



MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

The U.S. has been observing Mental Health Awareness Month since 1949. This May let's reduce the stigma around mental and behavioral health and promote foods that offer mental health support! Research suggests what we eat can affect mood and overall mental health with the gut and brain connection playing a significant role. A healthy gut can reduce stress, anxiety, and depression.

This month we are creating awareness of the importance to prioritize mental health and eat good foods to help support a good mood. Fresh fruits and vegetables provide a variety of vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants and whole grains give a boost of fiber. Be sure to include seafood for omega-3 fatty acids, lean proteins, and probiotics from foods like yogurt. Don't forget to stay hydrated! Keeping up with water and enjoying hydrating foods like cucumbers and zucchini will help to support your mood.

NATIONAL CAGE FREE EGG MONTH

It's National Cage-Free Egg Month. Why does our friend the egg have its own national holiday? Because it is packed full of protein and antioxidants which contribute to muscle strength, brain function, eye health, and weight management.

Did you know Compass Group's commitment to serving certified cage-free eggs nationwide means the eggs we purchase must adhere to the Humane Farm Animal Care (HFAC) standards? An EGG-cellent way to celebrate during May is to enjoy a toasted breakfast egg flatbread, an egg strata for lunch, or even a sunny side up egg on your evening salad!



CHEF'S TIPS

With so much seasonal produce to enjoy, our chefs have some tips to keep your produce fresher, longer:

- **Carrots and parsnips:** keep in the refrigerator wrapped in a slightly damp cloth. Remove their leafy greens first, rinse well, and utilize in pesto, salsa, or gremolata.
- **Heads of lettuce:** keep whole until ready to use. For bagged or packaged greens, add a paper towel to absorb excess moisture and prevent premature spoilage.
- **Leafy greens:** if in a bunch, remove the rubber band and gently wrap in a tea towel, then place in a resealable bag.
- **Kale and chard:** blanch and freeze heartier greens if you find yourself with more than you can handle! Blanching stops the enzyme activity that can lead to declining flavor and texture. Plunge your greens into a pot of rapidly boiling water, remove with tongs and place in a bowl of ice water. Once drained and dried, your leaves are ready to be frozen.
- **Bananas, apples, and avocados:** keep away from your fresh vegetables - the ethylene gas they give off will shorten the shelf life of other produce.



CELEBRATE THE SEASON

Spring is in the air! With the warming weather, comes an increase in local, seasonal produce so it is only fitting that we will celebrate National Asparagus and National Strawberry Month in May! Buying local fruits and vegetables has so many benefits. First, it supports your local farmers and community. Next, the nutrient values tend to be higher because the produce has had less transit time and less exposure to changing temperatures. Lastly, because of less transit time, there are less carbon emissions to get to you. Let's not forget they taste better too! Sounds like a winning combination!