Important Fruits & Vegetables

I. Background
A. Popular usage

Fruit = Plant part (usually a fruit in the strict sense) eaten for its sweetness.
   e.g., Apple, Cherry, Mango

Vegetable = Some other plant part not eaten for its sweetness
   e.g., Asparagus, Spinach, Tomato, Zucchini, string beans

Nutritionally, both typically exclude other plant parts classified as starches (e.g., potatoes, yams).
I. Background

B. Botanical usage

**Fruit** = the ripened, matured ovary of a flower and any surrounding accessory tissue where present. May or may not be sweet.
   e.g., Apple, Cherry, Mango, Tomato, Zucchini,
   String beans

**Vegetable** = Some other edible plant part (e.g., roots, stems, leaves, flower parts other than a ripened ovary) that does not include an ripened ovary or its seeds.
   e.g., Asparagus, Spinach

**Starchy staples** are a subset of vegetables: e.g., potato, yam

II. Fruits

A. General types of fruits (botanically speaking)

1. **Fleshy vs. Dry**
   In nature: fleshy fruits are usually consumed by animals for seed dispersal.

2. **Indehiscent vs. Dehiscent**
   Most fleshy fruits are indehiscent at maturity, whereas many dry fruits are dehiscent.
II. Fruits
   A. General types of fruits (botanically speaking)

   3. Simple vs. Aggregate vs. Multiple

3. Simple, Aggregate, vs. Multiple
3. Simple, Aggregate, vs. Multiple

Tomato = berry

Tomato (Potato Family)

3. Simple, Aggregate, vs. Multiple

Citrus fruit = hesperidium
3. Simple, Aggregate, vs. Multiple

Blueberry =
Berry from
inferior ovary

Raspberry =
aggregate of drupelets.
3. Simple, Aggregate, vs. Multiple

Morinda or Noni (Coffee Family)

Pineapple (Bromeliad Family)

Simple, Aggregate, or Multiple Fruit?
Black Mulberry (Fig Family)

Simple, Aggregate, or Multiple Fruit?

4. Accessory Fruit
4. Accessory Fruit

Pome (ovary surrounded by fleshy hypanthium) e.g. apple (Malus domestica cv. 'gala')

Fig. 311: Flower and fruit of apple (Malus domestica), cut lengthwise to show the relation of the parts of the flower to the torus.
II. Fruits

B. Seedless fruits (an ethnobotanical phenomenon)

1. Ripened ovaries in which the seeds aborted early or otherwise did not form.

   e.g., naval oranges, bananas, seedless watermelons & grapes

II. Fruits

C. Consumption of immature fruits (another ethnobotanical phenomenon)

1. String beans

   They mature into dry, dehiscent and inedible fruits
II. Fruits

C. Consumption of immature fruits (another ethnobotanical phenomenon)

2. Corn

The kernel matures into a dry, indehiscent fruit that must be either 1) ground and cooked, 2) cooked in water to soften, or 3) popped.