



COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

BERRIES



Berries are small edible fruits that grow on bushes, shrubs, and vines. They belong to many scientific families and are classified as drupes, pomes, aggregate, multiple, or accessory fruits. Berries are native to North America. Early settlers also brought berry plants to North America from Europe to propagate and cultivate, creating many of the hybrids we have today. Berries can taste sweet, musky, tart, or tangy, depending on the type and size of berry. Berries can be consumed fresh or cooked in sweet and savory dishes and desserts, drinks, jams, jellies, mustards, sauces, and syrups. In Michigan, berry season starts in late April and ends in September.



BERRIES ARE

Depending on the type, berries are:

- An excellent source of fiber. Fiber helps us feel fuller and benefits the digestive and cardiovascular systems.
- An excellent source of vitamin C*. Vitamin C is important to the body's tissues and supports a healthy immune system.
- An excellent source of vitamin K. Vitamin K is vital for blood clotting and healthy bones.

**Foods that are high in vitamin C, calcium and/or iron can help protect you from lead absorption.*

MICHIGAN MADE

Michigan is home to native wild, woodland, and cultivated berries such as strawberries, blueberries, bramble berries (raspberries, blackberries, black raspberries, and thimbleberries), mulberries, and more. Ranking third in the nation for blueberry production, Michigan farmers grow over 30 blueberry varieties and produce nearly 100 million pounds each year. The top producing counties for Michigan blueberries are Allegan, Berrien, Muskegon, Ottawa, and Van Buren.

FUN FACTS

- All berries need full sun, rich soil, plenty of water, and time to ripen to reach maximum sweetness.
- Blueberries contain more antioxidants than many other fruits and vegetables.
- Strawberries have over 100 tiny seeds in each berry, the most of any berry.
- There are many colors of raspberries including, black, gold, purple, and red.
- Gold raspberries are the sweetest.
- Bramble berry crops have thorns.
- Cranberries grow on low lying vines in bogs and marshes in the Upper Peninsula, Northern Lower Peninsula, and Southwest Michigan.
- Blueberries have been cultivated and consumed by Indigenous Peoples, including the Abenaki, Algonquin, Cree, Haudenosaunee, and Anishinaabe, in North America for centuries.

BUYING AND STORING

- Select fresh berries that are dry, plump, and shiny without any blemishes.
- Store unwashed berries in the refrigerator. Strawberries, blackberries, and raspberries will last about three days. Blueberries will last up to two weeks.
- Wash all fresh fruits and vegetables before using.

MORE THAN FRESH

In addition to fresh, berries are available frozen, dried, canned, and juiced. When buying packaged berries, read labels and choose berries with low or no added sugar and juice that is 100% juice. Always choose pasteurized juice over unpasteurized. Unpasteurized juice can contain harmful bacteria.

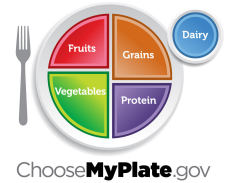




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EAT WITH MYPLATE

MyPlate focuses on whole grains, lean protein, low-fat dairy, and half the plate being fruits and vegetables. Berries are part of the Fruit Group. Most people need 1–2 cups of fruit per day. For more information visit: myplate.gov.



IT ALL COUNTS

Fresh, frozen, canned, dried, and 100% vegetable and fruit juices count toward your daily MyPlate goals.

BLUEBERRY CORN SALAD

Time: 15 minutes | Makes: 8 servings | Serving Size: ½ cup

Nutrition Information Per Serving: Calories 93, Carbohydrate 15g, Dietary Fiber 2g, Protein 2g, Total Fat 4g, Saturated Fat 0.5g, Cholesterol 0mg, Sodium 76mg

Always wash hands before preparing food. Wash all fresh fruits and vegetables before using.



INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup fresh blueberries
- 2 cups corn kernels, fresh, frozen, or canned
- 1 cucumber, chopped
- ¼ cup red onion, diced
- ¼ cup fresh basil, chopped

- 2 tablespoons lime juice
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 tablespoon honey* or sugar
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper

*Avoid giving honey to infants under 1 year of age.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Prepare corn. For fresh corn, cook, cool, and drain; frozen corn, cook according to package directions, cool, and drain; or canned corn, drain, rinse, and drain again.
2. Combine blueberries, corn, cucumber, onion, and basil in large bowl.
3. Whisk lime juice, olive oil, honey or sugar, salt, and pepper in small bowl. Add to salad. Mix gently.
4. Serve, or refrigerate covered until ready to serve. Use within two days.

TRY THIS

- Make a fruit salad with berries, any type of melon, feta cheese, and chopped mint.
- Add berries to salsa or Pico de Gallo.
- Layer berries with low-fat vanilla yogurt and granola to make a parfait.
- Keep frozen berries on hand. Use in smoothies or heat in microwave for about 1 minute to use as a topping for oatmeal, pancakes, and waffles.

CHANGE IT UP

- Add ½ jalapeño, seeded and finely diced.
- Substitute chopped cilantro or mint for basil.
- Add shredded carrots or purple cabbage.