

# CARRUTHERS SEASONAL NEWS



The majority of the UK population grow up in urban areas, with little or no awareness of when and where various foods are produced. Imports from around the world ensure that supermarket shelves look the same week in week out.



There are many reasons why you should aim to eat local and seasonal food; to reduce the energy needed to grow and transport the food we eat, to avoid paying a premium for food that has travelled a long way and to support the local economy. But most importantly, because seasonal food is fresher and tastes SO much better!

Carruthers aims to promote an understanding of food seasons. Each month we will focus on the fruit and/or Veg, which is currently in season, and share enlightening facts, useful tips and enticing recipe ideas picked from the web and our favourite publications. When a food is in season its quality can vary dramatically. Food produced locally, e.g. bought from a farmers' market, is likely to be a lot fresher than its supermarket equivalent. Each fruit or vegetable has a prime time when it's at its seasonal best. Some are great for over half of the year; others only hit their peak for a month.



# SPRING/SUMMER

As the cool early weeks of April and May turn into the lazy days of summer, the season's produce means cooking becomes quick & easy, for simple lunches and suppers to suit throughout the summer. Use our Islands home grown sustainable best to create healthy tasty and fresh recipes.

It is the easiest time of year to cook, when all the sweet, crisp, fresh green vegetables appear, barely needing any heat. There are many ways to cook spring vegetables, but the simplest and most versatile is blanching.

Most spring produce rapidly loses quality as soon as its picked. Asparagus and peas lose sugar and turn starchy. Blanching freezes vegetables in their tracks, helping them retain their flavour and colour. Careful boiling for 1-2 minutes, then shocking the vegetables in ice-cold water afterward, will stop the cooking in its tracks. Once vegetables are blanched, they will last for several days in the refrigerator without any loss of flavour or sweetness.





British berries will also be in abundance from early May this year – three weeks earlier than last year, as a result of the mild winter and arrival of Mediterranean temperatures this spring.

The British berry season was about six weeks long 25 years ago, but decades of industry investment in new varieties and protective covers means that berry-lovers can enjoy the quintessentially British fruit for most of the Summer months.



Nutritionists recommend that we eat fresh berries at least three times a week as they are high in fiber, contain high levels of vitamin C and scientists believe the antioxidants, particularly concentrated in blueberries, stimulate the flow of blood and oxygen to the brain, boosting concentration levels. So, this summer, while the sun is HOPEFULLY shining we recommend you reclaim your lunch hour, grab a healthy seasonal berry snack and go for a walkabout in the fresh outdoors.

# SEASONS BEST

## May

Artichoke, Asparagus, Aubergine, Beetroot, Chicory, Chillies, Elderflowers, Lettuce, Marrow, New Potatoes, Peas, Peppers, Radishes, Rhubarb, Rocket, Samphire, Sorrel, Spinach, Spring Greens, Spring Onions, Strawberries, Watercress.

## June

Asparagus, Aubergine, Beetroot, Blackcurrants, Broad Beans, Broccoli, Cauliflower, Cherries, Chicory, Chillies, Courgettes, Cucumber, Elderflowers, Gooseberries, Lettuce, Marrow, New Potatoes, Peas, Peppers, Radishes, Raspberries, Redcurrants, Rhubarb, Rocket, Runner Beans, Samphire, Sorrel, Spring Greens, Spring Onions, Strawberries, Summer Squash, Swiss Chard, Tayberries, Turnips, Watercress

## July

Aubergine, Beetroot, Blackberries, Blackcurrants, Blueberries, Broad Beans, Broccoli, Carrots, Cauliflower, Cherries, Chicory, Chillies, Courgettes, Cucumber, Gooseberries, Greengages, Fennel, French Beans, Garlic, Kohlrabi, Loganberries, New Potatoes, Onions, Peas, Potatoes, Radishes, Raspberries, Redcurrants, Rhubarb, Rocket, Runner Beans, Samphire, Sorrel, Spring Greens, Spring Onions, Strawberries, Summer Squash, Swish Chard, Tomatoes, White Turnips, Watercress.

## Featured Spring/Summer Vegetable - Asparagus



This sweet, sexy superfood is in season in Britain for just a short period, so grab those melt-in-the-mouth spears while you can and feast! Freshly picked English asparagus is one luxury you can afford- a home grown delicacy far superior to any imported varieties. A serious contender for champion seasonal vegetable, is asparagus. Brief, but the quality is frequently exceptional.

Asparagus is highly nutritious and contains more folic acid than any other vegetable. It is also a source of fibre, potassium, vitamins and been found to have antioxidant and anti-carcinogenic properties.

## Availability

Imports are available all year round, but the British stuff, which is reckoned by many to be the best, is available from May to July. The tips should be tightly furled and perky, rather than limp, and the shoots should be straight and firm.

## Preparation

Asparagus needs no preparation other than a wash. For larger asparagus (which will also have more flavour), bend the spear until it snaps and throw the woody end away. If the ends still feel tough, you can pare away the exterior to reveal the more tender flesh beneath.

## Store it

Wrap in damp kitchen paper, put in a perforated paper or plastic bag and keep in the salad drawer of the fridge. You can also store it in a glass or jug of cold water in the fridge.

## Cook it

Boiling or steaming for a few minutes is suggested or blanching as mentioned above as precursor to other types of dishes such as griddled or as part of a risotto or pasta.



Our quick and tasty tips:

1. Try using perfectly cooked spears to dunk into soft boiled eggs.
2. Griddled and served with a drizzle of your best extra virgin olive oil, salt, pepper, a squeeze of lemon juice and a grating of Parmesan.
3. Traditionally matched with hollandaise sauce or hot melted butter.
4. Baked in a quiche or combined with peas, podded broad beans, young spinach leaves and basil for pasta primavera.
5. Sprinkled with sea salt, brushed with oil and then wrapped round with prosciutto, roasted (for 10 minutes) or grilled (5 minutes)





# Spring Asparagus Salad

This vegetarian salad is simply bursting with the fresh flavours of spring, the perfect meal for a sun soaked day. Serve warm as a side dish, or chilled as an Asparagus salad

## Ingredients

1-2 bunches asparagus  
2 Cups Cous Cous (uncooked)  
½ Cup kalamata olives ( pitted, sliced)  
½ Cup feta  
½ toasted pine nuts ( optional)  
Handful fresh mint, tarragon or Italian parsley  
Zest from one lemon  
Dressing:  
6 Tablespoons olive oil  
3 Tablespoons whole grain mustard  
2 Tablespoon Red wine vinegar  
2 Tablespoon lemon juice  
1 tsp salt  
1 teaspoon pepper



## Instructions

Trim the tough ends of the asparagus off. Lay them on a baking sheet and drizzle with olive oil, sprinkle with a generous pinch of salt and cracked pepper, and half of the lemon zest. Roast in the oven until just tender, about 20-25 minutes. Cut into bite size pieces. (Alternatively, for faster preparation, blanch bite size pieces of asparagus, along with the cous cous, during the last 2 minutes of the cous cous's cooking time.)

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add 2 cups I Cous Cous, and cook until al dente.

While cous cous is cooking, make the dressing. In a small bowl, stir all ingredients together.

Drain cous cous, and place in a large bowl. Toss it with the dressing, olives, asparagus, feta, pine nuts, fresh herbs and lemon zest. Serve warm, or chill and serve as a salad

## Featured Spring/Summer Fruit- British Berries

The height of Summer is epitomised by juicy strawberries, sweet raspberries, plump blueberries and tart gooseberries, and they feature in many traditional desserts, such as Eton mess and fresh berry fruit salad. Berries used to be a luxury item, but now they are a delicious staple, consumed as part of a healthy diet for many people.



The strawberry is an iconic staple of the British summertime and the most popular berry in terms of volume sold. Strawberry production is a key contributor to the success of the whole soft fruit industry, which includes strawberries, blueberries, raspberries and blackberries. Strawberry sales alone represent over 51 percent of the total soft fruit sales, which this year has reached a record high.



Berry sales from all sources now equate to a staggering 21 percent of total fruit consumption in the UK, overtaking apples and bananas, and establishing berries as the largest fresh fruit category.

There are four reasons which could be attributed to this growth;

- Increased consumer demand due to berries' renowned health benefits and superfood status.
- More acres of berries are being grown than ever before.
- The development of new varieties.
- Innovative growing methods that have extended the British season.
- The healthy smoothie revolution has also helped to increase demand for fresh berries, as people look to pack in their five a day.



The Met Office recorded the warmest May temperature since 2012, but as the weather begins to change again, the cooler nights and less hot days means the fruit ripens slowly giving greater depth to its flavour. This year we predict that consumers can expect sweet and juicy strawberries that are well worth the wait.



# BERRY FRUIT SALAD

This Berry Fruit Salad recipe is the perfect way to use up leftover berries! It's quick and easy to make, plus tastes extra refreshing when tossed with fresh mint, lemon juice, and a hint of honey.

## INGREDIENTS:

Fresh strawberries, hulled and halved  
Fresh blackberries  
Fresh blueberries  
Fresh raspberries  
1/4 cup chopped fresh mint leaves  
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice  
1 tablespoon honey



## DIRECTIONS:

Add the strawberries, blackberries, blueberries, raspberries, and chopped mint together in a large bowl. Set aside.

In a separate bowl, whisk together the lemon juice and honey until combined.

Pour it on top of the berries. Then gently toss the fruit salad until everything is evenly coated with the lemon mixture.

Serve immediately, or refrigerate in a sealed container for up to 3 days.

# Berry compote

1. Place the berries in a small saucepan over a low heat with the brown sugar and bring to a simmer

370g of mixed berries

1 tbsp. of brown sugar

2. Cook the fruit for around 20-30 minutes until soft, then remove from the heat and allow to cool

3. Serve with ice cream and meringue!!!!



# Caruthers News

We are proud to announce that Carruthers is the first company in Scotland to have achieved the Resource Efficiency Pledge Gold Award.



**RESOURCE  
EFFICIENCY  
PLEDGE  
GOLD**

**The way in which we use energy, water and materials has a direct impact on the competitiveness and future viability of our business.**

By signing up to the pledge, we agree to:

- Commit to embedding resource efficiency in our own business operations;
- Show leadership in driving sustainable growth through our supply chain; and
- Actively contribute to achieving a low carbon economy for Scotland.

During the next twelve months, we will achieve this with the following actions:

1. Assign senior manager responsibility
2. Train procurement staff
3. Take the Keep Scotland Beautiful: Clean Up Scotland Pledge

Signed



Iain Gulland  
Chief Executive, Zero Waste Scotland

Signed

Claire Fairfull  
George Carruthers & Sons Ltd

Date:



RESOURCE  
EFFICIENT  
SCOTLAND

Growth that doesn't cost the earth

A programme from



resourcepledge.com



This demonstrates our commitment to reducing energy, water, and raw material use, managing waste efficiently and promoting environmentally friendly business practice.

The Resource Efficiency Pledge is a nationwide scheme backed by Scottish Government to help Scottish businesses use energy, water and raw materials more efficiently throughout their operations.

George Carruthers took the pledge in 2015, along with nearly 200 organisations across Scotland, who have taken steps to save money and strengthen their businesses through the Pledge.

We can proudly say we are the first company in Scotland to have achieved the Gold Resource Efficiency Certificate. This is due to making an investing in many organizational changes towards running a more economical and environmentally efficient business.

George Carruthers & Sons Ltd is committed to leading the fruit and vegetable industry in minimising the impact of its activities on the environment. This ethos is carried across all aspects of the business ensuring maximum impact.



# FPC Awards

George Carruthers & Sons Ltd are in the final three for the fruit and vegetable wholesaler of the year UK category, in the Fresh Produce Consortium Awards. Thank you to all the team at Carruthers, our customers and our suppliers for helping us get this far! This is a fantastic accomplishment for a small company like ourselves to achieve. The awards are taking place in the middle of June, when we will find out if we have been successful. To be awarded the best wholesaler of fruit and vegetables in UK would be a huge achievement however to make it to the top three out of hundreds of applicants is an achievement in its self.



# Easy blueberry muffins

## (For children to bake)

These cake-like muffins are simply divine. They are sweet and packed full of fresh blueberries and easy for children.

### Ingredients

Makes: 12 muffins

110g butter

250g plain flour

250g caster sugar

2 eggs

125ml milk

2 teaspoons baking powder

1/2 teaspoon salt

225g fresh blueberries



### Method

Prep:15min › Cook:25min › Ready in:40min

Preheat oven to 180 C / Gas 4. Grease and flour a muffin tin or line with paper cases. Sieve flour, baking powder and salt together and set aside.

Cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add eggs and beat well. Add milk and flour mixture. Beat until combined. Stir in blueberries.

Fill muffin tin 2/3 full. Bake at 180 C / Gas 4 for 25 to 30 minutes.