



EXTENSION

Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

Florida Fresh: Blueberries¹

Jennifer Hillan²

You can buy delicious fruits and vegetables at farmers' markets. You can also ask the person who grew it how to eat it! Because the produce is locally grown, it's fresh and costs less than at the supermarket. Enjoy some of your favorites or try something new! To find a farmers' market in your area, call your county Extension office or visit the Florida Department of Agriculture's web site: www.fl-ag.com/farmmkt/city.htm.



History and Facts



Native Americans used blueberries for food and medicine.



Early American colonists used blueberries and milk to make blue and grey paint.



North America grows over 200 million pounds of blueberries each year!



Blueberries are high in antioxidants, which may help reduce the risk of heart disease and some types of cancer.



Half a cup of blueberries has 2 grams of fiber.

Availability

April through June

Selection

Choose blueberries that are plump, juicy, and deep purple to blue-black. Avoid green or shriveled berries.

Storage

Store unwashed blueberries in the refrigerator crisper. For best freshness and flavor, use within a few days. Freeze unwashed and completely dry blueberries in a sealed container up to twelve months.

Uses & Preparation

Blueberries are easy to prepare. Just rinse well and enjoy! Eat blueberries out of hand or:

- ✓ add to baked goods, pancakes, waffles, and smoothies
- ✓ toss into cereals and salads
- ✓ stir into yogurt, cottage cheese, or ricotta cheese
- ✓ make a sauce for French toast or angel food cake

1. This document is FCS8677, one of a series of the Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Publication date: July 2002. Reviewed by Isabel Valentín-Oquendo, MS, RD, LD/N. Please visit the EDIS Web site at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>

2. Jennifer Hillan, MSH, RD, LD/N, Coordinator, Educational/Training Programs, Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences, Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville, 32611.

The Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer authorized to provide research, educational information and other services only to individuals and institutions that function without regard to race, color, sex, age, handicap, or national origin. For information on obtaining other extension publications, contact your county Cooperative Extension Service office. Florida Cooperative Extension Service / Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences / University of Florida / Christine Taylor Waddill, Dean

Nutrient Facts

- ❖ Good source of fiber and vitamin C
- ❖ Supplies small amounts of potassium, thiamin, and riboflavin
- ❖ Cholesterol, sodium, and fat free

What are Organically Grown Foods?

Organically grown means that a food was grown without synthetic (man-made) pesticides or fertilizers. Natural pesticides and fertilizers were used instead. Organic and non-organic foods are similar in taste and nutritional value. However, organic foods usually cost more.

Blueberry Sauce

Serves 4

- 1 cup blueberries, rinsed
- 4 tablespoons orange juice
- 4 tablespoons water
- 4 tablespoons sugar
- 1-½ teaspoon cornstarch
- ¼ teaspoon cinnamon or nutmeg (optional)

Combine all ingredients in small saucepan. Cook over medium heat. Stir constantly until thickened (about 4-5 minutes). Serve over French toast, pancakes, waffles, ice cream, or angel food cake.

Blueberry Banana Split

Serves 2

- 1 large banana, peeled
- 1 cup blueberries, rinsed
- ½ cup lowfat yogurt
- ¼ cup whole-grain cereal

Cut bananas in half lengthwise and then crosswise, making 4 pieces. Divide bananas into two dessert bowls. Add blueberries and yogurt to each serving, then sprinkle with cereal.

Summertime Fruit Salad

Serves 4

- ½ cup orange juice
- ¼ cup honey
- 1 pint strawberries, rinsed, stemmed, and cut into halves
- 1 half-pint blueberries, rinsed
- 2 oranges, rinsed, peeled, and cut into sections
- 1 cup melon balls or cubes
- 3 tablespoons fresh mint leaves (optional)

In a medium bowl, combine juice and honey. Add remaining ingredients and toss gently. Spoon salad into four small bowls.

Blueberry Smoothie

Serves 2

- 1 cup blueberries, rinsed
- 2 bananas peeled and sliced
- 2 containers (16 oz total) lowfat yogurt
- 4 ice cubes
- 2 tablespoons wheat germ (optional)

Blend all ingredients until smooth. Pour into two tall glasses and enjoy!



Source: Produce for Better Health Foundation