

Food for Thought

July 2024

July is National Berry Month

What better way to celebrate July than with berries! Many berries come into season this month making them more affordable and available.

Why should I eat more berries?

- 🍓 Berries have a lot of vitamin C, folic acid, dietary fiber, and antioxidants.
- 🍓 These nutrients help increase our immune function and are protective against cancer and heart disease.



Selecting Berries:

- 🍓 Look for firm, plump, and full-colored berries.
- 🍓 Avoid buying berries with bruises, mold, or that are oozing. When selecting be sure to turn the container over to thoroughly check the berries. At home throw out any overripe or damaged berries.
- 🍓 Strawberries are the most popular berry, but berries come in many colors and they are all good for you. Choose your favorites:
 - Red: raspberries, strawberries, cranberries
 - Black or dark purple: blackberries, huckleberries
 - Blue: blueberries

Cleaning Berries:

- 🍓 Rinse berries under cool, running water just before using.

Storing Berries:

- 🍓 Berries can be frozen. Rinse and pat dry and spread in a single layer on a large cookie sheet. Freeze, then put berries in a plastic bag. Keep frozen until ready to use. This makes it possible to measure just the amount needed. Use frozen berries within one year.

Ways to Add More Berries to Your Day:

- 🍓 Add sliced strawberries to a bowl of whole grain cereal.
- 🍓 Stir raspberries into low-fat vanilla yogurt.
- 🍓 Sprinkle blueberries on a salad.
- 🍓 On the grill make fruit kabobs that incorporate berries with other fruits such as pineapple chunks, bananas and grapes.
- 🍓 Cut your ice cream or frozen yogurt portion in half and fill the other half with different berries to make your cool treat higher in fiber, vitamins, and minerals.



Fun Berry Facts

- 🍓 The huckleberry is the official state fruit of Idaho.
- 🍓 Strawberries have around 200 seeds on the outside of them.
- 🍓 Blueberries are one of the only foods that are naturally blue in color.
- 🍓 Most people know of red raspberries, but they also come in purple, gold, and black varieties.

Berry Yogurt Crunch

2 cups blueberries, fresh
2 cups strawberries, fresh
1 cup graham crackers, crushed
4 cups vanilla yogurt, non-fat or low-fat



1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. Gently wash berries and pat dry. Remove leaves and slice strawberries.
3. Place graham crackers in a sealed plastic bag or on plastic wrap and crush using the palm of your hand or the back of a spoon.
4. Divide the fruit evenly into eight bowls or cups.
5. Spoon $\frac{1}{2}$ cup yogurt on top of fruit and sprinkle with crushed graham crackers.

Tips

- Try other flavors of yogurt.
- Use a variety of seasonal fruits.
- This recipe can be made with frozen fruit. Put frozen fruit in a covered container to thaw overnight in the refrigerator.

Super Fruit Slushie

2 cups frozen or fresh mixed berries
2 cups low fat milk
1 tablespoon honey
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups nuts, optional



1. Wash hands and rinse berries.
2. Put ingredients in blender. Blend until smooth.
3. Serve cold.
4. Cover and refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours

Eat Smart Idaho offers FREE classes that can help you learn how to eat well for less! Ask for the Nutrition Instructor in your county.

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To contact the Eat Smart Idaho Coordinator: Kali Gardiner, RD, LD www.eatsmartidaho.org
Phone: 208-292-2525 E-mail – kalig@uidaho.edu

Sources: <https://food.unl.edu/documents/July%3A%20National%20Berries%20Month%20%282010%29.pdf>; https://www.ksre.k-state.edu/humannutrition/current_newsletters/good-for-you/goodforyou-documents/Spring_07_color.pdf; <https://extension.umass.edu/recipes/berry-yogurt-crunch> retrieved 07/01/24

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