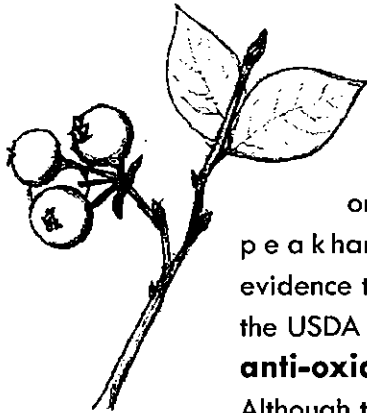


BLUEBERRY



BLUEBERRIES have been around for thousands of years, and were once called “star berries” because of the star-shaped calyx on top of each berry. Belonging to the genus *Vaccinium*, blueberries are one of only three fruits native to North America. In the Northeast, the peak harvest is in July, which is National Blueberry Month. There is growing evidence that blueberries are powerful disease fighters. Researchers from the USDA Human Nutrition Center have found that blueberries **rank #1 in anti-oxidant activity** when compared to forty other fruits and vegetables. Although they are also great in recipes, remember that blueberries may be best enjoyed just the way they are!

SELECTION

- ◆ Look for **plump, juicy**, yet **firm** berries with a deep purple to blue-black skin highlighted by a silvery sheen called “bloom”.
- ◆ Blueberries do not ripen after harvest, so you can eat them as soon as you buy them.

STORAGE

- ◆ **Remove any damaged berries** to prevent the spread of mold and store unwashed, on a plate or baking sheet lined with paper towels to absorb excess moisture.
- ◆ **Rinse** just before use.
- ◆ Place blueberries in your refrigerator. They should keep for **2 to 3 days**.

Nutritional Information

One serving contains 15% of the vitamin C and 14% of the dietary fiber our bodies need every day. Vitamin C is important in immune response, wound healing, and allergic reactions. Vitamin C also helps with iron absorption. Fiber appears to reduce the risk of developing various conditions, including heart disease, diabetes, diverticular disease, and constipation. Blueberries are abundant in ellagic acid and anthocyanin, which may help lower the risk of some types of cancer and heart disease.

Blueberry Recipes

Tropical Blueberry Smoothie (Serves 3)

- 1 (8 oz.) can of crushed pineapple
- 1 cup low fat soy milk or milk
- 1 cup fresh blueberries

Combine pineapple, banana, milk, and blueberries in blender or food processor. Cover and blend until thick and smooth. Serve immediately.

Recipe contributed by Lori Wyble, Just Food dietetic intern, 2003



Blueberry Muffins

- 2 cups flour
- 1 Tablespoon baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup milk
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 6 Tablespoons butter
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 1/2 cups blueberries, washed

In a bowl, mix together flour, baking powder, nutmeg and cinnamon. In a separate large bowl mix together the eggs, milk, sugar, butter, and vanilla. Gradually add the dry mixture into the wet. Do not over mix, the batter should be lumpy. Fold in the blueberries. Grease the muffin tins and divide the batter into the tins. Bake at 400 degrees for 12 to 15 minutes or until tester comes out clean. Cool in the tins for 2 to 3 minutes before removing.

Recipe adapted from The All New All Purpose Joy of Cooking by Irma S. Rombauer, Marion Rombaur Becker and Ethan Becker. Copyright 1997 by Smith and Schuster Inc.



Blueberry Pandowdy (serves 4)

- 3 1/4 cups fresh blueberries
- 1/2 cup grape juice
- 1/2 tablespoon corn starch
- 1 1/2 cups granola

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Combine all ingredients together in a medium-sized mixing bowl. Pour into glass baking dish. Cover and bake until bubbly, about 35-40 minutes. Stir and serve hot.

Recipe adapted from Hi-Phy recipes. Food & Health Communications, Inc. 1998

