



# NLJ Fitness & Wellness Consulting

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### Great Summer Eats that Keep the Planet Green

By Nancy Jerominski

Have you gone to your local farmers market lately? If not, find one and check it out. Supporting Washington growers is a wonderful way to help keep our state green, boost local commerce and enjoy some incredible fruits and vegetables.

SeaTac's market runs on Sundays from July to October, Burien has one on Thursdays and the Des Moines market by the waterfront starts June, every Saturday. Check each market schedule for any additional days/times.

One look at the produce our local farmers grow tells a different story than the big grocery chains. Colors and aromas are more vivid and the taste will knock your socks off. The produce actually lasts longer too. All of these fresh produce perks will have you coming back week after week.

Conventionally farmed produce is bathed in petro-based pesticides and farming chemicals an average of eight times from field to shelf. Whatever plants and animals are treated with or eat, we eat. They are genetically modified (GMO) to be bigger and sweeter, but less nutritious.

The produce looks better but lacks flavor. The enzymes and minerals in produce are there for a reason. Genetically modifying them to be bigger and contain more fructose but less nutrients isn't exactly what already sugar sodden America needs.

If you can't afford certified organic produce, buy local every time. This cuts down on the ecological footprint because it doesn't have to be shipped great distances. It's often less expensive and definitely more nutritious than what you find at the grocery stores.

Popular "wisdom" consistently advise us to consume more fruits and juices (which are full of fructose) as a way to lose weight. Sounds good until you understand what happens when too many carbs, including fruit, are ingested, as explained in an excerpt from Dr. Joseph Mercola's website:

*"When consumed in massive quantities, sugars cause hormonal changes that lead to overeating. And don't forget, carbohydrates found in processed foods, such as white bread and rice, break down to glucose and affect your body in the same way as refined sugar does.*

*Any meal or snack high in carbohydrates or sugars generates a rapid rise in blood glucose. To adjust for this rise, your pancreas secretes the hormone insulin into your bloodstream, which lowers your glucose (sugar) level. **Insulin is essentially a storage hormone and is used to store the excess calories from carbohydrates in the form of fat.***

*Insulin, stimulated by the excess carbohydrates in overabundant consumption of grains, starches and sweets, is responsible for all those bulging stomachs and fat rolls in thighs and chins. High*



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*insulin levels suppress two other important hormones -- glucagons and growth hormones -- that are responsible for burning fat and sugar and promoting muscle development, respectively. So insulin from excess carbohydrates promotes fat, and then wards off the body's ability to lose that fat.*

*Excess weight and obesity lead to heart disease and a wide variety of other diseases. But the ill effects of grains and sugars do not end there. They suppress the immune system, contributing to allergies, and they are responsible for a host of digestive disorders. They contribute to depression, and their excess consumption is, in fact, associated with many of the chronic diseases in our nation, such as cancer and diabetes.”*

Fresh seasonal vegetables and fruits are wonderful treats in the warmer temperatures, so enjoy. Just keep in mind that fruit is loaded with fructose, which is sugar. Too much of it is unhealthy for our bodies.

At breakfast try some full fat Greek yogurt, berries, a dollop of nut butter or a handful of raw almonds, pecans or walnuts. For a great light lunch or dinner, toss together a bunch of salad greens, pea pods, radishes, carrots, celery, avocado, sprouts, grilled chicken, shrimp or beef, raw nuts or sunflower seeds, cheese, tomatoes and a hardboiled egg. An easy dressing made of extra virgin olive oil, unrefined apple cider vinegar, pepper and a little garlic powder tops off this nutritious, delicious meal or side dish.

Now you're eating good food that's good for you, practicing good environmental stewardship and keeping money in our community pockets.