Montcalm and Oceana counties produce the most carrots in Michigan.

Carrots provide 30% of the vitamin A in the American diet.

Carrots can be orange, red, purple, yellow, white or black.

Montcalm and Oceana counties produce the most carrots in Michigan.
Bright, crunchy carrots are tasty as a raw snack or cooked in a favorite recipe. Fresh market carrots are available in Michigan from late July through November. Carrots for processing are harvested from early October through late November and are available all year thanks to storage. Carrots are a great vegetable for institutional food service due to their availability, nutritional value and versatility. Many schools use colorful carrots to get students excited about eating their veggies! Try carrots in soups and stews, in baked goods or casseroles, roasted or raw.

The Michigan Carrot Toolkit provides resources to help make it easier for institutions to find, buy and use this delicious and versatile vegetable. Learn how to purchase carrots from distributors or directly from farmers, find recipes that have been tested and perfected by food service staff members, and use the marketing materials to share the results of your efforts with staff members, eaters and communities. Then track your local purchases through the Cultivate Michigan Dashboard as we work towards reaching the goal of 20% Michigan foods in all Michigan institutions by 2020.

**Quick Tips and Facts**

1. **Fact:** In terms of production, Michigan ranks fourth in acreage of processed carrots and fourth in total acres of carrots.

2. **Nutrition Tip:** Frozen and canned carrots are just as nutritious as fresh carrots.

3. **Fact:** Orange carrots are the most prevalent worldwide, but carrots can also be red, purple, yellow, white or black.

4. **Storage Tip:** Choose well-shaped, firm, deeply colored carrots. If attached, green tops should be bright and moist. To store, remove the green tops, place the carrots in a plastic bag and refrigerate for up to 14 days.

5. **Fact:** Montcalm and Oceana counties produce the most carrots in Michigan.

6. **Nutrition Fact:** Carrots provide 30% of the vitamin A in the American diet. They are also a good source of potassium, fiber and vitamins C and K.

7. **Nutrition Fact:** As the name implies, carrots are rich in beta-carotene, an organic compound that is converted to vitamin A in the body. Vitamin A is beneficial for eyesight.
Carrot Varieties

A Versatile Vegetable

Recommended varieties of Michigan-grown carrots include baby, Chantenay, Danvers, Imperator, Nantes, novelty, round and small. Sizes range from true baby carrots harvested young—those sold in bags are usually larger carrots that were peeled and trimmed—to mature large carrots. The sweet flavor comes from the carrots’ high sugar content. Carrots are used raw and cooked, and they are available all year long through storage, canning and freezing. Crunch into carrots any which way!

- **Raw:** Try them raw with dip or shredded on a salad or sandwich.
- **Steamed:** Steamed carrots are a nutritious addition to any meal.
- **Roasted:** Slice and then roast them in the oven with some potatoes and olive oil.
- **Boiled:** Carrots are a perfect addition to a stew or soup.
- **Baked:** Carrot muffins and cakes are moist and delicious.
Carrot Varieties

**A Carrot of Every Color**

Carrots’ bright orange color comes from the accumulation of beta- and alpha-carotene, a specific pigment compound that also gives carrots their nutritional value. However, this was not how carrots have always looked. The first carrots to be consumed by humans were actually purple and yellow. The long history of carrot domestication and development is muddy at best, but the orange carrot may actually have been a product of politics and national pride.

The Dutch were responsible for much of the carrot development in Europe between the 16th and 18th centuries as well as the increased popularity of the orange carrot varieties. This may be, in part, because orange is the national color of the Netherlands and because orange carrots were a specific tribute to the leader of the Dutch revolution, William of Orange. Whatever the reason for the increased popularity and production of the orange carrot, it has become the most popular and widely grown commercial variety of carrots.

Although orange carrots are the most popular, carrots of every color have pigments called carotenoids that make each unique color and provide different nutritional benefits. The table below lists several colors of carrots and their properties.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Carotenoids</th>
<th>Benefits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Xanthophylls and lutein</td>
<td>Promotes eye health, reduces risk of macular degeneration, reduces risk of atherosclerosis (hardening of the arteries), may prevent lung and other cancers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Lycopene, another form of carotene, also found in tomatoes and watermelons</td>
<td>Reduces risk of macular degeneration, helps prevent heart disease and a wide variety of cancers, maintains healthy skin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purple</td>
<td>Anthocyanins and beta-carotene</td>
<td>Powerful antioxidants protect cells, help prevent heart disease and have anti-inflammatory properties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>Lacks any pigmentation</td>
<td>Contains phytochemicals that protect against disease and reduce risk of atherosclerosis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table information provided by the World Carrot Museum (www.carrotmuseum.co.uk/carrotcolours.html).
Product Sourcing Information

On the following pages, you will find item descriptions, pack sizes, seasonal availability and item codes for several varieties of fresh Michigan carrots. This information is categorized by the size of the supplier/distributor. Contact information is listed for each supplier to help make it easier to find and buy Michigan carrots when in season.

Full Service (Broadline) Distributors

Several broadline distributors provide Michigan institutions with Michigan-produced carrots. Listed below are distributor names and contact information and the products offered by each.

Gordon Food Service

Please call 800.968.4164 and provide an item/produce number to receive pricing and purchasing information. You may also visit www.gfs.com for more details.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Pack</th>
<th>Item Code</th>
<th>Availability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carrot Coins 100/2-ounce portions</td>
<td>601300</td>
<td>September–December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrot Coins 50/2-ounce portions</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>September–December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrot Coins 2/5 pound</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>September–December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrot Sticks 2/5 pound</td>
<td>601362</td>
<td>September–December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrots, Diced, ½-inch 2/5 pound</td>
<td>601310</td>
<td>September–December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrots, Jumbo 2/5 pound</td>
<td>601371</td>
<td>September–December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrots, Jumbo 50 pound</td>
<td>602472</td>
<td>September–December</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sysco (Grand Rapids)

Contact your Sysco representative for all Michigan Produce Items (MIPROD). You may also visit www.syscogr.com for more information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Pack</th>
<th>Item Code</th>
<th>Availability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carrot, Large 1/50 pound</td>
<td>6672010</td>
<td>Timmer Farms Imlay City, MI</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

US Foods

Contact your sales representative or visit www.usfoods.com for more information.

Van Eerden Foodservice

Please call 800.833.7374 for pricing/purchasing information or visit www.vaneerden.com for more details.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Pack</th>
<th>Item Code</th>
<th>Availability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carrots, Jumbo, Bulk 50 pound</td>
<td>004535</td>
<td>August</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sourcing Michigan Carrots

Regional and Specialty Distributors

These businesses tend to distribute food regionally and can provide Michigan carrots to institutions located in their area. Contact suppliers directly to find out about their specific delivery area and Michigan product availability.

Allen Market Place (Lansing)
With more than 60 farms and food producers registered, the Exchange at Allen Market Place offers a full range of food products. Current product inventory can be viewed and orders placed at www.allenmarketplace.org/exchange/food-service/. Orders placed by 7 p.m. Monday are fulfilled by Wednesday afternoon the same week. Questions about current product availability or purchasing should be directed to John McCarthy, Exchange Manager, at 517.999.3923 or exchange@allenneighborhoodcenter.org.

Cherry Capital Foods (Statewide)
Cherry Capital Foods distributes only Michigan-made and Michigan-produced products within the state. Call 231.943.5010 ext. 1 or e-mail sales@cherrycapitalfoods.com (include subject line “Farm to Institution”) for more pricing/purchasing information. Join the Cherry Capital Foods mailing list for up-to-date product information at www.cherrycapitalfoods.com.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>Pack Size</th>
<th>Item Code</th>
<th>Seasonal Availability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carrot, Jumbo</td>
<td>25 pound</td>
<td>2805</td>
<td>August–December</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LaGrasso Bros. Produce
This wholesale foodservice and fresh produce distributor is based in southeast Michigan. Contact Tom LaGrasso III at 313.579.1455 for more information and to order.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>Pack Size</th>
<th>Item Code</th>
<th>Seasonal Availability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carrot, Jumbo</td>
<td>25 pound</td>
<td>2805</td>
<td>August–December</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sourcing Michigan Carrots

Regional and Specialty Distributors, Continued

Pearson Foods Corporation (Grand Rapids)
Pearson Foods is a processor and distributor that sources, sells and processes Michigan produce. Contact a representative at 616.245.5053 or visit pearsonfoods.com/ for pricing information and more details.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Pack</th>
<th>Availability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carrots, Jumbo</td>
<td>50 pound</td>
<td>September–February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrots, Jumbo</td>
<td>10 pound</td>
<td>September–February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrots, Diced, ½-inch</td>
<td>2/5 pound</td>
<td>September–February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrots, Shredded, ¼-inch</td>
<td>2/5 pound</td>
<td>September–February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrots, Sticks, 4-inch</td>
<td>2/5 pound</td>
<td>September–February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrots, Coins</td>
<td>2/5 pound</td>
<td>September–February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrots, Coins, individually wrapped</td>
<td>100/2 ounce</td>
<td>September–February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrots, Coins, individually wrapped</td>
<td>50/2 ounce</td>
<td>September–February</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

West Michigan FarmLink (Grand Rapids)
West Michigan FarmLink is an online wholesale food hub connecting local chefs, restaurateurs, institutions and schools with Michigan farmers and producers of good food products servicing the greater Grand Rapids area. This open exchange’s product offerings, growers and availability change on a weekly basis, so visit www.wmfarmlink.com or contact Paul Quinn at quinn@wmfarmlink.com for up-to-date product listings and pricing.

Shelton’s Wholesale Farm Co. (West Michigan)
Please call Joe Shelton at 269.684.3230 for a current list of available Michigan-grown carrots.

Tedesco Produce Co. Inc. (Clinton Twp.)
Please call Teddy Tedesco at 586.405.2080 for a current list of available Michigan-grown carrots.
Resources

Resources for Farm to Institution Support

Michigan Farm to Institution Network
www.mifarmtoinstitution.org

MSU Center for Regional Food Systems
foodsystems.msu.edu

Ecology Center
www.ecocenter.org/food-systems

Michigan State University Extension
Locate your county MSU Extension office.
www.msue.msu.edu

Resources for Linking with Local Farmers

Below is a list of regional and statewide resources to help you connect with local Michigan farmers who may be able to supply you directly with carrots.

Regional Michigan Resources

Michigan Food Hub Learning and Innovation Network
Food hubs are centrally located facilities that aggregate, store, process, distribute and/or market locally or regionally produced food.
foodsystems.msu.edu/activities/food-hub-network

U.P. Food Exchange
This group connects local food activity within three regions (Eastern, Central and Western) of the Upper Peninsula and coordinates local food efforts between the regions.
upfoodexchange.com/

Taste the Local Difference
From the Michigan Land Use Institute, this resource connects consumers in northwest Lower Michigan to local food and farms, restaurants and businesses.
www.facebook.com/localdifference
Resources for Linking with Local Farmers, Continued

Statewide Resources

Local Harvest
Locate farmers markets, family farms, community supported agriculture (CSA) and other sources of sustainably produced food.
www.localharvest.org/

Michigan MarketMaker
This interactive mapping system links producers and consumers in Michigan.
mi.foodmarketmaker.com

Michigan Farmers Market Association
Find the locations of farmers markets across the state.
mifma.org/findafarmersmarket/

Michigan Food and Farming Systems (MIFFS)
MIFFS connects beginning and historically underserved farmers to resource opportunities.
www.miffs.org

Natural Resources Conservation Service
This site provides a listing of county and state service offices.
1.usa.gov/1kMidud

Michigan Farm Bureau
Locate the local Michigan Farm Bureau office in your county.
www.michfb.com/counties/

Michigan Agricultural and Commodity Organizations
The Michigan Agricultural Commodity directory lists the locations of and contacts for the agricultural commodity organizations in Michigan (updated October 2014).
1.usa.gov/1msHb5c

Michigan Organic Food and Farming Alliance (MOFFA)
Visit this site to find MOFFA’s guide to Michigan’s organic and ecologically sustainable growers and farms.
www.moffa.net/farm-guide.html

Certified Naturally Grown
This site provides a list of certified small-scale, direct-to-market farmers and beekeepers who use natural growing and harvesting methods in Michigan.
certified.naturallygrown.org/producers/list/227/MI
Carrot Recipes

Equally delicious cooked or raw, carrots are a versatile vegetable for your food service program. On the following pages, you will find recipes that use carrots in a variety of ways, making it easy to incorporate this delicious and nutritious vegetable into your menus.

Carrot and Broccoli Salad

**Ingredients**

- 2 pounds + 8 ounces fresh broccoli, chopped
- 1 pound + 4 ounces Michigan carrots, shredded
- 10 ounces onions, finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon + 2 teaspoons granulated garlic
- 3 tablespoons + 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- 3 ¾ cup light ranch dressing

**Directions**

Wash all vegetables before preparing. Combine all ingredients in a mixing bowl or pan. Cover and chill for at least one hour prior to service.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yield: 50 servings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 serving = ½ cup</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recipe provided courtesy of Chartwells School Dining Services.
Brown Rice Pilaf with Carrots and Fresh Dill

Ingredients

- 5 cups onions, diced
- ¼ cup + 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 4–6 cloves garlic, grated
- 1 ½ teaspoons ginger, ground
- 5 pounds long-grain brown rice
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 gallon + 3 quarts chicken broth
- 6 pounds Michigan carrots, sliced
- 1 ⅓ cups fresh dill

Directions

Preheat oven to 350°F (convection) or 400°F (conventional). Add the onions, olive oil and garlic to 2 ½-inch deep hotel pans. Roast, stirring once or twice until the onions are translucent but not brown. Remove from oven and stir in rice and black pepper. Add chicken broth, equally dividing it among hotel pans, and cover tightly. Bake until all liquid is absorbed and the rice is tender, about 40–50 minutes. Steam carrots until tender but not mushy, about 5–7 minutes. (Check after 5 minutes.) Add carrots and dill into cooked rice, reserving a little dill for garnish. Use forks to mix gently. Add salt to taste, if needed. Serve immediately and sprinkle with remaining dill.

Yield: 100 servings

1 serving = ½ cup
One serving provides ⅛ cup Total Vegetables and ¼ cup Grain

Recipe adapted from *Fresh from the Farm: The Massachusetts Farm to School Cookbook* by Amy Cotler.
Curried Carrot and Ginger Soup

**Ingredients**

- 24 ounces water
- 6 ounces butter, unsalted
- 6 medium red onions, peeled and diced
- 1 cup fresh ginger, peeled and minced
- ¼ cup curry powder
- 3 gallons roasted chicken stock
- 3 quarts orange juice
- 18 pounds Michigan carrots, washed, trimmed and sliced
- 48 ounces heavy cream
- 2 tablespoons kosher salt
- 1 tablespoon white pepper

**Directions**

In a steam-jacketed kettle, melt butter and water together. Add onion, ginger and curry powder. Cook, covered, stirring occasionally until tender but not browned. Stir in stock, orange juice and carrots. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce heat and simmer 15–20 minutes until carrots are tender. Turn off heat. Use immersion blender to purée until smooth. Stir in heavy cream, salt and pepper. Return to simmer and adjust seasonings. Serve hot with sliced scallion garnish.

**Yield: 96 servings**

- 1 serving = 1 cup
- One serving provides ½ cup Total Vegetables
  (Red/Orange: ½ cup)

Recipe courtesy of Elissa Penczar, Chef/Instructor at Muskegon Area Career Tech Center, Muskegon Intermediate School District.
Cinnamon Glazed Carrots

**Ingredients**
- 12 pounds Michigan carrots, bias cut
- ¾ cup light brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon ground cinnamon
- ½ cup canola oil
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt

**Directions**
Cook carrots by boiling or steaming until they are just tender (easily pierced with a sharp knife) and drain. While carrots are cooking, combine brown sugar, cinnamon, salt and oil in a saucepan. Melt together over low heat, stirring well so there are no lumps. Continue cooking until the glaze thickens slightly, about 3–5 minutes. Pour glaze over the cooked carrots and stir until well coated. Transfer carrots to serving pans.

**Yield:** 48 servings

| 1 serving | ½ cup |

Recipe courtesy of Chartwells School Dining Services.

Carrot Fries

**Ingredients**
- 9 pounds + 12 ounces Michigan carrot sticks, fresh
- 2 tablespoons granulated garlic
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- ¼ cup canola oil

**Directions**
Preheat oven to 375°F. Toss the carrot sticks together with oil and seasonings until lightly coated. Spread the carrots on sheet pans in a single layer. Roast in the oven for approximately 30 minutes until the carrots are softened and caramelized.

**Yield:** 50 servings

| 1 serving | ½ cup |

Recipe courtesy of Chartwells School Dining Services.
Carrot Crisp

**Ingredients**

- 1 cup Smart Balance margarine
- 1 spray of cooking spray per pan
- 7 pounds Michigan carrot coins, frozen
- 1 quart + 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 tablespoon ground cinnamon
- 1 quart + 3 ½ cups evaporated whole milk, canned
- 3 cups + 2 tablespoons whole egg with citric acid
- 2 ½ pounds yellow cake mix
- 2 ½ pounds whole wheat flour

**Directions**

Melt the margarine and set aside. Preheat oven to 350°F. Place carrots in steam table pan(s). Pour about ¼ inch of water in the bottom of the pan(s). Cover pans and heat in steamer at 5 pounds of pressure for 3 minutes or until carrots reach 140°F, then drain off any excess liquid. Once excess liquid is drained off, purée carrots in a food processor.

In a large bowl, mix together the puréed carrots, sugar, cinnamon, evaporated milk and eggs. Spray a large (17-inch by 24-inch by 2-inch) baking pan with cooking spray and pour the mixture into the prepared pan.

In another large bowl, combine the cake mix and whole wheat flour. Sprinkle mixture over the carrot mixture. Drizzle the melted margarine over the top of the cake mix and flour mixture. Bake at 350°F for 45–60 minutes.

Cut each pan 12 by 12 into 144 servings. Serve hot or cold. For hot service, hold at 140°F or higher. For cold service, hold at 40°F or lower.

**Yield:** 144 servings

**1 serving = 2 ounces**

Recipe courtesy of Chef David Rose, Mattawan Consolidated School.
Cultivate Michigan is a project of the Michigan Farm to Institution Network (MFIN).

MFIN is a space for learning, sharing and working together to get more local food to institutions. In 2014, MFIN launched Cultivate Michigan, a local food purchasing campaign designed to help ramp up farm to institution programs and track progress. We aim to meet the Michigan Good Food Charter goal of 20% Michigan food to institutions by 2020.

The Michigan Farm to Institution Network is co-coordinated by MSU Center for Regional Food Systems and Ecology Center, with support from MSU Extension.

To learn more and join the network, visit our website:
www.mifarmtoinstitution.org