterial infections
- Eliminate constipation and diarrhea
- Reduce risk of atherosclerosis, heart attacks, and strokes
- Increases blood circulation and oxygenation of organs

3. **Hubbard Squash.** A winter produce, Hubbard squash come with loads of nutrients, including vitamins A, C, E and K, potassium, folic acid, iron, lutein, manganese, magnesium, phosphorus, zeaxanthin, and plant-based omega-3. It's best enjoyed roasted and with kale, or added into a steaming pot of stew.



4. **Teff.** A tiny North African cereal grass grain, teff has been a staple of traditional Ethiopian cooking for thousands of years. Apart from being naturally gluten-free, here are a some more reasons why teff should be a part of your everyday diet:

- It helps manage blood sugar
- It helps regulate your bowel movement
- It is low in sodium
- It is rich in calcium, manganese, iron, fiber, protein, B vitamins, zinc, and all eight essential amino acids



Including teff into your everyday meals is easy-peasy, since it has a mild, nutty flavor that lends itself well to a variety of dishes, including stews, pilaf, and baked goods. You could also use it as a salad topping.

5. **Fenugreek.** Its curry-scented leaves are edible and are often used as an ingredient in authentic Indian cuisine, while its seeds are used as a flavorful spice. Fenugreek seeds are rich in minerals like iron, potassium, calcium, fiber, choline, and can be sprouted for an added health kick as well.

Over the years, fenugreek has also been the focus of several studies concerning the treatment of diabetes and the prevention of breast cancer. But traditionally, fenugreek has been valued for its medicinal uses for: ^{ix}

- Digestive problems
- Constipation
- Gastritis
- Bronchitis
- Sore throat
- Diabetes
- Ulcer



6. **Purslane.** Purslane is a lemon-flavored edible weed that is popular in both Greek and Mexican cooking. Some compare its taste to watercress or spinach. It's rich in plant-based omega-3 fats, vitamins C and E, and pectin. Young leaves and tender stem tips are generally preferred in terms of flavor and crunch, and make a tasty addition to salads and sandwiches.



7. Celeriac. Also known as turnip-rooted celery or celery root, celeriac is a root vegetable with a taste that resembles conventional celery. Celeriac is high in vitamins B6, C, and K, along with potassium, and magnesium. It is also proven to help aid in:

- Improving bone health
- Enhancing brain function
- Fighting damaging free radicals
- Maintaining a healthy blood pressure level
- Preventing cancer

You can eat celeriac either raw or cooked. *Time* magazine, on the other hand, suggests grating a little celeriac onto your salad, along with beets, apples, and walnuts, for an added punch.



Chapter III: Common Food Concerns That May Make Your Superfood Consumption Counterproductive

Before you start loading up your shopping cart with the superfoods I mentioned in the previous chapter, keep this in mind: not all foods you see in the grocery are as healthy as they seem. In fact, even the most innocent-looking produce may expose you to certain health dangers.

Consider this: in June 2011, vegetable sprouts from Germany killed over 30 people and sickened over 3,000. The sprouts were found to be contaminated with *Escherichia coli* (E. coli) O104:H4. Aside from the usual stomachache, the victims experienced severe symptoms, such as anemia and kidney failure.

But it's not just in Germany. According to Bill Marler, a personal injury attorney who specializes in food-borne illnesses, there have been over 40 "sproutbreaks" since 1990 in the US alone.^x It's quite unfortunate since sprouts, which are among the healthiest and most nutrient-dense foods on the planet, are given a bad rap.

But that's just the tip of the iceberg, as conventional foods are actually plagued with plenty of health and safety issues that, if you're not careful, can severely wreak havoc on your health.

Most Conventional Crops Are Now Genetically Engineered

Genetically modified organisms (GMOs) are crops produced via genetic engineering. The genetic makeup of these "specialized crops" has been altered to induce a variety of unique traits, such as making them "drought- or pest-resistant," or fortifying them with "more nutrients."

Today, up to 85 percent of U.S. corn, 88 percent of cotton, and 91 percent of soybeans are genetically modified. It is also estimated that at least 80 percent of processed foods now contain genetically engineered ingredients. Genetic engineering has been deemed safe and beneficial by GE proponents, mainly by biotech companies like Monsanto.

Sadly, nothing can be further from the truth.



Not only is genetic engineering a power-hungry technology that severely harms the environment, but it also has potentially damaging effects on your wellbeing. For example, in one review of GMOs, which consists of an analysis of 19 animal studies, nearly 10 percent of

blood, urine, organ and other parameters were significantly influenced by GMOs, with the most damage seen on the liver and kidneys.

Sadly, food regulators such as the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) do not conduct any test on the safety of GMOs on human health. But the truth cannot be denied: the potentially damaging health effects of GMOs are now starting to become evident.

So when shopping for any of the healthy superfoods in my list, make sure that you choose those varieties that are not, in any way, genetically modified.

Pesticides in Produce Can Put Your Health at Grave Risk

Did you know that the US uses at least 1.1 billion pounds of pesticides each year? And, in some produce, these pesticides are not easily removed, no matter how thoroughly you wash it.

While the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) claims that these pesticide residues are “no cause for concern,” I do not advise lowering your guard when buying these types of produce. In 2014, more than half of all foods tested were found to have detectable levels of pesticides. What’s worse, it’s not uncommon for your favorite fruit or vegetable to contain two different pesticides... or more.



Sadly, there’s no legal limit on the number of different pesticides allowed on food, and the effect of this toxic chemical cocktail is still unknown.

The good news is, more and more people are now being cautious of consuming foods laden with pesticides. Eighty-five percent of Americans are now concerned about pesticides in produce, and are looking for ways to cut down on their pesticide exposure.

Buying Organic Superfoods Is Key to Safe Food Consumption

With the proliferation of pesticide-loaded and genetically engineered foods today, it’s absolutely important for you to be very wary of selecting foods for you and your family.

I advise you to choose wholesome organic foods that are traditionally cultivated without the use of synthetic pesticides. Not only will it support your wellbeing, but it will also prevent the environment from harmful pollutants.



You can start by shopping in your local farmers markets or food co-ops. Here are some great resources to help you out:

- [Alternative Farming Systems Information Center](#), Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)
- [Farmers' Markets](#) – A national listing of farmers' markets.
- [Local Harvest](#) – This site will help you find farmers' markets, family farms, and other sources of sustainably grown food in your area where you can buy produce, grass-fed meats, and other products.
- [Eat Well Guide: Wherever you are, Eat Well](#) – This is a free online directory of more than 25,000 restaurants, farms, stores, farmers' markets, CSAs, and other sources of local, sustainably produced food throughout the US.
- [Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture](#) (CISA) – CISA is dedicated to sustaining agriculture and promoting the products of small farms.
- [FoodRoutes](#) – Check out their interactive "Find Good Food" map to help you connect with local farmers so you can find the freshest, tastiest food possible. The map can also give you a listing of local farmers, CSAs, and markets near you.

Or better yet: **grow your own food!** If you truly want to be assured of consuming only the healthiest foods, then I suggest you start your own organic garden. Later on in this E-book, I will give you tips to help you get started on growing organic foods in the comfort of your home.

Techniques to Maximize Food Absorption: Juicing and Fermentation

Aside from ensuring that you only consume safe and healthy organic produce, I also recommend taking extra measures to maximize all the nutrients that you get from these superfoods.

The Benefits of Juicing

One way of doing this is by juicing the produce instead of cooking them. I believe that **raw juice** is like a “living broth,” as it is teeming with micronutrients that many people simply do not get from their diet. When you drink raw juice, it’s like receiving an intravenous infusion of antioxidants, vitamins, minerals, and enzymes, as they are directly absorbed by your body without having to be broken down.



Here are some of the benefits of juicing:

- It lets you absorb all the nutrients from the vegetables.
- It helps you consume a healthier amount of fresh produce in an efficient manner, assuring you that you reach your daily target of fruits and vegetables.
- You can add a wider variety of vegetables in your diet – including those that you may not enjoy eating whole.

Juicing is simply one of the easiest health strategies that you can add to your daily routine, and will help you get a better immune system, improved energy and brain health, and even support for weight management. For more tips on juicing, I suggest you read my article “[Juicing: How Healthy Is It?](#)”

Why You Should Ferment Your Vegetables

Just like juicing, fermentation also lets you maximize the nutrients found in your favorite superfoods. In fact, I consider fermented vegetables – as well as other cultured foods like yogurt, kefir, and natto – as the ultimate superfood. They are potent chelators (detoxifiers) that help break down toxins and heavy metals from your body. They also contain higher levels of probiotics that can not only optimize your gut flora, but also provide a number of incredible functions in your body, such as:



- Better mineral absorption
- Preventing diabetes and obesity by regulating dietary fat absorption
- Lowering your risk of cancer and other diseases
- Improving your mood and mental health
- Preventing acne

A warning: if you’ve never eaten fermented foods in your life, you may experience a “healing crisis,” which occurs when the pathogens in your body are eliminated by the healthy bacteria. The pathogens release potent toxins, which may lead to unpleasant symptoms. So if you’re starting out, introduce cultured foods into your meals gradually, starting with a teaspoon of fermented veggies per meal. Observe your reactions for a couple of days before proceeding with another small serving, and increase your portions gradually, as tolerated.

Chapter IV: Getting the Most Out of Your Superfoods

Try These Delicious Recipes Using Superfoods

Your tastebuds are in for an awesome treat with these nourishing and mouthwatering dishes made with nature's most incredible superfoods. Check out these quick and easy recipes adapted from my E-book, *Healthy Recipes for Your Nutritional Type*.

Tuscan Bean and Kale Soup

This hearty soup recipe is a classic Italian dish more popularly known as ribollita, which literally means “reboiled.”

Ingredients:

- 1 pound dried cannellini beans
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 large onion, minced
- 2 large garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh sage
- 2 teaspoons minced fresh rosemary
- 7 cups chicken stock
- 1/3 pound kale, ribs removed, coarsely chopped
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper



Procedure:

1. Soak beans overnight in water to cover generously; drain.
2. Heat two tablespoons oil in a large pot over moderate heat.
3. Add onion and sauté until soft, about five minutes. Add garlic, sage, and rosemary and sauté for one minute. Add beans and stock.
4. Bring to a simmer, cover and adjust heat to maintain a gentle simmer. Cook until beans are almost tender, about one hour.
5. Add kale. Cover and continue cooking at a gentle simmer until beans and vegetables are tender, about 20 minutes more. Add a little water if soup gets too thick.
6. Remove pot from heat. With a wooden spoon, mash some of the beans against the side of the pot until soup is as thick as you like. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

This recipe makes six servings.

Slow Roasted Garlic and Tomatoes

Bring out the flavorful goodness of garlic and tomatoes and turn ordinary pasta, salad, or meat dishes into totally tomato-tastic meals in an instant.

Ingredients:

8 ripe Roma tomatoes
6 cloves of garlic
2 tablespoons olive oil
6 teaspoons thyme
Salt and pepper

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Procedure:

1. Heat the oven to 300°F.
2. Core out each tomato and cut a 3/4 inch deep X in the end of each tomato.
3. Sprinkle inside of tomatoes with salt and pepper.
4. Stuff each tomato with one clove of garlic and one teaspoon of thyme.
5. Coat olive oil in the bottom of a shallow baking dish, place the tomatoes in a row, and bake for at least 30 minutes to two hours.

This recipe makes six servings.

Fennel-Dill Artichokes

This baked artichoke recipe is made even better with super healthy ingredients like fennel, dill, and coconut oil – an all-veggie dish you should absolutely try at home.

Ingredients:

4 artichokes
1 cup carrots, quartered lengthwise
1 cup fennel or celery, thinly sliced
¼ cup olive oil
¼ cup melted coconut oil
¼ cup fresh lemon juice
1 teaspoon fennel seeds
2 tablespoons or more fresh dill, chopped
½ teaspoon salt
Black pepper



Procedure:

1. Trim the tips of the leaves and cut off the stems of the artichokes, so they sit upright.
2. Place in a large pot, add water to cover, and bring to a boil. Cover, reduce heat, and simmer until just barely tender, about 15 minutes. Drain.
3. Preheat the oven to 350°F.
4. Mix the carrots, fennel, and celery. Spread evenly in a baking dish with a lid. Place the artichokes upright on top of the vegetables.
5. Mix the olive oil, coconut oil, lemon juice, fennel seeds, dill, salt, and a few sprinkles of black pepper. Pour over artichoke mixture.
6. Cover the baking dish and bake until all the vegetables are tender, about 45 minutes.

This recipe makes four servings.

Blueberry Acai Smoothie

Fuel up your tank before a long day at work or at the gym with this fruity antioxidant-packed smoothie.

Ingredients:

- 1½ cups almond milk
- 1½ bananas
- 1 cup frozen blueberries
- 1 cup frozen strawberries
- 1 acai frozen smoothie pack or 1 cup acai juice
- ¾ to 1 cup ice

Procedure:

This recipe uses acai fruit at its most available, peak freshness, sans added sugar. Place all the ingredients into a blender, process, and enjoy! This recipe serves two.

Note: If you use the juice, cut the almond milk down to ½ cup.



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Red Peppers and Broccoli with Ume Tarragon Dressing

A salad in a snap – here's how to make your own savory super salad in just a few minutes!

Ingredients:

2 cups water
¼ teaspoon sea salt
2 cups red pepper, matchstick sliced
2 cups broccoli stems and florets

Dressing:

¼ cup olive oil
1 teaspoon umeboshi plum*
¼ teaspoon ground fresh pepper
4 sprigs fresh tarragon



Procedure:

1. Bring water to boil and add salt. Quickly blanch the broccoli stems and florets (to blanch, place veggies in the boiling water for about one to two minutes. Remove and plunge into ice water. Once the broccoli has cooled, remove and drain). The broccoli should be bright and crunchy.
2. Arrange red peppers and broccoli in clear bowl.
3. Mix dressing ingredients and toss with veggies. Let stand for five to 10 minutes so the dressing can marinate the veggies.
4. Garnish with tarragon leaves and serve.

*Can be found in the Asian aisle at the grocery store or in an Asian market.

This recipe makes four servings.

Minted Cucumber Soup

The coolness of cucumber with a hint of mint, this chilled soup recipe will surely beat the summer heat.

Ingredients:

4 cucumbers, peeled and chopped
2 shallots
¼ cup tahini
¼ cup fresh mint
2 scallions, minced



Procedure:

1. Blend all ingredients and add enough water to make soup thick.
2. Chill in refrigerator for one hour.
3. Garnish with scallions when serving.

This recipe makes four servings.

Rye Crisp “Sandwich” with Avocado, Sprouts, and Sheep’s Cheese

Try this sandwich with a superfood twist.

Ingredients:

8 rye crisp crackers
4 tablespoons Dijon mustard
8 slices grass-fed cheddar cheese (or any other raw or grass-fed cheese of your choice)
1 avocado, sliced
¼ cup broccoli sprouts
Fresh lemon juice, to taste

Procedure:

1. Spread each rye crisp cracker with ½ tablespoon mustard.
2. Place one slice of cheese on each cracker.
3. Lay two or three slices of avocado on top on the cheese.
4. Top each with a tablespoon of sprouts.
5. Sprinkle each with a squeeze of fresh lemon juice.

This recipe makes four servings.

Sprout Stuffed Avocados

Stuffed avocados not only look enticing, but are undoubtedly nourishing, too, especially when you use superstar ingredients, such as tomatoes and sprouts, as their healthy filling.

Ingredients:

4 ripe avocados
3 large ripe tomatoes, chopped
1 packed cup alfalfa or sunflower sprouts, coarsely chopped
Juice of 2 lemons
1 garlic clove, pressed
2 scallions, minced
2 teaspoons fresh cilantro, minced
Umeboshi vinegar for drizzling
Toasted sesame seeds



Procedure:

1. Slice avocados lengthwise, remove pit, and set aside four halves.
2. Mix remaining ingredients.
3. Smash remaining avocados, and mix with tomatoes, sprouts, lemon juice, garlic, scallions, and cilantro.
4. Stuff the four avocado halves with the tomato mixture.
5. Sprinkle with umeboshi vinegar and toasted sesame seeds.

This recipe makes four servings.

Basic Bone Broth Recipe

While this recipe calls for beef bones, you can also make bone broth using whole organic chicken, whole fish (including the head) or fish bones, or pork.

If this is your first time making your own bone broth, I suggest starting with chicken because it has the mildest flavor, as beef tends to be a bit more overpowering. If you're using chicken, simply place the raw meat into the pot in place of the beef bones and proceed with the recipe as follows.



If cooking a whole chicken, the meat should start separating from the bone after about 2 hours. Simply remove the chicken from the pot and separate the meat from the bones. Then place the bones back in and continue to simmer. You can even use bones from a roasted chicken or

turkey carcass to make bone broth, which is incredibly cost effective since you would otherwise throw them away.

Ingredients:

3-4 pounds beef marrow and knuckle bones
2 pounds meaty bones such as short ribs
½ cup raw apple cider vinegar
4 quarts filtered water
3 celery stalks, halved
3 carrots, halved
3 onions, quartered
Handful of fresh parsley
Sea salt

Procedure:

1. Place bones in a pot or a crockpot, add apple cider vinegar and water, and let the mixture sit for one hour so the vinegar can leach the mineral out of the bones.
2. Add more water if needed to cover the bones.
3. Add the vegetables, bring to a boil, and skim the scum from the top and discard.
4. Reduce to a low simmer, cover, and cook for 24-72 hours.
NOTE: If you're not comfortable leaving the pot to simmer overnight, turn off the heat and let it sit overnight, then turn it back on and let simmer all day the next day.
5. During the last 10 minutes of cooking, throw in a handful of fresh parsley for added flavor and minerals.
6. Let the broth cool and strain it, making sure all marrow is knocked out of the marrow bones and into the broth.
7. Add sea salt to taste and drink the broth as is or store in the fridge for five to seven days, or in the freezer up to six months for use in soups or stews.

3 Supercharged Juice Recipes Using Superfoods

Juicing is one of the most powerful and proactive strategies you can take if you wish to get all the goodness of fruits and vegetables into your body. Every time you drink a glass of freshly made green juice, it's almost like receiving an intravenous infusion of vitamins, minerals, and enzymes because they go straight into your system without having to be broken down.

If you're ready to take your nutrition to a whole new level, try these delicious juicing recipes at home:

Green Goodness Juice^{xi}

Ingredients:

4 celery stalks
1/2 cucumber
5 big pieces of dino kale
A handful of parsley
A piece of fennel bulb or stalk
A handful of spinach leaves
Pure water (optional)



Procedure:

1. Press veggies through your favorite juicer
2. Add pure water at the end to extract the rest of the juicing liquid.
3. Pour into a glass.

This recipe makes a single serving.

Oh Sweet Broccoli Juice!^{xii}

Ingredients:

½-1 head of broccoli (florets and stalks)
2 oranges
1 cucumber
1 carrot



Procedure:

1. Wash all produce well.
2. Peel the oranges.
3. Add all ingredients through juicer and enjoy!

This recipe makes a single serving.

Pineapple Juice^{xiii}

Ingredients:

¼ medium pineapple
1 handful fresh mint leaves

Procedure:

1. Wash all produce well.
2. Add all ingredients through juicer and enjoy! Can be served with ice.

Practical Shopping, Preparation, Cooking, and Storage Tips

Follow these practical tips and tricks on how to pick up the best choices, bring out more nutrients, and extend the shelf life of your wholesome superfoods.^{xiv}

Shopping

- Choose only fresh produce that is not bruised, wilted, browned, or show any signs of damage.
- When selecting fresh-cut produce, such as a half watermelon or bagged salad greens, select items that are refrigerated or surrounded by ice.
- Go for locally grown organic produce that is free of pesticide and other harmful chemicals.
- Buy meats sourced from grass-fed, pasture-raised animals that were not given antibiotics or growth hormone enhancers.
- Put fresh fruits and vegetables in a separate bag, away from meat, poultry, and seafood products to avoid contamination.



Preparation^{xv}

- Wash your hands for 20 seconds with warm water and soap before and after preparing fresh produce.
- Do not wash soft herbs and mushrooms until right before they are used.
- Cut away any damaged or bruised areas on fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Wash fruits and vegetables under running water just before cutting. Nutrients may leach out of the vegetables and into the water if you cut them first before washing.
- Throw away any fruit and vegetable that looks rotten.
- Keep the peel on if at all possible. Many of the important nutrients in vegetables are at their highest concentration right under the skin.
- Do not wash fresh produce with soap, detergent, or commercial produce washes.
- Scrub firm produce, such as melons and cucumbers, with a clean produce brush.
- Dry produce with a clean cloth towel or paper towel. This may further reduce bacteria that may be present.



Storage

- Store fruits and vegetables separately. Some fruits release enormous amounts of the ripening chemical ethylene, which can speed up the ripening process and eventually spoil the vegetables around them.
- Before storing your vegetables, don't forget to remove ties and rubber bands and trim leafy ends.
- Punch holes in plastic bags where you'll store your vegetables to allow good air circulation.
- Pack vegetables loosely in the refrigerator. The closer they are, the quicker they will rot.
- Unripe non-cherry stone fruits, avocados, tomatoes, mangoes, melons, apples, and pears should be left on the countertop to continue the ripening process.
- Refrigerate bell peppers, grapes, citrus fruits, and berries. Bananas in particular ripen very quickly, and will also speed the ripening of any nearby fruits.



Cooking

- For fresh produce, RAW is the best way to go.
- Baking is the best option to take if you want your vegetables cooked. Study shows that baking doesn't diminish the antioxidant and other nutrient content of vegetables as much as microwaving, roasting, frying, or girdling. ^{xvi}
- In hot dishes, always add vegetables last so as not to overcook them, as it'll strip them off of their valuable nutrients.



Chapter V: Growing Your Own Superfoods

Although superfoods live up to their name when it comes to the nutrients and health benefits they possess, growing them does not have to be complicated. In fact, it can be as simple as doing it in your own backyard. Not only is this a wise and proactive move towards health, but it's also a very practical strategy to save money without compromising your health and nutrition.



Gardening may seem like a tall order for some, but don't worry – I will give you some tips on how to grow your own edible garden effortlessly.

To get started, you need:

- Compost
- Seeds, ideally heirloom
- Shovel
- Growing medium (preferably a fine-textured soilless mix of peat moss and vermiculite or perlite)
- Hoe or hand-weeding tool
- A space allotted for gardening
- Containers (about 2 to 3 ½ inches deep with adequate drainage holes)
- Wood chips

Selecting Your Soil

A sound foundation is crucial for your crops to grow well and strong, and your choice of soil can greatly affect the outcome of your gardening.

An ideal soil would be made up of 45 percent minerals (sand, clay, and silt), five percent organic (plant and animal) material, 25 percent air, and 25 percent water. When it comes to mineral content, it should be loam (20 to 30 percent clay, 30 to 50 percent silt, and 30 to 50 percent sand). Visually, it should have:^{xvii}

- A crumbly texture
- A dark color
- A rich earthy smell
- A load of nutrients, microorganisms, and earthworms
- A pH between 6.5 and 7.5

Collecting Your Compost

Composting is an integral part of gardening and provides many benefits, such as:

- Acting as a soil conditioner
- Adding nutrients to your plants
- Helping retain moisture in the soil
- Recycling kitchen and yard waste and reducing landfill waste^{xviii}
- Introducing beneficial organisms to the soil that help aerate the soil, break down organic material, and ward off plant disease
- Serving as a natural alternative to chemical fertilizers

Composting is not as complicated as many people believe; you can compost in any open space in your yard, in a shallow pit, in a large bin, or in a small worm bin that takes less than two square feet of space.

For home gardeners, your compost kit should have – and not have – the following:

Green Stuff (Nitrogen-Rich)	Brown Stuff (Carbon-Rich)	Stuff to Avoid
Yard trimmings	Egg shells	Meat, fish, bones, bread, pasta, or other grain-based foods
Vegetable food waste	Cardboard tubes from toilet paper and paper towels, paper cups and plates, and brown paper bags	Plastic or synthetic fibers
Manure from grazing animals	Dried flowers and fallen leaves	Manure from carnivorous animals, including cat litter
Coffee grounds, tea leaves, and tea bags	Corn husks or stalks	Any diseased plants or plants with chemical residue

As a general rule, I recommend putting two to three times as much brown matter as green into your compost.

The Wonders of Wood Chips

Although it is not a common practice, I like putting wood chips into my compost pile. This was a tidbit I learned from Dr. Paul Gautschi, who used the same method in his orchard after looking at the trees in the woods behind his house.

Using wood chips for your compost has some added benefits, such as:



- Reducing water evaporation and the need for watering
- Lessening the amount of weeds and making it easier to pull out the ones that grow
- Absorbing moisture from the air at night and releasing it back into the soil during the day when the plants need it
- Eliminating the need for fertilizers and expensive soil testing
- Increasing bacteria, fungi, protozoa, and nematodes
- Attracting earthworms that create vermicompost, considered to be the best compost in the planet
- Serving as a great insulation blanket for your soil
- Moderating the temperatures in the summer and the winter

Solving the Space Problem: Container Gardening

If you do not have a spacious backyard, it does not mean you can't grow superfoods anymore, as there are some that do not need that much space to flourish. As the name implies, container gardening utilizes large and lightweight containers for plants to grow in. It is doable no matter how much space you're willing to devote, whether it's your apartment's small balcony, courtyard, deck, patio, or even areas with poor soil.^{xix}



Container gardening gives you more control, versatility, accessibility, and mobility over your edible garden project. You can move plant containers according to the current weather, season, or your personal taste. You also have the liberty to grow plants with different needs next to each other. In addition, keeping your plants well-nourished is much easier when they are confined in a small area.

Container gardening also requires no weeding or heavy and costly garden tools and/or equipment. The small surface area makes it unlikely that weeds will find their way into pots.

Super Sprouts

Sprouts are an authentic superfood that many people tend to overlook. In addition to their superior nutritional profile, sprouts are really easy to grow even if you're living in an apartment, as they don't require an outdoor garden. Some of the most popular sprout varieties include:

- Alfalfa
- Broccoli
- Clover
- Lentils
- Mung bean
- Pea shoots
- Sunflower



Planting and Harvesting Sprouts

Planting sprouts at the comfort of your home is easy. Here's a step-by-step procedure from Rawfoods-Livingfoods.com to get you started.^{xx}

Materials:

- Fresh seeds (ideally heirloom varieties)
- Soil trays or containers that are about 2 to 3 ½ inches-deep with drainage holes
- A growing medium, a fine-textured soilless mix of equal parts of peat moss and vermiculite or perlite

Procedure:

1. Soak a cup of unhulled sunflower seeds (or any seed variety of your choice) for eight hours or overnight.
2. Rinse and drain them afterwards.
3. Leave the seeds in a warm and dark area, and rinse them twice a day until they start to sprout.
4. Fill your container with your growing medium or good-quality compost. Make sure that you push the material right onto the corners of the tray.
5. Tip the seeds into the middle of the tray. Spread them out evenly and gently.
6. Cover the seeds with another layer of the growing medium. Leave the soil trays in a warm place out of direct sunlight.
7. Check daily to see if they need watering. Water gently and keep them out of direct sunlight.

Bonus tip: Gently run your fingers onto the soil surface, so the top layer of the compost will fall down into the deeper layers.

8. Harvest your plants when their smooth seed leaves are large and green and the second hairier leaves have not yet grown. Use a pair of clean and sharp scissors to cut near the base of the plant.
9. Once done, rinse your harvest in cold water to remove traces of soil, and spin dry using a salad spinner.

Microgreens

Microgreens are the “baby” versions of leafy greens that are cut at a smaller stage and are only harvested once. They may be small, but they’re big in nutrients compared to regular vegetables. A study conducted by Gene Lester and his colleagues at the University of Maryland, College Park analyzed the nutrient components of microgreens. The results showed that the leaves from 25 varieties of microgreens possessed four to six more times more nutrients than matured leaves. In particular, red cabbage had high vitamin C content, while radish microgreens had the most vitamin E.

Among the most popular choices include micro versions of:

- Basil
- Beets
- Broccoli
- Celery
- Kale
- Lettuce
- Mustard greens
- Rocket (or arugula)
- Spinach



DIY Microgreen Garden

To grow your own microgreens, you will need:

- Microgreen seeds (ideally heirloom varieties)
- Organic soil or growing medium
- Compost
- A shallow tray or container
- A grow light if you live in an area with not much sunlight
- A warming mat to speed up germination (optional)

Procedure:

1. Place an inch of organic potting soil in the bottom of a shallow tray or planter. Smooth it out as evenly as possible. Alternately, you can clear an area in your garden where you plan to grow your microgreens.
2. Scatter seeds over the surface of the soil evenly. You can put more seeds than you normally would if planting to grow to up to full size, since they will only get to one to two inches tall.
Tip: Soak the seeds overnight to speed up sprouting time, although it may make it more difficult to scatter them.
3. Cover the seeds with a thick layer of soil and spray the surface with clean, filtered water.
4. Place your microgreen containers on a warming mat if you're using one and under the grow light or near the window to allow ample amount of sunlight.
5. Mist the seeds a couple of times a day to keep the soil evenly moist while waiting for them to germinate. Within two to four weeks, depending on the type of seed used, you're microgreens will be ready for harvest.

To start another round of microgreens, you can either remove the roots and replant, or dump the entire tray in a compost and fill with more soil. If you do dump them in the compost, some straggler seeds usually volunteer and make a crop of their own a few weeks later.

Herbs

We all know that herbs like basil, parsley, rosemary, and thyme give flavor to our favorite dishes, and they happen to have a wide array of health benefits as well. Herbs taste best when harvested in the morning and are at their most flavorful if harvested just before they bloom.

Growing herbs would require high amounts of sunlight. Insufficient sunlight will result in spindly and stressed plants with little flavor.^{xxi}

Starting Your Own Herb Haven at Home

Try this easy, one-pot, indoor herb garden DIY guide: ^{xxii}

1. Grab a large, deep plant pot and make sure there is at least one small hole at the bottom for drainage. You can also put a few inches of stones or gravel at the bottom of the pot to optimize drainage.
2. Fill the pot with soil, stopping at about three inches from the top.
3. Moisten the soil lightly but thoroughly with water and mix it until evenly wet.
Note: It shouldn't be dripping wet, just loosely muddy.
4. Dig a small but deep hole.
5. Remove one of the plants from its nursery container.
6. Gently loosen the soil around its roots. Don't tear the roots apart, just loosen them up a bit.
7. Put the plant in the hole and pack about an inch of dirt over the top of the root ball.
8. Repeat these steps for other plants, giving them several inches of room between each other. Water again when finished.
9. Put the pot on its drainage tray and place it anywhere where it can get enough sunlight.



The Best Superfood to Grow for Every Season

Choosing which superfoods to grow can be exciting. However, not all superfoods are at their best all year round. Knowing when to grow what specifically is important to guarantee good yields and superior nutrient quality, and allows you to save a couple of bucks and grocery trips.

Eating foods in season also has its perks. According to the ancient science of Ayurveda, doing so helps in digestion.

Check out this list of fresh produce that you can grow for each particular season, plus a number of gardening tips to help you along the way:

Spring

Because spring is characterized by relatively cooler air temperature and shorter days, cool-season crops are best grown during this season. These include: ^{xxiii}



If these crops are planted too late in the season, especially when the hotter days arrive, the quality of the crop decreases as some plants are forced to flower and form seeds or develop off-flavors, bitterness, poor texture, and low yields. ^{xxiv}

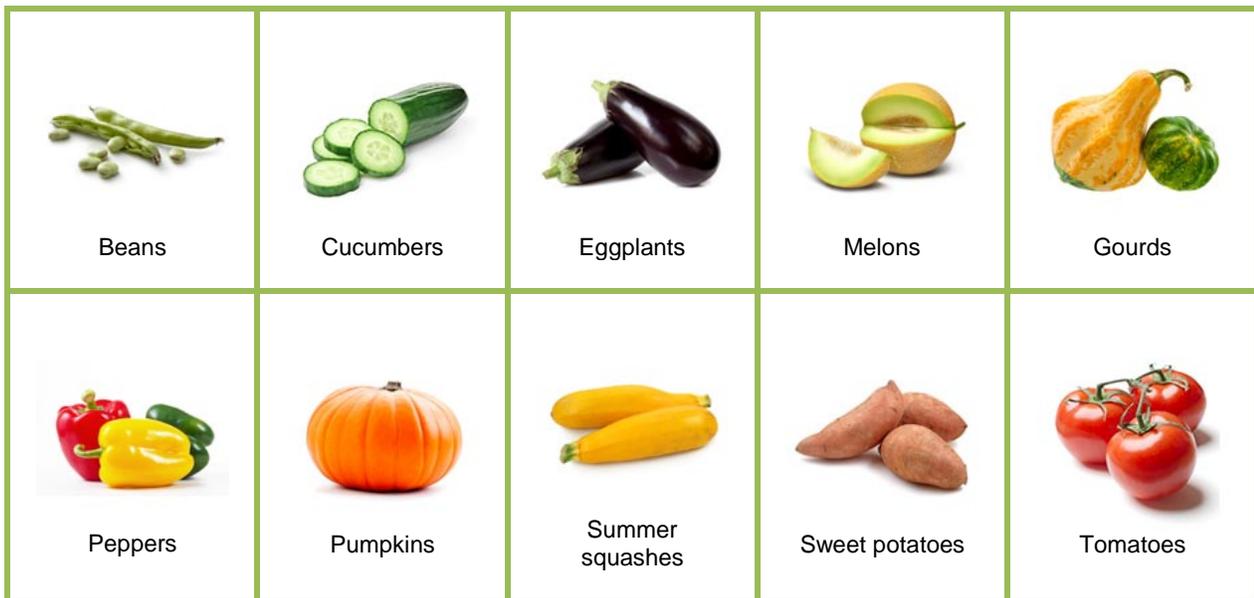
Spring is a time for beginnings, so it's out with the old and in with the new! Discard everything unnecessary and start fresh – this season is a good time for you to get your garden in prime form by doing the following:

- **Toss weeds and diseased plant parts in the trash, not the compost pile.**
- **Nourish your soil with a couple of inches of organic materials**, such as compost, well-aged manure, or worm castings. ^{xxv}
- **Work the soil only when it's moderately dry.** Working on it when it's wet not only produces a hard medium similar to adobe, but destroys the soil structure as well. ^{xxvi}

Summer

Warm-season crops require sunlight and warm temperatures, especially within the soil. They're usually characterized as large and sprawling with extensive root systems,^{xxvii} and cannot withstand periods of cold or frost. If they end up in cold conditions, these particular crops tend to "sulk," which is why it's best to plant them after the last frost in spring, complete with adequate protection.^{xxviii, xxix}

For summer, I recommend planting:^{xxx}



Here's how to shower your garden with some much-needed summer TLC:^{xxxi}

- **Keep your pots cool by mulching and positioning them away from direct sunlight.** Potted plants (terracotta ones in particular) are vulnerable to overheating.
- **Water early in the morning to prevent mildew and other fungi from attacking leaves.** Allow enough time for foliage to dry out before sunset when watering in the afternoon.
- **Protect new plantings.** Freshly planted vegetable and flower seedlings are likely to need a bit of sun hardening. Use 50 percent shade cloth, old net curtains, dead palm fronds, or leafy branches to shelter them for a week or two.

Fall

Similar to spring, fall crops rely on the cooler climate (with daytime temperatures ranging from 70 to 80 degrees Fahrenheit and nighttime temperatures from 40 to 50 degrees Fahrenheit) and the moisture that comes with the season.^{xxxii,xxxiii}

It takes longer for plants to mature during fall, but it does allow give them crispier and tastier finish. Crops that are semi-hardy or hardy are best grown during fall, because of their tolerance of light to hard frost.^{xxxiv}

Here are some examples of fall crops:^{xxxv,xxxvi}



Follow these tips to help your garden adapt fairly to fall:

- **Collect falling leaves and use them as next season's garden mulch or add them to your compost heap.**^{xxxvii}
- **Take note of frost dates.** Even just a slight drop in temperature can affect the quality and outcome of your plants – some can die or severely deteriorate by even a single night of freezing temperatures.^{xxxviii}
- **Shield plants from frost** by blanketing low-growers with a thick layer of straw mulch or leaves, a clear plastic tarp, or a floating row cover.

Winter

A big factor in winter gardening is the threat and presence of frost, which occurs when air temperatures dip below 32 degrees Fahrenheit. This results in the formation of ice crystals on leaves, and sometimes, death in plants because the water in plant cells freezes and damages the cell wall.^{xxxix} Since winter days are shorter and have less sunlight, crops grown in this season should be hardy. If they're half-hardy, you need to take care of them a bit more.^{xl, xli}

Here are some winter crop ideas:^{xlii, xliii, xliv, xlv}



Winter gardens need sustenance and security to survive the freezing temperatures. Here are a few reminders:

- **Apply a three- to four-inch layer of mulch to your garden after the soil freezes to keep the soil cold.** This will help reduce root injury and help against continual freezing and thawing.
- **Protect your plants from the weight of frost by wrapping twine around your plant stems to help prevent breakage.** The process is done by wrapping heavy twine at the base of the plant and winding it spirally around and upward to the top and back down.^{xlvi}
- **Select containers that are frost-proof to prevent them from cracking.** Lift them into a shed or greenhouse for extra protection. If the containers cannot be moved around, they should be placed on “pot feet” to prevent waterlogging.

More than the materials and resources, starting your own garden requires doing your due diligence, especially when it comes to the specific growing conditions for your crops. Before you happily plant away, learn the climate and weather conditions in your area, particularly frost dates for spring and fall, the soil type in your backyard, or pests that can affect the growth of your plants.

By knowing more about the details of your surroundings as a gardener, you will be able to plan ahead so that all your effort and hard work will not be put to waste.

Conclusion

Why the Long Wait? Add These Superfoods to Your Diet Right Away!

Your diet is the most important pillar that you must address if you truly want to achieve optimal health and longevity. No matter how much you exercise, address your stress levels, or get enough rest, if you're eating processed fares instead of healthy wholesome meals, then you're surely putting your wellbeing at great risk.

It's time to ditch those processed foods... and swap them for fresh and wholesome choices.

I invite you to give these incredibly nutritious superfoods a try – whole foods that can provide you with a wide range of antioxidants, vitamins, and minerals that you simply cannot get from any dietary supplement.

Not only are these top food choices delicious, but they also certainly will not break your budget (especially if you grow them at home). It's the most cost-effective way to get all the healthy nutrients you need.

And the best part of adding superfoods into your diet? They can help you ward off diseases and other illnesses.

I believe that consuming healthful foods, such as these superfoods on my list, is the number one strategy for avoiding chronic diseases, such as cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular problems, and Alzheimer's disease. So if you truly want to protect yourself from a hospital visit, then having a repertoire of superfoods in your meals is your best course of action.

One final reminder: don't limit yourself to these superfoods!

I have only listed the ones that I truly believe are the most wholesome choices. But with a little research and a lot of motivation, you'll learn that there's a whole world out there of superfoods – fruits, vegetables, raw dairy, healthful meats, and even herbs and spices – that are just waiting to be discovered... and added to your meals.



For more Superfood recipes, visit:

- recipes.mercola.com
- foodfacts.mercola.com

You may also want to read these useful Superfood articles:

- [10 Superfoods for Digestive Health](#)
- [Seven Slimming Superfoods](#)
- [10 Superfoods for Stress Relief](#)
- [7 Super Healthy Food Staples, and 7 Superfoods You May Not Know](#)

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