Tablet computers or tablets are small mobile computers that are primarily touch-screen operated. They can be used for reading, watching movies, using apps, listening to music, taking photos, surfing the Internet and more. When purchasing a tablet, you should consider:

- Price
- Hardware
- Preferences for Use
- Average Battery Life
- Dimensions / Weight
- Internal Storage Capacity
- WiFi & 3G/4G Data Plans
- Resolution
- Camera
- Operating System
- Accelerometer

**Price:**
Tablet computers vary greatly in price, from around $200 up to $2,000 depending on the features they offer. It is important to consider the quality of the tablet associated with the price. A more expensive tablet may have more capabilities and last longer than a lower priced tablet. Choosing a tablet will depend on the budget you have to spend. If you have a tight budget, you might consider purchasing a tablet with less advanced hardware specs without the addition of a 3G or 4G data plan.

**Hardware:**
Compare the hardware.
- Speed and processor: A tablet worth purchasing should be able to open a webpage, launch an app, or adjust settings within a few seconds. Processors of 1GHz speed or more are optimum and will be your best bet for fast performance.
- RAM: Tablets within the range of 512MB or more of RAM will produce better performance and overall improved interface.

**Preferences for Use:**
- Will you use the tablet on the go, or primarily at your home?
- Will you use it for entertainment purposes only, or for taking notes in class?
These are also very important considerations when deciding on a tablet.

**Average Battery Life:**
Tablet computers can have a battery life for anywhere from 2 to 16 hours.  
• Will you take your tablet on the go frequently without access to a power outlet?  
• Or, will you use it at home and be able to plug it in if needed?  
These are important questions to ask when considering battery life.  

**Dimensions and Weight:**  
• Tablet screen sizes range from 2.8 inches to 14 inches. The median size for a tablet screen is 9.7 inches. Screen size can affect which cases you are able purchase and how you transport them. The screen size impacts how easy the tablet is to hold and use with one or both hands.  
• The weight of a tablet computer is a key factor to consider, especially if you plan on carrying your tablet computer with you. The weight of a tablet ranges from around .15 lbs. to 5 lbs. and affects how easy it is to hold and use. Does it feel heavy or too bulky for easily being carried around? Or, is it lightweight and easy to hold with one hand?  

**Internal Storage Capacity:**  
Internal storage is the amount of data the tablet can hold. One thing to look for in a tablet is whether you can add additional storage. Some tablets have a relatively small amount of internal storage, but allow you to add a considerable amount of removable storage. On others you cannot add any storage, so what you see is what you get. You will need to consider how much you intend to store on your tablet. Internal storage capacity ranges from 0 GB to 500 GB.  
The larger the storage capacity, the more downloads you will be able to store on your device.  

**WiFi & 3G/4G:**  
If you plan on using your tablet computer in your home, at school, or in a location where WiFi is available, it is easiest to connect to a WiFi network so you don’t have to pay for a 3G or 4G data plan. If you are looking for more mobility, you will need a 3G or 4G data plan so that you can get online when you’re not within a WiFi network range. A data plan is an extra cost you will have to pay to use your tablet computer wherever you like. 4G connectivity is the fastest connection available for mobile devices. However, it uses much more data than a 3G connection and will cost more.  

**Resolution:**  
The resolution of the screen affects how sharp the image will appear on the screen. It is measured in dimensions of pixels. The higher the pixel numbers, the higher the resolution of the screen will be.  

**Camera:**  
• Would you use your tablet computer as a camera or to make videos? Not all tablets feature built in cameras.
• Is it important that a camera is featured on both the front and the back of
the tablet computer? You will possibly need this for video calling and
self-portraits.
• Is the quality of the camera important to you?
These are important questions to consider when considering the use of your
tablet computer as a camera.

Operating System & Software Platform:
Tablets, like regular computers, run a number of operating systems. There
are two types of operating systems. One is a traditional desktop-based
operating system, which includes Microsoft Windows™ and OS X™. The other
is post-PC mobile based (“phone-like”) operating systems, including Apple
iOS™, BlackBerry®, and Google Android™.

Additionally, these operating systems have significant differences in how
they handle apps. Android is an open model, which means that anyone can
create an app and release it for purchase. Apple is a closed model, meaning
that all apps created must be approved before being sold in their app store.
This difference is especially important if you are a programmer.

Three platforms are dominate right now: Android™, BlackBerry® tablet OS
and Apple™ iOS 6. Your choice of tablet affects the operating system it runs
on, so it is important to consider which OS you prefer.

Accelerometer:
Accelerometers are small motion sensors inside tablets that detect the
orientation of the device. When you rotate your tablet, accelerometers are
what changes the tablet from landscape to portrait orientation.

Additionally, the accelerometers can be used to interact with apps and
games. By tipping it left, right, downward and forward you can affect what is
going on in the game.

If you plan on using your tablet for a lot of web-surfing or document reading,
you may want to use a landscape orientation so you can read the material on
the screen easier.

GPS:
Some tablets have GPS capability with the use of a 3G/4G data plan. This
might be ideal if you are planning on taking your tablet with you when you
travel. If you are planning on purchasing a data plan, the GPS capability of
your tablet might be important for you to consider.
Shop wisely, compare prices, and select the features you want. Using this guide you will be able to purchase the tablet that best meets your needs while staying within your budget.

Cheryl Varnadoe, Georgia 4-H
Extension 4-H Specialist
May, 2013

With appreciation to Brittney Anne Macdonald, UGA student.
JEANS

An estimated 450 million pairs of jeans are purchased every year, making them a staple of the American wardrobe. Indeed, jeans are the most widely produced piece of apparel in the U.S. Jeans have long been a cyclical market being driven in the main by factors such as employment conditions, productivity, fashion trends, lifestyle factors, and celebrity endorsements. Manufacturers and retailers are constantly challenged to maintain the market by staying on top of fads, changing tastes and consumer desires for different styles of jeans.

Every brand and every style of jeans will fit a little differently, but knowing what to look for will help narrow down the selection to just those jeans that will look great on you. The type of fabric, the cut of the jean and the details can all affect how jeans fit.

Denim is denim is denim -- or is it?
You may have thought that all blue jeans were cut from the same cloth, but this isn’t so. Variations in the weave, the fibers and the finishes all create differences.

Weave
• All denim is cotton twill -- a weave that has a slight diagonal to it, but that’s where the similarities end. Some denim is a left-hand twill (the diagonal on the dark side runs from lower right to the upper left), which has a very soft feel. A few types of denim have broken twill (the diagonal line changes directions). All other denim is a right-hand twill (the diagonal on the dark side runs from the lower left to the upper right), which is the most common and has a durable feel.

The cotton
• The quality of the cotton the denim is made of will affect the look and feel of the jeans. Fine cotton fabric is made from longer stands of the fiber, giving the jean fabric a softer feeling and a smoother look. High-quality cotton also lasts longer because there are fewer small fibers to rub off -- this is often what you are paying for when you buy premium jeans.

Dyes and finishes
• Most jeans are made of denim that was dyed before it was woven into cloth (this is also called “yarn-dyed”); other jeans are dyed after they have been constructed into jeans. Jeans dyed after construction may have a more saturated color, but it may also fade faster. Blue jeans are dyed with the familiar indigo blue, but there are new innovations in denim dyes all the time. For example, some manufacturers layer the indigo dye with a yellow sulphur dye to gives jeans an aged, dirty-on-purpose look.
• After the pants are constructed, many manufacturers put the jeans through finishing processes. A few terms you may see in product descriptions are:
  • **Stonewashed**: Jeans are washed with chemicals or actual stones -- usually pumice stones -- to lighten and soften the denim. Occasionally, you may even find a few small pumice stones in the pockets when you first put on your new stonewashed jeans.
  • **Sandblasted**: To give new jeans a broken-in appearance, the jeans are blasted with sand in areas where wear would occur naturally. This can sometimes lighten the denim, and lighter areas will draw attention to that body part. If you buy sandblasted jeans, make sure the light area is on a part you want to emphasize.
  • **Whiskered**: Crease lines, called whiskers, are created across the lap to look like the jeans have been sat in many times. Whiskers are printed on, sanded on or created with lasers. They are horizontal lines, so if you are worried about your legs looking too heavy, choose jeans with subtle whiskers or none at all.

Stretch
• Many people love stretch jeans, and for women with more curves, stretch denim can be very flattering. Women with flat rear ends will want to avoid stretch jeans, however, because the stretch will just emphasize the lack of curves.
What makes jeans fit differently?

Legs
- **Boot cut**: Boot cut jeans flare slightly at the bottom. The slight flare -- not a bell-bottom flare -- balances out large hips and heavy derrieres.
- **Wide leg**: With a fitted waist, wide leg jeans can be a stylish alternative to your other jeans.
- **Straight leg**: Straight leg jeans are not as baggy as wide leg jeans, but they share the same stovepipe shape that lacks any flare at the ankle. The straight line of straight leg jeans gives a long, lean look to your legs.
- **Skinny**: Skinny jeans are slim-fitting jeans that are narrow all the way to the ankle. These are the perfect jeans to wear tucked into a pair of boots because they don’t have extra fabric around the ankles.
- **Boy cut**: With slim hips that sit a little higher and with straight legs. Because of the relaxed fit, these jeans can be the perfect casual jeans, or you can cuff them to your calf and dress them up.

Rise
- The rise is the length from the crotch to the waistband. A standard rise is about 30 inches, while low-rise jeans -- also called hipsters, hip-huggers or low-cut jeans -- have about a 20-inch rise. Low-rise jeans can elongate a short torso, but on a long torso, they can be a bit too revealing in the back.

Seat
- As long as the seat of your jeans fits well and is flattering, a tailor can fix just about everything else. Even if you prefer other pants with a loose fit in the seat, choose jeans with a snug seat. The center seam gives definition to your curves. Back pockets make or break a backside.

Understand the Washes of Jeans
- Jeans come in a number of distinct cuts and washes. Figure out which are right for you before selecting the perfect pair of jeans.
  - **Stonewashed jeans**: have a lighter, more broken-in appearance.
  - **Dark jeans**: The deep indigo color of dark jeans make them the ideal jeans for a night out on the town.
  - **Distressed jeans**: Holes, shredding, and crinkles create the highly worn appearance of distressed jeans.

What does a consumer look for?

Seams
- Flat fell seams have two rows of stitching and are enclosed on both the outside and inside of the jeans. Seams of this type leave no open seam allowances to unravel during wear and laundering. Make certain the seams are neatly constructed and firmly stitched. Where seams are not flat fell, they should be serged (overcast with thread) to cover the raw edge and reduce raveling. Seams that join at the crotch and in the back should meet accurately for smooth contour, comfort, and durability of the garment.

Waistband
- A waistband made of two or more layers of fabric will reduce stretching in the waist area. If the jeans have no waistband, look for interfacing (an extra layer of firm fabric sewn into the waist seam for stability).

Reinforcements
- Look for thread bar tacks or rivets at places of stress like corners of pockets, belt loops and the bottom of the zipper placket.

Zipper
- The zipper will be more durable if the fabric on both sides has been turned under and stitched. Because denim fabric is so heavy, a metal zipper offers more durability than a nylon zipper.

Select the Right Jeans for Your Body Type
With so many designer jeans on the market, it’s important to do your homework and select the right pair of jeans for your body type.
- **Slim body types**: Slimmer body types look great in a variety of jeans. Look for jeans that run straight from the hips through the knee, with a slight flare at the leg opening. Low-rise jeans with a high back and lower front are another good choice. Or, if you’re looking for a snug fit, choose jeans that are tight around the waist and backside.
• Curvy body types: If you have great curves to accentuate, choose jeans that run straight from the hips through
the knee with a slight or more generous flare at the leg opening. A wide boot-cut silhouette is also flattering.
• Athletic body types: If you have athletic legs and narrow hips, consider a low-rise jean with a contoured
waistband. Legs that taper out to a graceful and generous boot cut are also flattering—but without giving you
the retro bell-bottom look. Or, to give the appearance of wider hips and a fuller backside, choose a cigarette-
style jean.
• Full-figured body types: Choose a traditional five-pocket-style jean that isn’t too snug and has a little give. Many
jeans woven with spandex stretch nicely to your frame. Remember also that a slight flare at the leg opening,
such as a boot cut, will help to balance a wider or fuller figure, as well as make your legs look longer. Always opt
for jeans in darker shades, as they’ll have a naturally slimming effect.

Caring for your jeans - Here are a few ideas for denim care:
• Cold wash will keep the color darker, longer. Cold will also prevent shrinkage.
• Warm water will shrink jeans, but may get our tough stains. BEWARE: don’t wash jeans with whites unless you
want to turn all your clothes blue!
• Air dry jeans for the least shrinkage and the least fading.
• Use a warm iron to get out wrinkles.
• Turn jeans inside out, to preserve the dark color.
• To keep white denim looking brand new wash in warm or hot water. Pre-treat stains and re-wash if stains are still
visible before the drying cycle.
• Wash and dry your denim before hemming or altering.
• Consider dry cleaning very expensive jeans. The process will remove dirt but won’t affect the wash as much as a
machine.
There are many different types of headphones, all ranging in price as well as style and comfort. When looking to buy a new pair of headphones the consumer wants to pick a style that best meets their needs and is in his/her price range. There are several types of headphones and features to consider in making this decision.

### Main Types of Headphones

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Best Uses</th>
<th>Price Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Over-Ear/Full-Size</strong></td>
<td>These are traditional-looking headphones with cushioned pads that cover the whole ear. Full-Size headphones are bulkier, but generally very comfortable because of generous padding and ergonomic design.</td>
<td>Home or Office</td>
<td>$40-$300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>On-Ear/Lightweight</strong></td>
<td>These are headphones which sit on the ears rather than over them. They typically have a thin headband that goes over or behind the head. Some other models use small clips that slip over your ear.</td>
<td>Exercising; Travel</td>
<td>$20-$130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>In-Ear/Canalphones</strong></td>
<td>These headphones rest in the ear canals. There are capable of producing incredible audio quality. For optimal use, they fit snugly and can be custom made in order to fit your ear canal.</td>
<td>Noisy Environments; Travel</td>
<td>$75-$420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Best Uses</td>
<td>Price Range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Canalbuds</strong></td>
<td>Canalbuds are the middle ground between earbuds and in-ear canal. They sit just on the inside of your ear instead of deep inside. They tend to be more comfortable because they are not as tightly fitting as the inner-ear canal and are generally less expensive.</td>
<td>On the Go</td>
<td>$49-$100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Earbuds</strong></td>
<td>Similar in size to in-ear headphones, earbuds are handy for listening to music while on the move. They sit outside the ear canal and don't fully seal your ear, meaning they are susceptible to sound leakage.</td>
<td>On the Go</td>
<td>$5-$90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Other Types of Headphones**

In addition to the main headphone types, there are other specialized types available for specific purposes. Here are a couple of examples.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Best Uses</th>
<th>Price Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sports Headphones</strong></td>
<td>Ideal for exercising built to withstand the rigors of any workout; built for comfort and portability; designed to be water and sweat resistant.</td>
<td>Working out; running; any type of exercise</td>
<td>$10-$380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Monitor Headphones</strong></td>
<td>Studio monitoring headphones; specialist headphone, designed to be used by audio professionals, where accurate sounds produced are crucial.</td>
<td>Sound engineering; audio mixing</td>
<td>$20-$2,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Open versus Closed
Both the on-ear and in-ear headphones can also differ by the type of ear cups used. The ear cup variations create different listening conditions and the headphone type that is right for you is purely personal preference. Both designs have their pros and cons and it usually comes down to personal preference as to which ones to buy. It is a good idea to try each type out in-store before buying.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Open Back</th>
<th>Open is when the back of the ear pads are not completely sealed off. This can provide a more natural sound but open-back headphones tend to leak more noise.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Closed Back</td>
<td>Closed is when the back of the ear pads are completely sealed off. They can sound a bit muffled, but are good at preventing sound leakage and blocking out unwanted noise.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Headphone Features
Some headphones offer additional features; for example, blocking out unwanted outside noise with noise cancelling or noise isolation. Other headphones are great for when you want to be mobile; such as wireless, or Bluetooth connectivity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Noise Cancelling Headphones</strong></td>
<td>Headphones with noise cancelling or noise reduction block outside sound keeping out all monotonous noise that is not your audio tuner. They tend to be good at eliminating unwanted low-frequency noise (such as traffic). This feature is mainly available with on- or over-ear headphones, but some in-ear models have it too.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Noise Isolation Headphones</strong></td>
<td>Not to be confused with noise cancelling headphones, noise isolation headphones or earphones block outside sound by sealing in the ear when fitted. Some earphone models do look very similar to standard earbuds but the audio quality is improved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wireless Headphones</td>
<td>Wireless sets allow you to listen to music without being tethered to the audio source. They use radio frequencies to transmit sound from their base station to your ears. Long-range wireless connections such as FM systems allow you to move from room to room or even outside. But the downside is you might experience interference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bluetooth Headphones</td>
<td>Bluetooth is a type of short-range wireless technology commonly used with hands-free mobile phone kits. These headphones also double as headsets letting the consumer switch between music and voice features. These are best suited for portable use as you have to keep the transmitter close to you.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Headphone Controls**

Some headphones come with controls built into the cable or earpiece. Typical controls include playback functions such as play/pause and volume up/down. Others include mobile phone functionality, enabling the user to seamlessly switch between hands-free telephone calls and listening to music.

**Terms to Know**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Decibels (dB)</td>
<td>The unit of measurement for sound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ear Cup</td>
<td>The portion of the headphones that is placed over the ear and houses the speaker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ear Cushions</td>
<td>The portion on the inside of the headphone ear cup that rests on your skin and around your ears</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency Response</td>
<td>The range of frequencies, in kHz, that drivers are able to reproduce before a significant drop in volume level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headphone Amplifier</td>
<td>An electronic device that is designed to drive headphones rather than speakers. A dedicated headphone amplifier can provide better dynamic range, clarity and volume when driving headphones than the often cheap headphone output circuits on consumer electronics equipment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impedance</td>
<td>How much opposition (or resistance) the headphone gives to the signal from the audio source. (The larger the impedance the quieter the headphones will sound for a given volume level from the source. In contrast a set of headphones with low impedance will sound louder.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Definition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum SPL</td>
<td>A measure of how loud your headphones can get, indicated in decibels (dB).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nose-induced hearing loss (NIHL)</td>
<td>Exposure to harmful noise/sounds that are too loud or loud sounds that last a long time causing sensitive structures in the inner ear to be damaged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plug</td>
<td>The headphone plug or headphone jack on the end of the headphone cord that plugs into the sound source. This jack plug is either 1/4” in diameter or 1/8” in diameter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plug Adapter</td>
<td>An attachment that slips over the plug making it useful with more sound sources. An adapter can convert a 1/8” plug to a 1/4” plug or a 1/4” plug to a 1/8” plug. Most headphones come with a 1/4” and a 1/8” plug which eliminates the need for an adapter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safe Hearing Levels</td>
<td>In general, sounds above 85 dB are harmful, depending on how long and how often you are exposed to them and whether you wear hearing protection, such as earplugs or earmuffs. (Average home noise is 40 dB and normal conversation is 60 dB.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound Leakage</td>
<td>The ability of unwanted sound to flow in or outside of the headphones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stereo</td>
<td>Designates sound reception to both ears.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Compiled by:**

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Mindy Turner, 4-H Youth Development Specialist, New Mexico State University
FAST FOOD MEALS

Fast foods are quick and easy substitutes for home cooking, and a reality with the busy schedules many families maintain. However, fast foods are almost always high in calories, fat, sugar, and salt.

Fast food used to mean fried food. However, today there are many more healthy alternatives available at fast food restaurants. Some restaurants still use hydrogenated vegetable oils for frying. These oils contain trans fats, which increase your risk for heart disease. Some cities have banned or are trying to ban the use of these fats. Now, many restaurants are preparing foods using other types of fat.

Even with these changes, it is hard to eat healthy when you eat out often. Many foods are still cooked with a lot of fat, and many fast-food restaurants do not offer any lower-fat foods. Large portions also make it easy to overeat, and few restaurants offer many fresh fruits and vegetables.

Before heading out, it is important to know your personal calorie limit. Staying within yours can help you get to or maintain a healthy weight. Most adolescents need 1800 (girls) to 2200 (boys) calories; however, knowing how many calories one needs is based upon age, sex, height, weight, and activity level. When choosing what to eat and drink, it’s important to get the right mix – enough nutrients, but not too many calories.

In general, eat at places that offer salads, soups, and vegetables. Select a fast-food restaurant that you know offers a variety of food selections that fit in your healthy eating plan. Along with that, the following tips can help you make healthier selections when dining at fast-food restaurants.

Check and compare nutrition information. Knowing the amount of calories, fat, and salt in fast foods can help you eat healthier. Many restaurants now offer information about their food. This information is much like the nutrition labels on the food that you buy. If it is not posted in the restaurant, ask an employee for a copy.

Have it your way. Remember you don’t have to settle for what comes with your sandwich or meal – not even at fast-food restaurants. Ask for healthier options and substitutions. Adding bacon, cheese, or mayonnaise will increase the fat and calories. Ask for vegetables instead, such as lettuce or spinach, and tomatoes. With pizza, get less cheese. Also pick low-fat toppings, such as vegetables. You can also dab the pizza with a paper napkin to get rid of a lot of the fat from the cheese.

Keep portion sizes small. If the fast-food restaurant offers several sandwich sizes, pick the smallest. Bypass hamburgers with two or three beef patties, which can pack close to 800 calories and 40 grams of fat. Choose instead a regular- or children’s-sized hamburger, which has about 250-300 calories. Ask for extra lettuce, tomatoes, and onions, and omit the cheese and sauce. If a smaller portion is not available, split an item to reduce calories and fat. You can always take some of your food home, and it is okay if you leave extra food on your plate.

Skip the large serving of french fries or onion rings and ask for a small serving instead. This switch alone saves 200 to 300 calories. Or, ask if you can substitute a salad or fruit for the fries.

Strive to make half your plate fruits and vegetables. Take advantage of the healthy side dishes offered at many fast-food restaurants. For example, instead of french fries choose a side salad with low-fat dressing or a baked potato, or add a fruit bowl or a fruit and yogurt option to your meal. Other healthy choices include apple or orange slices, corn on the cob, steamed rice, or baked potato chips.

When choosing an entrée salad, go with grilled chicken, shrimp, or vegetables with fat-free or low-fat dressing on the side, rather than regular salad dressing, which can have 100 to 200 calories per packet. Vinegar or lemon juice are also healthier substitutes for salad dressing. Watch out for high-calorie salads, such as those with deep fried shells or those topped with breaded chicken or other fried toppings. Also skip extras, such as cheese, bacon bits and croutons, which
quickly increase your calorie count. If you forgo the dressing, you can find salads for around 300 calories at most fast food chains.

Opt for grilled items. Fried and breaded foods, such as crispy chicken sandwiches and breaded fish fillets, are high in fat and calories. Select grilled or roasted lean meats – such as turkey or chicken meat, lean ham, or lean roast beef. Look for meat, chicken, and fish that are roasted, grilled, baked, or broiled. Avoid meats that are breaded or fried. If the dish you order comes with a heavy sauce, ask for it on the side and use just a small amount.

Go for whole grains. Select whole-grain breads or bagels. Croissants and biscuits have a lot of fat. People who eat whole grains as part of a healthy diet have a reduced risk of some chronic diseases.

Slow down on sodium. Americans have a taste for salt, but salt plays a role in high blood pressure. Everyone, including kids, should reduce their sodium intake to less than 2,300 milligrams of sodium a day (about 1 tsp of salt). Adults age 51 and older, African Americans of any age, and individuals with high blood pressure, diabetes, or chronic kidney disease should further reduce their sodium intake to 1,500 mg a day.

When eating at a fast food restaurant, pay attention to condiments. Foods like soy sauce, ketchup, pickles, olives, salad dressings, and seasoning packets are high in sodium. Choose low-sodium soy sauce and ketchup. Have a carrot or celery stick instead of olives or pickles. Use only a sprinkling of flavoring packets instead of the entire packet.

Watch what you drink. What you drink is as important as what you eat. Teenagers often drink more carbonated and caffeinated beverages and eat more fast foods. This, along with peer pressure related to eating and exercise, make teenagers particularly vulnerable to becoming sedentary, overweight, and obese. An obese teenager has a greater than 70% risk of becoming an obese adult.

Many beverages are high in calories, contain added sugars and offer little or no nutrients, while others may provide nutrients but too much fat and too many calories. For example, a large regular soda (32 ounces) has about 300 calories. Instead, order diet soda, water, unsweetened iced tea, sparkling water or mineral water. Also, skip the shakes and other ice cream drinks. Large shakes can contain more than 800 calories and all of your saturated fat allotment for the day.

Drink water. This is a better choice over sugary drinks. Regular soda, energy or sports drinks, and other sweet drinks usually contain a lot of added sugar, which provides more calories than needed. Water is usually easy on the wallet. You can save money by drinking water from the tap when eating out. When water just won’t do, enjoy the beverage of your choice, but just cut back, avoiding the supersized option.

Don’t forget dairy. Many fast food restaurants offer milk as an option for kids’ meals, but you can request it! Dairy products provide calcium, vitamin D, potassium, protein, and other nutrients needed for good health throughout life. When you choose milk or milk alternatives, select low-fat or fat-free milk or fortified soymilk. Each type of milk offers the same key nutrients such as calcium, vitamin D, and potassium, but the number of calories are very different. Older children, teens, and adults need 3 cups of milk per day, while children 4 to 8 years old need 2 ½ cups, and children 2 to 3 years old need 2 cups.

The American Heart Association recommends some examples of healthier alternatives to common fast food picks.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Instead of...</th>
<th>Try...</th>
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<tr>
<td>Danish</td>
<td>Small bagel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jumbo cheeseburger</td>
<td>Grilled chicken, sliced meats or even a regular 2 oz. hamburger on a bun with lettuce, tomato and onion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fried chicken or tacos</td>
<td>Grilled chicken or salad bar (but watch out for the high-calorie dressing and ingredients)</td>
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<tr>
<td>French fries</td>
<td>Baked potato with vegetables or low-fat or fat-free sour cream topping</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food</td>
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<tr>
<td>Potato chips</td>
<td>Pretzels, baked potato chips</td>
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<tr>
<td>Milkshake</td>
<td>Juice or low-fat or fat-free milk or a diet soft drink (Limit beverages that are high in calories but low in nutrients, such as soft drinks.)</td>
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References
American Heart Association [www.heart.org/HEARTORG/GettingHEalthy?nuritionCenter/DiningOut/Tips-for-Eating-Fast-Food_UCM_308412_Article.jsp](http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/GettingHEalthy?nuritionCenter/DiningOut/Tips-for-Eating-Fast-Food_UCM_308412_Article.jsp)


- Choose My Plate
- Make Half Your Grains Whole
- Salt and Sodium
- Make Better Beverage choices
- Enjoy Your Food, But Eat Less

Choose My Plate – Calories: How Many Can I Have?

Mayo Clinic
[www.mayoclinic.com/health/fast-food/MY01268](http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/fast-food/MY01268)

National Institutes of Health – Medline Plus

US Department of Health & Human Services - Office on Women’s Health
[www.girlshealth.gov/nutrition/fsatfood/fastfood_tips.cfm](http://www.girlshealth.gov/nutrition/fsatfood/fastfood_tips.cfm)

Wyoming 4-H

Produce Judging Handbook Senior

University of Wyoming Cooperative Extension Service

70501D-January 2010
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Horticultural and Consumer Qualities

This publication is a reference for fruit, vegetable, and herb identification and judging and is intended to reduce confusion as contestants, coaches, and judges prepare for this contest. Check with your local University of Wyoming Cooperative Extension Service office to make sure you are using the most recent version of this publication.

The 4-H philosophy for produce judging is that the qualities describing horticultural merit are identical to those traits that make produce ready for purchase and consumption. These qualities include: product uniformity, stage of ripeness, freedom from disease and insect damage, absence of bruises and blemishes, and so forth.

The correct stage of ripeness is determined by examining either the product’s skin or leaves. If the product’s skin is wrinkled, shriveled, or collapsed in any way, it is probably overripe. Leafy produce should be firm and not wilted. Unripe vegetables and fruits will have uneven color and usually are very hard. Underripe is better than overripe when selecting produce.

Another way to tell if a vegetable or fruit is edible is to look for bruises, growth cracks, or sunscald. Mechanical damage, such as bruises, may need to be cut out. Growth cracks, most often caused by erratic watering practices, may need to be removed. If large portions of a produce item must be removed due to damage, the produce item is low quality.

Sometimes vegetables may be misshapen. This distortion often happens when root vegetables, such as carrots or radishes, are grown in heavy, compacted soil that has not been amended or properly worked. Odd shapes may occur in vegetables grown above ground or in fruits when they grow next to another plant, a rock, or some other obstacle.

Holes, chewed sections, and discolored areas on vegetables, fruits, and herbs are signs of insect damage. Disease damage results in discolored lesions, off-color and streaked appearances in the flesh, and rotted areas.

Produce Descriptions, Merits, and Faults

**Apples** (fruit) are round to slightly elongated. Apples commonly come in red, yellow, or green, but many of the newer varieties may be a mixture of these colors. The flesh of the apple should be white or, in some varieties, soft pink. 1

Merits of apples include: crisp flesh that is white and juicy, smooth skin devoid of blemishes, and firm tissue all the way to the core. The apple should have good symmetry.

Faults of apples include: brown or bruised flesh, discolorations of the skin, corky tissue on the skin, soft flesh, and a watery core. Any apparent insect damage is also a fault.

**Artichokes** (globe) (vegetable) are actually immature flower buds that are edible. Each bud contains many layers of bracts (modified flower petals), of which the...
lower bases of the bracts are edible. The heart of the artichoke, on which the bracts are attached, may also be eaten. 1

Merits of the artichoke include: leaves that are thick and firm, stem free of holes and blemishes, and all of the leaves should be tightly closed, perhaps even squeaking when handled.

Faults of the artichoke include: leaves that are soft and browning, stems with holes, which may be evidence of insect damage within the head, and leaves that are loose or open.

Asparagus (vegetable) has young, immature stem tips, and scales on the tips are tight. Asparagus may be dark green or white, or it may be green toward the tip and white toward the base.

Merits of asparagus include: uniform stalk length and size (at least ½ inch in diameter), juiciness, bright color, and tightly closed scales at tips.

Faults of asparagus include: loose scales, or undersized, spindly, wilted, or oversized stalks.

Bananas (fruit) are a curved, long fruit. The skin is yellow, and the flesh is white and creamy. Bunches usually grow in 6 to 25 individual bananas. 1

Merits of bananas include: bright yellow skin, absence of bruising on the flesh, and lack of skin browning near the stem. The flesh should be soft and creamy but not overripe.

Faults of bananas include: brown skin, bruised flesh, and squishy stem end.

Basil (herb) is a fragrant herb used as a seasoning in a variety of foods. Basil is sold dry or fresh.

Merits of fresh basil include: green bunches that are fresh and not wilted. Basil should be free of insect damage or yellowing and should have a strong, pleasing aroma.

Faults of basil include: yellow leaves, wilting, signs of insect damage, and blackening of the stems.

Beets (vegetable) have round or cylindrical roots. Beets may be red, yellow, or, rarely, white.

Merits of beets include: uniform size, color, and shape. Baby beets should be 1 1/2 inches and table beets should be 1 1/2 to 3 1/2 inches in diameter. The crown should have very little browning and no cracks.

Faults of beets include: damaged, cracked, pithy, or wilted tissues.

Broccoli (vegetable) has immature green flower heads and is harvested before buds open.

Merits of broccoli include: fresh green color with florets close together. Broccoli should be tender, crisp, and free from worms. Stems should be less than 6 inches long.

Faults of broccoli include: heads that are soft or wilted or are showing yellow flowers.

Brussels sprouts (vegetable) are firm, green, round buds measuring about 1 inch across. Brussels sprouts look like small cabbage heads.

Merits of Brussels sprouts include: fresh, solid, and tightly closed buds with good green color.

Faults of Brussels sprouts include: small or loosely closed buds, yellowish color, or wilted buds.

Cabbage (vegetable) is a compact ball of thickened leaves. The heads can be green, red, smooth, or crinkled. Cabbage is solid and heavy with outer leaves intact. The head may be rounded, flattened, conical, or egg-shaped. The midribs may be white.

Merits of cabbage include: solid, firm heads that measure about 6 to 9 inches in diameter. Heads should be tender, crisp, and heavy for their size. Worm damage or rot should never be present. Knowing the cabbage variety is important as varieties differ in size and shape.

Faults of cabbage include: prominent midribs on leaves, incorrect size, light weight, loosely formed, wilted, or uneven color.

Carrots (vegetable) have yellow or orange roots. They are cylindrical, tapered, or round, without side roots.

Merits of carrots include: uniform type (diameter depends on variety), smooth surface, and pale to deep orange color (depending on variety). When carrots are cut, they should have a small core without rings. Carrots should be tender and sweet.

Faults of carrots include: off-color, wilted, rough, or cracked roots. Worm damage, crooked or branched roots, or green crowns also are considered faults.

Cauliflower (vegetable) consists of a firm, heavy, white head of immature flowers. Some types may be purple or green.

Merits of cauliflower include: solid heads with good color and smooth, fine-grained texture. Cauliflower should be crisp with outer leaves trimmed about 1 inch above the head’s center.

Faults of cauliflower include: wilted heads having yellowish color or rough, grainy texture.

Celeriac (vegetable) is a rough-surfaced, round root measuring about 2 to 6 inches in diameter. The root has crisp, white flesh. Celeriac smells like celery.

Merits of celeriac include: uniform color and solid roots.

Faults of celeriac include: incorrect size, wilted root, or damage from worms or insects.
Celery (vegetable) is the whole, above-ground portion of the plant. Leaf blades are trimmed off. Stalks may be green, white, or yellowish. Celery is a cylindrical cluster of leaf petioles attached to a very short stem.

Merits of celery include: thick, firm, and crisp petioles that are uniform and long. Color should be uniform.

Faults of celery include: stalks that are stale or wilted. Rust on the stalks is a fault. Stalks that are uneven in color, spindly, or unevenly arranged in the bunch also should be faulted.

Chard (vegetable) consists of large, thick, crumpled leaves. Chard can include single leaves or the entire plant with the roots removed. Stems are short. Petioles and midribs may be white, red, orange, or yellow.

Merits of chard include: firm, tender, crisp leaves free from insect or disease damage.

Faults of chard include: small or wilted leaves, roots that are still present, or uneven color.

Chinese cabbage (vegetable) has a compact, elongated head with thin, many-veined leaves. Chinese cabbage color can be light green to white. One type, bok choy, has dark green leaves and white petioles. Bok choy does not form a solid head.

Merits of Chinese cabbage include: solid, firm heads with tender, crisp leaves and uniform color.

Faults of Chinese cabbage include: very prominent midribs, incorrect sized heads, wilted leaves, or uneven color.

Chives (herb) are small, onion-like plants. Chives grow in clusters and are dark green. The leaves are hollow and thin.

Merits of chives include: fresh leaves that are evenly green and have no sign of blemish or drying.

Faults of chives include: wilted leaves, dried leaves, signs of insect damage, or uneven colored leaves.

Collards (vegetable) consist of rosettes of tender, dark green leaves, which may be attached or detached from the main stem. The roots are removed.

Merits of collards include: firm, crisp leaves with uniform color and size.

Faults of collards include: wilted, dirty, or damaged leaves.

Cucumber (fruit) is an immature, firm, heavy, green fruit. Pickled cucumbers are 1½ to 5 inches long, and they are blocky. Slicing cucumbers are 6 to 9 inches long. European slicing cucumbers can be up to 16 inches long. Lemon cucumbers are egg-shaped and 4 to 6 inches long. Lemon cucumbers have light yellow skin. Some might assume cucumbers and several other fruits mentioned in this guide, including edible podded peas, eggplant, okra, peppers, snap beans, squash, and tomatoes, are vegetables. They are fruits because the botanic and horticultural definition of “fruit” is a mature ovary, which may or may not contain seeds (some fruits are seedless).

Merits of cucumbers include: uniform size, crisp and straight fruits, dark green color, uniform maturity, and evenly spaced spines (if present).

Faults of cucumbers include: non-standard size or color, or wilted, over mature fruits.

Dill (herb) has green, fragrant flower heads with stems and green leaves. Seeds are brown and immature and should not be shedding.

Merits of dill include: freshness, uniform and balanced bunches, and clean leaves and stems.

Faults of dill include: dirty foliage or flower heads, disease or insect damage, discoloration, or wilted foliage.

Edible podded peas (fruit) are tender, flat pods. The seeds inside should be starting to enlarge. Some varieties have rounder, crisp pods with nearly full-grown seeds. Both ends of the pods are intact.

Merits of edible podded peas include: uniform color and size, both ends intact, and fresh, crisp pods.

Faults of edible podded peas include: wilted or over mature pods, pale color, or insect or disease damage.

Eggplant (fruit) is a black, purple, or white, round to egg-shaped fruit. An eggplant may be as long as 14 inches.

Merits of eggplant include: well-shaped, firm, mature fruit. Other merits are a connected stem and a shiny surface.

Faults of eggplant include: wilted or misshapen fruit, uneven color, or over maturity.

Endive (vegetable) is a green, leafy rosette plant. The roots are removed, and the center leaves are creamy-white.

Merits of endive include: fresh, uniform, and clean leaves and stems.

Faults of endive include: dirty, diseased, discolored, or wilted leaves or stems.

Garlic (herb) is a bulb 1½ to 3 inches in diameter. Garlic may be white to pink, and it has papery, dry skin.

Merits of garlic include: individual cloves that are uniform in size and shape. Clear skin also is a merit.

Faults of garlic include: soft or damaged bulbs.

Ginger root (vegetable) is actually an edible rhizome. The interior is golden white.

Merits of ginger root: few knots or branches, light brown skin that is smooth, and lack of blemishes or bruises.

Faults of ginger root: withered knobs, many knots and branches, and blemishes or bruised skin.

Grapes (fruit) are round fruits that grow in clusters on vines. The skin of the fruit may be green, red, purple, or yellow when ripe. The skin is usually thin and the flesh juicy. Seeds may or may not be present, depending on the variety.

Merits of grapes include: plump fruits, stems securely attached, rich coloring, and absence of shriveling or skin blemishes.

Faults of grapes include: blackening of skin near stem, soft or shriveled fruits, and mold present on fruits.
**Grapefruits** (fruit) are large, round fruits with a thick rind. The rind is yellow but may be slightly red or pink. The flesh of the fruit is pinkish-red or yellow and is slightly bitter in taste. ¹

Merits of the grapefruit include: smooth and shiny skin, firm fruit, and absence of mold or bruising.

Faults of the grapefruit include: dull or wrinkled skin, soft fruit, and the presence of mold or bruising.

**Green onions** (vegetable) are immature onion plants. Green onions have thick, straight stems with roots trimmed short.

Merits of green onions include: no large bulge at the base, clear white base color, and dark green tops. Green onions should be fresh and clean.

Faults of green onions include: wilted or damaged tissues, or soft tops. Another fault is when the base bulges more like an onion.

**Head lettuce** (vegetable) is a solid, round head of green leaves. The midribs and center leaves are nearly white.

Merits of head lettuce include: a firm, crisp, clean, solid head heavy for its size.

Faults of head lettuce include: wilted, dirty, loose, or damaged leaves.

**Jicama** (fruit) is a large tuberous root from a legume plant.

Merits of jicama include: tubers free of bruises or cracks and tissue that appears fresh and firm.

Faults of jicama include: cracks, bruises, and soft tubers.

**Kale** (vegetable) has grayish or blue-green curly leaves. Kale looks like a non-heading cabbage.

Merits of kale include: firm leaves uniform in color.

Faults of kale include: wilted, dirty, or damaged leaves or uneven color.

**Kiwi** (fruit) is an egg-shaped fruit with bright green flesh and brown skin covered with brown fuzz. A ring of small black seeds is embedded in the flesh. The seeds are edible.

Merits of kiwi include: plump, fragrant fruit with skin free of spots or blemishes.

Faults of kiwi include: wrinkled, soft, or very small fruits, and blemishes or soft spots on the fruit.

**Kohlrabi** (vegetable) has an enlarged stem measuring about 2 to 3 inches in diameter. Leaf scars and petioles of kohlrabi are in a spiral pattern. Kohlrabi may be round or shaped like a toy top.

Merits of kohlrabi include: uniform size, tender stem, and even color.

Faults of kohlrabi include: wrinkled, soft, or very small fruits, and blemishes or soft spots on the fruit.

**Lemons** (fruit) are a bright yellow, oblong shaped fruit. The skin is smooth, and the fruit may have a slight protrusion at the stem end. The inner flesh is light in color with a fragrant smell and acidic taste. ¹

Merits of the lemon include: skin that is vibrant colored and smooth. The skin should lack blemishes. The flesh should be juicy and fragrant.

Faults of the lemon include: pulpy or dry flesh. Avoid skin that is bruised or blemished.

**Mint** (herb) is a perennial herb known for its distinctive minty smell.

Merits of mint include: green bunches that are fresh and not wilted. Mint should be free of insect damage or yellowing and should have a strong, pleasing aroma.

Faults of mint include: yellow leaves, wilting, signs of insect damage, and blackening of the stems.

**Muskmelons or cantaloupes** (fruit) are netted or ribbed, round to oval fruits. The fruits have cream-colored netting on rinds and greenish to yellow skins.

Merits of muskmelons include: clean, firm fruits free of soft spots, scratches, or decay. Netting should be deeply ridged over melons. Color should be even.

Faults of muskmelons include: over or under ripeness, poor color, blemishes, or coarse netting.

**Mustard** (vegetable) consists of green leaves that are used fresh or cooked.

Merits of mustard include: fresh, uniform, and clean leaves and stems.

Faults of mustard include: dirty, discolored, or wilted leaves or stems.

**Okra** (fruit) has pointed, velvety pods. The pods may be green, yellow, or somewhat red. The pods should be partially mature.

Merits of okra include: uniform pod size, shape, and color. Pods should be clean, fresh, and crisp.

Faults of okra include: uneven color, damaged, overly mature, or wilted pods.

**Onions** (vegetable) are mature bulbs with dry roots and dry necks. Outer scales are dry and can be red, brown, yellow, or white. Onions may be flattened, round, or spindle-shaped, but they should be heavy for their size.

Merits of onions include: even color and heaviness for their size. Onions also should have clear skin, thin necks, good color, and good shape, and they should be uniform in size.

Faults of onions include: any damage, too many layers of outer skin removed, or thick, soft necks.
Oranges (fruit) are a round fruit that bears similarity to grapefruit but are smaller. The rind tends to be somewhat rough and is orange to yellow-orange in color. The flesh is yellow-orange and sweet to the taste.  

Merits of the orange include: smooth and shiny skin, firm fruit, and absence of mold or bruising.

Faults of the orange include: dull or wrinkled skin, soft fruit, and the presence of mold or bruising.

Parsley (herb) has curled or smooth green leaves with no flowers or seed heads.

Merits of parsley include: fresh, deep green color and crisp, clean leaves.

Faults of parsley include: wilted or yellowish foliage, or foliage damaged by insects.

Parsnip (vegetable) is a long, tapered, creamy-white root.

Merits of parsnips include: uniformity in size and true-ness to type. Parsnips should be free of side roots. They also should be firm, solid, and exhibit good color.

Faults of parsnips include: cracked or branched roots, rubbery flesh, or uneven color. Warty or over or undersized roots also should be faulted.

Peas (vegetable) are full-size, tender, green seeds in fresh, green pods.

Merits of peas include: freshness, bright green color, and uniform length and size.

Faults of peas include: large, empty, or partially filled pods. Discolored, damaged, or over mature peas also should be faulted.

Peppers (fruit) are green, red, or yellow fruits. They have three or four lengthwise lobes, and their shapes may be round or long and tapered. Peppers have deep color. Peppers are firm and heavy with thick walls.

Merits of peppers include: uniform size, color, and variety. Peppers should be crisp, heavy, smooth, and free of blemishes. Stems should be attached but cut cleanly. Peppers should have the same number of lobes or sections.

Faults of peppers include: dull or rough texture and fruits that are off-color or light weight. Other faults include: soft spots or damage from sunscald, disease, or insects.

Pineapples (fruit) are oval or cylindrical and are topped by a crown of coarse leaves. The pineapple is a multiple fruit, or one that is made up of numerous flowers fused together. The skin of the pineapple has many scales and is yellow when ripe. The inner flesh is juicy, sweet, and yellow in color. There are no seeds inside the fruit, but the core of the pineapple is fibrous and white.  

Merits of pineapples include: green and healthy top, firm fruit, and a bright yellow color.

Faults of pineapples include: brown leaves, soft fruit, bruises, mold, and sour smell.

Potatoes (vegetable) are swollen underground stems with buds (eyes). Potato skins can be smooth or russet (rough). Color and shape may differ among varieties. Potatoes should be heavy for their size and should show no green spots.

Merits of potatoes include: medium size tubers (best show size 8 to 10 ounces) that are firm and plump. Skins should be smooth or russet, depending on the variety, and free of scab, mosaic, or other damage.

Faults of potatoes include: immaturity, rubbed off or thin skin, or odd shapes. Bruised or diseased potatoes also should be faulted.

Radishes (vegetable) are crisp, swollen roots measuring up to 1¼ inches in diameter. Radishes may be round or long, and their skin may be red, white, or purple. They are white inside.

Merits of radishes include: firm, crisp roots with bright color. Radishes should show good shape for their variety, and skins should be smooth and clean.

Faults of radishes include: poor shapes or colors, rough textures, or wilting. Radishes that are over mature, woody, or pithy should be faulted.

Raspberries (fruit) are aggregate fruits (one flower with multiple sections). When picked, their central core remains on the plant; therefore, the fruit is hollow when picked. Raspberries may be red, black, purple, or golden in color when ripe.  

Merits of the raspberry include: fruit is juicy and fragrant and has a rich color; the fruitlets are firmly held together; the fruitlets are not over or underripe, and they have unblemished skin.

Faults of the raspberry include: fruitlets that are soft and falling apart, leakage from fruitlets, and bruising or mold on the skin.

Rhubarb (vegetable) is a leafstalk with a small portion of the leaf blade included. The skin and inside of the stalk either may be red or green. Rhubarb is a vegetable because the edible leafstalk is not the seed-bearing portion of the plant.  

Merits of rhubarb include: clean stalks and foliage, uniform color, and uniform stalk sizes.
Faults of rhubarb include: absent, wilted, or dirty leaf blades or damaged stalks.

**Rosemary** (herb) is an aromatic herb with slender, pointed leaves.

Merits of rosemary include: leaves that are green and pliable.

Faults of rosemary include: leaves that are brittle and dry.

**Rutabagas** (vegetable) are large, round, or slightly elongated roots. Rutabagas may include several smaller roots at the base. Their skin will be white to yellow, and the top may be purplish.

Merits of rutabagas include: uniform size and trueness to type. Rutabagas should be free of side roots, be firm and solid, and exhibit clear color.

Faults of rutabagas include: roots that are cracked or branched, rubbery flesh, or uneven color. Warty, under or oversized rutabagas also should be faulted.

**Shallots** (vegetable) are round or oblong bulbs. Shallots have dry yellow or red skin and measure about 1 inch in diameter. They may be up to 2½ inches long.

Merits of shallots include: bulbs that are crisp and have uniform color. Shallots should be relatively heavy, have clear skin, and be uniform in size and shape.

Faults of shallots include: thick, soft necks. Damaged or over or under mature bulbs also should be faulted.

**Snap beans** (fruit) are crisp pods containing nearly full-size seeds. The pods may be green, yellow, purple, or green with purple spots.

Merits of snap beans include: freshness, uniform color and length, and long, slender shapes. The pods should be brittle and fleshy, well-filled, and free from defects. Both ends of the pods should be intact, and pods may be straight or curled, depending on the variety.

Faults of snap beans include: pods that are tough, wilted, stringy, pale or discolored, rusty, unevenly filled, or over mature.

**Spinach** (vegetable) consists of thick, dark green leaves that may be smooth or crumpled. Spinach is often harvested as a whole plant.

Merits of spinach include: clean and crisp foliage with fresh, green color.

Faults of spinach include: wilted foliage, dark or poor foliage color, or a gritty texture. Evidence of bolting is also a fault. Bolting is when the plant becomes reproductive and sends up a flower stalk.

**Strawberries** (fruit) are cone-shaped, red fruits having a skin scattered with small, hard seeds. Strawberry inner flesh is rich red and juicy. The green calyx (the outer covering of the flower bud) may be attached at the stem end. The strawberry is an aggregate fruit. ¹

Merits of the strawberry include: rich red skin with a juicy red flesh. The core should be fleshy and juicy. The skin should be free of bruises and blemishes. If present, the calyx should be healthy and green. No visible dirt should be present on the fruits.

Faults of the strawberry include: mold present on the skin, pulpy core, bruised flesh, and a brown calyx or soft tissue near the calyx.

**Summer squash** (fruit) is a tender, immature fruit. Squash is crisp and even in color, and the seeds are very immature. Summer squash has thin skin. The shape of summer squash varies. The color can be yellow or light to dark green, or squash can be striped.

Merits of summer squash include: an attached stem, heavy weight for size, clear and even color, maturity, and freedom from blemishes.

Faults of summer squash include: stems that are absent or soft, light weight, presence of blemishes, or fruits not uniform to type. Over-maturity is a very common fault of summer squash. Over mature squash are often squishy and show bruising.

**Sweet corn** (vegetable) has well-filled kernels on ears covered with fresh, green husks. Sweet corn kernels should be in the milky stage. In this stage, kernel juices are milky white when kernels are squeezed.

Merits of sweet corn include: uniform in length, size, and color ears, according to variety. Kernels should be full and in the milky stage.

Faults of sweet corn include: immature, unfilled, overripe, or hard kernels. Sweet corn with uneven rows of kernels or rows not filled to the tips of the ears should be faulted. Also, damage from worms, insects, or disease is a fault.

**Sweet potatoes** (vegetable) are round, spindle-shaped, or cylindrical roots. Sweet potatoes may have red, orange, or yellow skin, and skin can be smooth or russet.

Merits of sweet potatoes include: uniform shape, size, and color. Sweet potatoes should be free from blemishes and should be fresh.

Faults of sweet potatoes include: roots that are branched or cracked, uneven in color, or blemished.

**Thyme** (herb) is a perennial herb. Thyme has a strong lemony flavor.

Merits of fresh thyme include: green bunches that are fresh and not wilted. Thyme should be free of insect damage or yellowing and should have a strong, pleasing aroma.

Faults of thyme include: yellow leaves, wilting, signs of insect damage, and blacking of the stems.

**Tomatoes** (fruit) can be red, orange, or yellow. Tomatoes can range from ½ inch to 6 inches in diameter and weigh
up to 1 pound. They are firm and heavy but not soft or over-ripe. Cherry tomatoes are smaller in diameter than standard tomatoes.

Merits of tomatoes include: medium size according to variety. Tomatoes should be firm and should show clear color typical of variety. They should be clean with no cracks. Stems should be closely trimmed, or all stems should be removed. Tomatoes should show only a small blossom scar.

Faults of tomatoes include: coarse skins or over or under ripeness. Bruised, soft, cracked, or lobed tomatoes should be faulted.

**Turnips** (vegetable) are round roots that may either be pure white or have a purple top. Turnips have thin, tender skin.

Merits of turnips include: uniformity in size, trueness to type, and freedom from side roots. Turnips should be firm and solid with clear, clean color.

Faults of turnips include: roots that are cracked or branched, rubbery flesh, or uneven color. Warty or under or oversized turnips for the type should be faulted.

**Watermelons** (fruits) are round or oblong fruits with gray-green, green, striped, or yellow skin. Watermelon flesh may be red, pink, or yellow and size varies.

Merits of watermelons include: good weight and medium to large size (10 to 20 pounds). Watermelons should exhibit bright color with even striping over the whole melon. Watermelon shapes should be even and without bulges, furrows, or dimples. If there is a yellow spot (rather than white) where the melon rested on the ground, it is ripe.

Faults of watermelons include: light weight, uneven shape or color, or presence of blemishes. A white, rather than yellow, ground spot also should be faulted.

**Winter radishes** (vegetable) are large, round, or elongated roots. Their skins may be black, white, or pink. Their flesh should be firm, crisp, and white.

Merits of winter radishes include: firm, crisp, and bright colored roots. Winter radishes should show good, uniform shapes for the variety and should have smooth, clean skin.

Faults of winter radishes include: poor shape or color, rough texture, wilting, or over mature roots.

**Winter squash** (fruit) is a mature, hard-shelled fruit. Winter squash shapes and sizes vary. Winter squash should be heavy for its size.

Merits of winter squash include: an attached stem and heavy weight. Winter squash should show clear, even color, be mature, and be free from insect, disease, or mechanical injury damage.

Faults of winter squash include: lack of or a soft stem, uneven color, immaturity, or light weight. Winter squash also should be faulted if the fruit is blemished or not true to type.

**Suggested Judging Points Scale (Use as a Guide)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Points</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Color</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Condition</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uniformity</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Suggestions for assigning points in each of the above categories follow:

**Color**
If the produce’s color is clear, bright, and typical of the type: 11 to 20 points
If the color is faded or not uniform: 10 points or less

**Condition**
If the produce’s condition is fresh, unblemished, and mature for the type: 11 to 20 points
If the produce is bruised, injured, or scarred by insect or disease damage: 10 points or less

**Form**
If the produce is formed symmetrically and is typical of the type: 11 to 20 points. Produce may vary in shape, but they will almost always be bilaterally symmetrical. If the produce’s form is misshapen, over or under mature, or distorted by insect, disease, or mechanical damage: 10 points or less

**Size**
If the produce’s size is typical for ideal edibility and consumer use: 11 to 20 points
If the produce is too small or overly large: 10 points or less

**Uniformity**
If the produce has uniform size, form, color, and condition: 11 to 20 points
If size, form, color, or condition is not optimal: 10 points or less
Descriptive Words: Merits

- Fresh
- Tender
- Succulent
- Crisp
- High quality
- Tapering
- Maturity
- Solid
- Edible

Words concerning uniformity:
- Uniform size
- Uniform shape
- Uniform color

Words concerning trueness to variety:
- Same type
- Same variety
- Typical shape
- Typical color

Descriptive Words: Faults

- Blemish
- Bruise
- Weather damage
- Insect damage
- Mechanical damage
- Diseased
- Deteriorated
- Woody
- Tough
- Pithy
- Withered
- Wilted
- Overripe
- Discolored
- Yellowing
- Dull color
- Cracks
- Decay
- Blossom scars
- Soft
- Sunburn
- Rust
- Waste
- Fibrous
- Stringy
- Puffy
- Shriveled
- Over mature
- Discolored
- Immature

Points to Remember:
- Make comparisons
- Grant merits, and criticize faults
- Use different terms
- Be sure you know what you are talking about
- Judge as if the produce would be eaten immediately
- Learn and enjoy!

Sample Reasons

- “I placed corn tray 1 over tray 4 because the latter tray offers the consumer the highest amount of quality product. It has fuller, plumper kernels with more evenly spaced rows. The corn ears in tray 4 showed insect damage and lacked overall consistency of color and size of kernels. Therefore, I placed corn tray 1 over tray 4.”

- “I placed tray 2 of beans over tray 4 because of the rusty and shriveled appearance of the beans in tray 4. Although I grant that tray 4 was more uniform in size, shape, and maturity, the presence of the rust and shriveling reduced tray 4’s use by the consumer. Tray 2 has the merits of bright color, a more edible product, and a crisp appearance; therefore, I placed tray 2 over tray 4.”
• “I placed corn tray 1 over tray 4 because of the numerous faults in tray 4. The corn ears in tray 4 were not fully developed and had many empty spaces. The earworm insect damage evident on ears in tray 4 also decreased its appeal to the consumer. Although the ears are not as large as those on tray 4, tray 1 showed more consistent color, filling of kernels, and freedom from insect damage. Therefore, I placed corn tray 1 over tray 4.”

Sample Class Placement

• “I place this class of leaf lettuce 1, 2, 3, 4. I placed tray 1 over tray 2 because of the crisp, green leaves on the rosettes and the uniformity of the rosettes on the tray. I placed tray 2 over tray 3 because tray 3 shows damage on the leaves from either weather or harvesting. Leaf lettuce on tray 2 is less uniform than that on tray 1 but does not show the damaged foliage like that on tray 3. I placed tray 3 over tray 4 because, even though there is damage to the leaves on tray 3, there is no wilting and the foliage is clean. I placed tray 4 last because the rosettes are wilted and are not of uniform size, and the foliage is dirty; therefore, I place this class of leaf lettuce 1, 2, 3, 4.”

• “I place this class of strawberries 4, 3, 2, 1. I placed tray 4 over 3 because of the bright colored fruits, juicy ripe flesh, and healthy green calyx tissue on the strawberries on tray 4. I placed tray 3 over tray 2 because tray 2 shows bruising of the fruit and brown calyx tissues. While tray 3 has some blemishes on the fruit, no bruising is evident, and the calyx tissues are green. I placed tray 2 over tray 1 because tray 1 has white mold growing on the fruit, and the flesh is extremely soft. Therefore, I place this class 4, 3, 2, 1.”

References

1 Many of the fruit descriptions were adopted from the University of Florida. Many topics relating to gardening and plant sciences are at http://florida4h.org/projects/plants/index.shtml.


As you walk down streets of any major city or small town you are bound to pass a bank or two or three. With so many banks offering different options, including internet banks, it is hard to choose which one you should use. For the most part all banks will offer basic checking accounts. They will also offer saving accounts, long-term savings, certificates of deposit and many different types of loan options; house, car, small business loans, etc.

The big difference between each banks’ basic accounts are the features: benefits, transaction limits, balance limits, etc. Every bank will do something a little different to try to attract your business.

**THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING A CHECKING ACCOUNT:**

1.) Convenience: bank location, disability access and services, hours.
2.) Interest: does it pay interest on the balance.
3.) Electronic services: Internet banking, Automated Teller machines, Free online bill payment, electronic bank statements, etc.
4.) Pricing: account charges, fees for checks, services, or problems.
5.) Other useful services: such as a link-up with savings, other checking accounts, charge cards, financial counseling
6.) Personal relationship: courtesy, customer support.
7.) Bank is FDIC (Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation) insured

**WHAT TO LOOK FOR:**

**Account and check fees:**
Some banks charge a base monthly fee on all accounts; others charge for each check; still others have no charge up to a certain number of transactions. (such as 10 checks per month) and charge heavily after that. If you write a lot of checks, a monthly fee and no per-check charge is for you.

**Check Processing:**
Some banks put a “hold” on deposits that are personal checks, with a longer hold for out-of-state checks; others give you instant access to part of any deposit (for example, the first $100) but encumber some of your account balance until the check clears.

**Interest accounts:** You can make money on some checking accounts that earn interest on
balances over a certain amount. Often these accounts offer other services like free safe
deposit boxes, and traveler’s or cashier’s checks for maintaining minimum balances.
These accounts sometimes cost more to maintain if your balance is below the minimum.

**Fees for services and problems:**
Some accounts provide you with overdraft protection or can be linked to a savings account for this purpose. Some have very steep fees for “bounced” checks (from you or written to you); others waive these charges if the problem is infrequent.

**Checks as records:** One advantage of using checks is that you have an automatic receipt (a canceled check) to record a transaction. Some banks send checks back with your monthly statement. Another option is to use checkbooks that have make carbon copies of the checks as you write them. Others copy them into a computer database, and destroy the originals. You may have to apply and pay a fee to get a copy or view them over the internet. Now, some banks offer this service for free, however, so shop around if this is important to you.

**SHOULD YOU CONSIDER ELECTRONIC BANKING?**
Electronic banking services can be especially useful for people on the go as well as disabled persons. Electronic banking includes: automatic deposit and bill paying, funds transfers, ATM/debit card services, telephone services, and personal computer / Internet access.

For people who do not like to carry cash or credit cards or for people with limited physical mobility, electronic banking can be a valuable asset in taking control of your money and your life.

- **Automatic deposit and bill paying:** Many employers will deposit your paycheck or benefits check directly into your account. It is convenient with less risk of loss. Many banks will also automatically debit your account for bills each month. Some banks charge fees and others offer this service for free. Compare banks to see what is offered.

- **Telephone services:** Most banks allow you to authorize certain transactions and access account information over the phone. Account information is usually free but fees sometimes are charged for transactions. You can access your account from anywhere with a touch-tone or cell phone. It is important to monitor your account, especially if you use electronic services for many of your transactions. You need to know if a specific bill was paid or if your check was
deposited or to be sure your balance will cover a check.

- **ATM/debit cards**: The “Automated Teller Machine: (ATM) is another easy way to complete simple banking transactions such as deposits and withdrawals. ATM machines are usually conveniently located outside banks, shopping malls, supermarkets and convenience stores. They allow 24-hour access to your account so the possibility also exists for overspending and impulse buying.

**THE PERSONAL BANKING RELATIONSHIP:**
A personal relationship should definitely exist between you and the bank you choose. Once you have narrowed down your choices by the services that are offered, and the fees that are charged, a visit to the bank will tell you what else the bank offers. Talk to bank officers and get to know the tellers. Determine whether or not staff members go out of their way to help you work out problems. Does the staff ignore you, tolerate you, or welcome you? Are bank officers willing and able to advise you? Trust yourself as you choose a bank. You are the consumer, and you are in charge.

**CHECK OUT THE CHECKING ACCOUNT**

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Prepared By: Cheryl R. Varnadoe, Extension 4-H Specialist, Georgia 4-H, May 2013