



EATING 101

RU DINING HEALTHY?

A WEEKLY NEWSLETTER BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE RU HEALTHY DINING TEAM

A Joint Program Between Rutgers Dining Services and the Institute of Food, Nutrition, and Health

Veggie Anatomy: From Seed to Root

It is no secret that vegetables are the superheroes of a balanced diet. These nutrient-rich additions to your plate not only fuel your body but also may help protect against disease and keep you feeling your best. From leafy greens to crunchy roots, each part of these plants has its own benefits and flavors waiting to be discovered. The Healthy Dining Team is here to help you explore the edible anatomy of plants and what they have to offer at every bite.

From the top...

Seeds:

Beans, Peas, and Lentils are the edible seeds of the plant, and come packed with plant-powered protein. Plant-based sources of protein are typically low in saturated fat, which may help lower inflammation and reduce the risk of chronic diseases. Next time you are in the dining hall, try swapping your usual source of protein for a chickpea salad or lentil soup.

Stems, Leaves, and Flowers:

Asparagus stems, kale leaves, and broccoli flowers are high in vitamins and minerals, such as Potassium, which helps maintain healthy blood pressure, and Vitamin A, which keeps your eyes and skin healthy. At your next visit to the pasta station, consider adding some broccoli to the mix or a Kale Ribbon Salad on the side.

Beneath the Surface...

Tubers, Taproots, and Bulbs:

Tubers, like potatoes, are the ultimate starchy staple for quick energy after class or before a workout. Taproots, such as carrots, are full of fiber to keep your digestion on track and everything “flowing”. Bulbs such as onions, garlic, and shallots add flavor to an otherwise simple meal. A roasted garlic and potato soup or glazed baby carrots are delicious ways to incorporate more of these veggies into your plate within the dining halls.

Incorporating two to three cups of all parts of a plant into your diet may yield a wide range of nutritional benefits. Make sure to visit your on-campus dining halls and organize your own veggie Frankenstein!

Always a happy harvest!

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References: *Vegetables* Available at: <https://www.myplate.gov/eat-healthy/vegetables> Accessed on: September 27, 2025. *Vegetables: Foods from Roots, Stems, Bark, and Leaves* Available at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/wildflowers/ethnobotany/food/vegetables.shtml> Accessed on: September 27, 2025. *Places to Eat* Available at: <https://food.rutgers.edu/> Accessed on: October 1, 2025. *Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2020-2025 Edition* Available at: <https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov/> Accessed on: October 1, 2025. *Is plant-based protein for you? Here's what you need to know* Available at: <https://www.uclahealth.org/news/article/is-plant-based-protein-for-you-heres-what-you-need-to-know> Accessed on: October 1, 2025.