

# The Beet



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## FUEL: SEASONAL FOODS

Being aware of food seasonality and then shopping direct from local farms can support an entire shift in seasonal food demand. Produce that is purchased in season is more likely to be fresher and higher in nutritional value, while fruits and vegetables that are stored for long periods of time due to transportation have a reduction in phytonutrient content. Large markets and grocers may buy out-of-season produce that has been gassed, irradiated (a burst of radiation to kill germs) or preserved in wax to extend shelf life. Buying seasonal foods even supports environmental health, by reducing transport frequency. Check out the availability of some of your favorite foods at the [Seasonal Food Guide](#) website and then find your nearest farmers market. Local markets are the best resource for organic produce, and the benefits of eating organic over conventional are outlined below.

## FROM YOUR RD: THE NUTRITIONAL BENEFITS OF EATING ORGANIC VS CONVENTIONAL PRODUCE



Conventional farming relies on chemical intervention to fight pests and weeds and provide plant nutrition.



Organic farming relies on natural principles like biodiversity and composting instead to produce healthy, abundant food.

Organic foods often have more beneficial nutrients, such as antioxidants, than their conventionally-grown counterparts. Also, organic produce contains fewer pesticides, and people with allergies to foods, chemicals, or preservatives often find their symptoms lessen or go away when they eat only organic foods.

## When are your favorites in season in Arizona?

- Apples, peppers: July - Dec
- Arugula, avocado, tomatoes, sprouts: all year long!
- Asparagus, strawberries: Feb – May
- Beets, brussels sprouts, celery, cauliflower, kale, oranges: Nov - Mar
- Cabbage, carrots, cucumber, artichokes: all year long!
- Corn, watermelon, cantaloupe, grapes: May – Nov
- Green beans, peaches, raspberries, nectarines, blueberries: May - Jun
- Potatoes, peas, onions, zucchini: April – July



## RECIPES USING IN-SEASON FOODS FOR JUNE IN ARIZONA

- [Blackberries & Lemons](#)
- [Cabbage](#)
- [Citrus & Mint](#)
- [Corn](#)
- [Summer squash & Zucchini](#)



## CONNECT: CSA AND FARM STANDS - CONNECTION TO COMMUNITY AND ECONOMY

Community-supported agriculture (CSA model) is a system that connects the producer and consumers within the food system more closely by allowing the consumer to subscribe to the harvest of a certain farm or group of farms. Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs are an excellent option for purchasing local food. Generally, a consumer pays at the beginning of the season for a set amount of food, and then receives it from the farmer once it is ready to be eaten. A CSA may deliver food directly to you at a premium, or may ask that you pick up your food on a set schedule from a farm stand, farmers market, or community center. Finding a local CSA can be easy and straightforward, as well as learning more about what to look for when subscribing to a CSA. Meat CSAs are becoming more popular, and give you the opportunity to directly inquire to the farmer how your meat was raised. If you're new to local foods and farmers markets, or just not quite ready to commit to a monthly program, picking one item to start is a great way to support a better food system and have a real impact. Eggs, milk, or cheese sourced from a local farm may be only a few dollars more than their industrial counterparts but will positively impact an entire ecosystem.

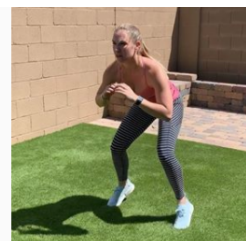


## MOVE: HIIT WITH WELLSTYLES

Riley Long, our Wellness Coordinator here at Valley Schools, is a certified yoga and fitness instructor with several years experience teaching classes around the valley. She brings her HIIT (high intensity interval training) expertise to the WellStyles Instagram page weekly! So be sure to follow us for complimentary workouts, health science, recipes and things to do.



[instagram.com/wellstyles\\_az](https://www.instagram.com/wellstyles_az)





We all need fresh air, sunshine, water, food, exercise, and rest. However, taking the opportunity to learn how and why we incorporate these items into a healthy lifestyle and routine to maintain, regain, and sustain a healthy mind, body and soul has been the major components of my journey.

### WELLNESS CHAMPION OF THE MONTH: DEBRA MURPHY, BALSZ SCHOOL DISTRICT

I became a champion because I am interested in holistic health and I wanted to be able to share how “easy” it can be to develop a healthy lifestyle through diet, exercise and fun. My favorite thing about being a champion is that it provides an opportunity to provide positive motivation to my peers in an area that they are interested in that doesn’t involve “work”. I have been able to influence health at my school site by forwarding wellness information to faculty and staff, checking in on employees to see how they are doing physically, mentally, and emotionally, encouraging individuals to keep up the excellent progress, also having employees remind me to drink water. It’s full circle we are able to help one another and increase accountability. My personal health journey has been complicated. Changing my mindset from a dieting perspective to a healthy lifestyle perspective, right? We all need fresh air, sunshine, water, food, exercise, and rest. However, taking the opportunity to learn how and why we incorporate these items into a healthy lifestyle and routine to maintain, regain, and sustain a healthy mind, body and soul has been the major components of my journey. Interestingly enough, these areas of lifestyle are of interest to lots of people. The synergy generated also is encouraging to continue improving my health one step, one day at a time. My goals continue to be maintain a healthy weight, exercise minimum of three times per week, increase water intake and learn how to rest.



### REFRAME: BEAT THE HEAT AND GET OUTSIDE AT NIGHT

Get away from daily stressors with these fun nighttime activities.

- [Desert Botanical Garden Flashlight Tours](#)
- [Mesa Goffland Sunsplash Night Splash](#)
- [First Fridays Art Walk](#)
- [Moonlight Hiking](#)



### CIRCADIAN RHYTHM: THE IMPORTANCE OF BALANCE IN LIGHT EXPOSURE

Human beings evolved over time with the natural rhythms of bright days and dark nights. Before the advent of artificial lighting, we spent our evenings in relative darkness. In less than 100 years, humans have radically altered our nighttime environment, putting our health at risk. The benefits of sunlight and daily exposure to it are numerous! Vital processes to our health and happiness depend on safe amounts of sun exposure. Due to the rapid growth of artificial light however, most of us spend every single night directly exposed to it. But basking in all this artificial light at night may be taking a serious toll on our health. Circadian disruption has been shown to increase our risk of obesity, diabetes, mood disorders, reproductive problems and cancers. Numerous studies have linked working the night shift and exposure to light at night to increased risks for breast and prostate cancers and other health problems. Even after getting adequate amounts of sunlight during the day, disruption to circadian rhythm through device use at night can affect our natural sleep patterns. The benefits are potentially life-changing, since a good night’s sleep has been proven to help slow weight gain, stress, depression and the onset of diabetes.

### ONE PRODUCT AND ONE HABIT TO SUPPORT YOUR CIRCADIAN BALANCE:

1. Dimming lights: Too much light is wasteful, creating glare and harsh shadows that impair vision. A bright lamp directly next to the bed or using a bedroom TV as a reading light will increase the glare and blue light simultaneously, putting strain on the eyes and lowering sleep quality. Dimming lights are worth the investment for all the times you’d like to control the light used in not just your bedroom but all rooms in your home. Dimming lamps are great as well and can be easily moved around.
2. Keep the blues away: Two to three hours before bed, avoid devices with screens that emit blue light such as tablets, smartphones, computers and televisions. Just as mentioned above, having the devices on for light without watching them amplifies the damage, such as the TV on in a dark bedroom while scrolling your phone. Try only using your overhead lights or dimming lamps during these hours before bed and try to be mindful of screen time impact on vision and sleep.



### DETOX: FROM PLASTIC WATER BOTTLES & UNSAFE WATER SOURCES

It’s interesting that the #2 bottle on Good Housekeeping’s list of best water bottles cost 90% less than the bottle holding the #1 spot. Clearly personal preference is what matters when choosing a water bottle. To keep them filled, many opt for an in-home water filtration system. Do your research and seek options that filter out exactly what you’re trying to avoid. To see what you’re up against, there are three main ways to test your home water supply. You can obtain tests through your city from the EWG, you can request the results of Water Quality Reports issued by your water utility, and you can purchase a home water test. If your water source is a private well, you should test it twice a year with a simple home test. The home well test will test for all the same toxins as the city water test, along with iron and copper. Water testing found that a third of American water supplies contain lead and 75% contain chromium-6. Like public water supplies, well water is also susceptible to contamination from urban and farm runoff and seepage from septic tanks and landfills. Knowing exactly what harmful substances your water has and what toxins you want to remove is the key to choosing successful filters and systems.

### FROM YOUR WELLNESS TEAM: OUR ENVIRONMENT INFLUENCES OUR HEALTH

June 5th is World Environmental Day! This is the perfect time to learn more about how our environment influences our health and how our behaviors influence our environment.

Did you know that spending as little as 30 minutes per week outside can decrease blood pressure and depression by 7 to 9% each week? This is because direct contact with natural sights, sounds and smells help to decrease our overall stress response and regulate our circadian rhythm. Therefore, having a major impact on our energy levels and sleep quality.

Here are some tips on how to enjoy the outdoors, even during the Arizona summer!

- Make a habit of going outside in the morning and/or at night.
- Drink lots of water and stay hydrated.
- Wear sunscreen.
- Listen to your body.
- Remember you do not need to spend a lot of time outside to get the benefits.

Not only does our environment influence our health but our actions also influence our environment. In order to perverse the benefits of our environment, it is important to reduce the amount of waste we produce, reuse what we already have instead of buying new, and recycle when possible.

Yours truly,  
Your Wellness Team