



COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

STRAWBERRIES



Strawberries are a soft fruit that blossoms from the flower of the plant on short vines from a central underground root. They are a member of the Rosaceae family and are related to cherries, apples, and raspberries. Wild strawberries are small in size and native to North America, South America, Europe, and Asia. Strawberries have a sweet or tart flavor. Strawberries can be eaten fresh off the vine, frozen, or dried and added to baked goods, desserts, juices, salads, sauces, smoothies, soups, and teas. They are also processed for jams, jellies, and salsas. Michigan strawberries are harvested from early June through July.



STRAWBERRIES ARE

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

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

MICHIGAN MADE

Strawberries are grown statewide. Michigan farmers grow over 45,000 tons of strawberries and over 3,000 tons of strawberries for processing each year. Many Michigan farms offer "u-pick" operations where consumers can hand pick their own strawberries. Popular strawberry varieties grown in Michigan include Earliglow, Guardian, Jewel, Surecrop, Midway, Red Chief, Sparkle, and Sweet Kiss. The top three counties for strawberry production are Berrien, Leelanau, and Van Buren.

FUN FACTS

- Ancient Romans ate strawberries to cure bad breath.
- Ode'imín (oh-day-emin) is the word for strawberry in the Anishinaabe language.
- Strawberries are the only fruit that has seeds on the outside.
- Strawberries prefer to grow in full sun and soil with good moisture and drainage.
- Strawberries are perennials that will produce fruit for about five years.
- Strawberries do not ripen after they are picked.
- Birds love to eat strawberries, especially blue jays, cardinals, crows, robins, sparrows, starlings, waxwings, and woodpeckers.

BUYING AND STORING

- Select strawberries that are medium firm, bright red, even in color, and plump with fresh green caps.
- Store unwashed, dry, fresh whole strawberries spaced apart in a single layer on paper towel in a container in the refrigerator.
- Store cut strawberries in an airtight container in the refrigerator.
- To freeze strawberries, wash, let dry, remove stems, and place in an airtight container or freezer bag. Label, date, and freeze for up to twelve months.
- Wash all fresh fruits and vegetables before using.



MORE THAN FRESH

In addition to fresh, strawberries are available juiced, frozen, dried, and canned. Choose unsweetened juice that is 100% juice. Always choose pasteurized juice over unpasteurized. Unpasteurized juice can contain harmful bacteria.

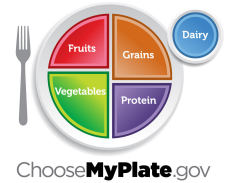




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EAT WITH MYPLATE

MyPlate focuses on whole grains, lean protein, low-fat dairy, and half the plate being fruits and vegetables. Strawberries 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.

STRAWBERRY, PEANUT BUTTER, AND BANANA FOLD-OVERS

Time: 10 minutes | Makes: 4 servings | Serving Size: ½ tortilla fold-over

Nutrition Information Per Serving: Calories 200, Carbohydrate 26g, Dietary Fiber 12g, Protein 7g, Total Fat 8g, Saturated Fat 2g, Cholesterol 0mg, Sodium 358mg



INGREDIENTS

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| 3 tablespoons peanut butter | 5–6 large strawberries, sliced |
| Two 10-inch whole-grain tortillas | Dash cinnamon (optional) |
| 1 large ripe banana, sliced | Cooking spray |

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Spread 1½ tablespoons peanut butter evenly and to the edges of each tortilla.
2. Cover half of each tortilla with half of the sliced bananas and strawberries.
3. Sprinkle with cinnamon (optional).
4. Fold each tortilla in half and press gently to secure.
5. Coat frying pan well with cooking spray. Bring pan to medium-high heat.
6. Place one tortilla in pan, cook until the bottom begins to brown, about 2 minutes. Carefully flip and continue to cook until second side begins to brown, about 2 minutes.
7. Remove tortilla to let cool slightly. Repeat with other tortilla.
8. Cut each tortilla in half and serve.

CHANGE IT UP

- Add blueberries and sliced almonds.
- Add 2 tablespoons of granola.
- Replace peanut butter with reduced-fat cream cheese and 1 teaspoon brown sugar.

TRY THIS

- Keep frozen strawberries on hand for smoothies, pancakes, waffles, cereals, and baked goods.
- Top watermelon with strawberries, feta cheese, and fresh, chopped mint.
- Layer low-fat vanilla yogurt with strawberries and granola to create a parfait.
- Add fresh strawberries to salads and salsas for extra flavor and nutrients.