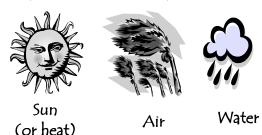# Protect your nutrients!

While preparing foods to eat

1. **Choosing foods:**

   - **Look for nutrients:** Include many different colours and textures in your diet. The brighter and darker colors tend to have more nutrients.

   - **Eat your foods as close to harvest as you can:** Foods have the most nutrients when they are still on the plant or tree and are at the peak of their ripeness. Eating a food as soon as you pick it will give you the most nutrients. The energies that help plants grow are the <u>same</u> energies that destroy the nutrients in the plant after it is harvested.

   Sun (or heat)   Air   Water

   > **The longer your harvested food stays in one of these, the more nutrients you lose.**

2. **Processing foods:**

   - **Eat skin!** Don't waste time & energy peeling! Edible skins have vitamins, minerals & fiber.

   - **Reduce Milling! Save your energy & money!** Milling and other processes usually remove the bran & germ. This means you lose valuable vitamins, minerals, fiber, and protein.

   - **If you don't eat the seeds, plant them!** Edible seeds are packed with nutrients, but if you don't eat them, plant them.

   - **Compost non-edible parts!** Feed the soil any part of the plant you don't want to eat.

3. **Preparing Foods:**

   - **Raw Foods.** Save your energy! Many fruits, vegetables, nuts & seeds can be eaten raw. Cooking, which usually adds water & heat to the foods, kills vitamins, amino acids and enzymes.

   - **Cooking:** If you need to cook one of these foods, follow these guidelines to save nutrients:

     - ✓ <u>Use as little water as possible.</u> Steam or stir-fry the food so that it is still crisp and keeps its color. The water that you cook with will have many nutrients so be sure to use it.

     - ✓ When cooking, <u>cut larger pieces</u> (a size that fits in the mouth) so that less of the food touches air, heat & water.

     - ✓ **Do not use Baking Soda**! Baking soda kills vitamins and other nutrients