

Vegetable	Part Eaten	Too Early	Optimum Maturity	Too Late
Artichoke, Globe	Immature bloom	Small flower buds	When buds are 2" to 4" in diameter	Large buds with loose scales or bracts
Asparagus	Stem	Insufficient length	6" to 8" long; no fiber	Excess woody fiber in the stem
Beans, Lima	Seed	Insufficient bean size	Bright green puffy pod; large seed	Yellow pods
Beans, Pole Green	Pod and seed	Insufficient size	Bean cavity full; seed $\frac{1}{4}$ grown	Large seed; fibrous pods
Beans, Snap Bush	Pod and seed	Insufficient size	Turgid pods; seeds just visible	Fibrous pods; large seed
Beets	Root and leaves	Insufficient size	Roots 2" to 3" in diameter	Pithy roots; strong taste
Broccoli	Immature bloom	Insufficient size	Bright green color; bloom still tightly closed	Loose head; some blooms beginning to show
Brussels Sprouts	Head	Insufficient size; hard to harvest	Bright green; tight head	Loose head; color changes to green-yellow
Cabbage	Head	Insufficient leaf cover	Heads firm; leaf tight	Loose leaf; heads cracked open
Cantaloupes	Fruit	Stem does not want to separate from fruit	Stem breaks away easily and cleanly when pulled	Yellow background color; soft rind
Carrots	Root	Insufficient size	$\frac{1}{2}$ " to $\frac{3}{4}$ " at shoulder	Strong taste; oversweet

Cauliflower	Immature bloom	Head not developed	Compact head; fairly smooth	Curds open; separate
Celery	Stems	Stem too small	Plant stands 12" to 15" tall; medium-thick stem	Seed stalk formed; bitterness
Collards	Leaf	Insufficient leaf size	Bright green color; small midrib	Large midrib; fibrous
Corn, Sweet	Grain	Grain watery; small	Grain plump; liquid in milk stage	Grain starting to dent; liquid in dough stage
Cucumber	Fruit	Insufficient size	Dark green skin; soft seeds	Skin beginning to yellow; hard seeds
Eggplant	Fruit	Insufficient size	High glossy skin; side springs back when mashed	Brown seeds; side will not spring back when mashed
Lettuce, Head	Leaves	Head not fully formed	Fairly firm; good size	Heads very hard
Okra	Pod	Insufficient size	2" to 3" long; still tender	Fiber development; tough pods
Onions, Dry	Bulb	Tops all green	Tops yellow; $\frac{3}{4}$ fallen over	All tops down; bulb rot started
Peas, English	Seed	Peas immature and too small to shell	Peas small to medium; sweet bright green	Yellow pods; large peas
Peas, Southern (green)	Seed and pod	Peas immature and too small to shell	Seeds fully developed but still soft; soft pods	Hard seeds; dry pods
Pepper, Pimiento	Pod	Insufficient size	Bright red and firm	Shriveled pod

Pepper, Red Bell	Pod	Chocolate-colored pods	Bright red and firm	Shriveled pod
Potato, Irish	Tuber	Insufficient size	When tops begin to die back	Damaged by freezing weather
Potato, Sweet	Root	Small size; immature	Most roots 2" to 3" in diameter	Early plantings get too large and crack; damaged by soil temperature below 50°F
Rhubarb	Stem	Small size; immature	Stem 8" to 15" long is best	Fleshy stem becomes fibrous
Soybeans	Seed	Seeds not developed	Thick pods; bright green	Dry pods; seed shatters out
Squash, Summer	Fruit	Insufficient size	Rind can be penetrated with thumbnail	Penetrating with thumbnail is difficult; large seed
Squash, Winter	Fruit	Soft rind	Rind difficult to penetrate with thumbnail	Damaged by frost
Tomatoes	Fruit	May be harvested in three stages: Mature green – tomato is firm and mature, color changes from green to light green, no pink color showing on blossom end. These tomatoes will store one to two weeks in the refrigerator. Pink – pink color about the size of a dime on the blossom end. At room temperature, these tomatoes will ripen in about three days. Ripe – tomato is full red but still firm. Should be used immediately.		
Watermelon	Fruit	Green flesh; green stem is difficult to separate	Melon surface next to the ground turns from a light straw color to a richer yellow	Top surface has a dull look

References:

Tremendous amounts of information on Harvesting Vegetables, Growing Seasons, and Gardening in general can be found on the internet. Regretfully, much of is of limited quality or value. To help refine your search, try adding the term site:Edu to your search to focus on Extension publications and other research-based information. A slightly broader range of material (yet still filtered of much of the undesired results) can be found by using the alternate “Google Scholar” site at www.scholar.google.com

WSU Sites:

<http://gardening.wsu.edu>

<https://pubs.extension.wsu.edu/general-gardening>

<https://s3.wp.wsu.edu/uploads/sites/2073/2014/09/Home-Vegetable-Gardening-in-Washington.pdf>

OSU Sites:

<http://extension.oregonstate.edu>

<https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/sites/catalog/files/project/pdf/em9027.pdf>

Seed Companies:

www.territorialseed.com & <https://territorialseed.com/blogs/spring-growing-guides>

www.Johnnyseeds.com