

Fruit of the Month

Cranberries



Cranberries grow on vines in boggy areas. Cranberries were first cultivated in Massachusetts around 1815 and are only one of three major native North American fruits. Some cranberry beds have been around for over 100 years.

Most of the U.S. cranberry crop is grown in only five states: Massachusetts, Wisconsin, New Jersey, Oregon, and Washington. Each year, more than 110,000 metric tons of cranberries are produced in the United States. Most cranberries are harvested by machine, but machines damage the berry. Damaged berries are not suitable to sell fresh but work well for juices, jellies, and other products. More than one-third of the cranberries grown in the United States are made into juice. Fresh whole berries may be purchased, but are often expensive because they have to be hand-picked to avoid the damage caused by machine-picking.

Native Americans used cranberries for both their medicinal and natural preservative powers. They brewed cranberry mixtures to draw poison from arrow wounds. They also pounded cranberries into a paste and mixed the paste with dried meat to extend the life of the meat.

The name cranberry was given to this plant because the Pilgrims believed the plant looked like the head of a sandhill crane and was originally named "craneberry." Over time, the "e" was dropped.

Selection

Good, ripe cranberries will bounce, which is why they are nicknamed "bounceberries." They should be shiny and plump and range in color from bright light red to dark red. Shriveled berries or those with brown spots should be avoided. Cranberries do not ripen after harvest..

Storage

Store fresh cranberries in a tightly-sealed plastic bag in the refrigerator. As with all berries, if one starts getting soft and decaying, the others will quickly soften and decay also. Be sure to sort out the soft ones if you plan to store them for more than a few days.

Fresh cranberries may last up to 2 months in the refrigerator. Cooked cranberries can last up to a month in a covered container in the refrigerator. Washed cranberries may be frozen for up to 1 year in airtight bags.

Preparation

Cranberries are often too tart to be eaten raw. Most cranberries need to be cooked before they are eaten. No matter what preparation method you choose, cook cranberries only until they pop because overcooking gives them a bitter taste.

Since cranberries are almost 90% water, do not thaw frozen cranberries before cooking them. Thawing, will cause the fruit to breakdown, resulting in soft cranberries.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size (73g)
Servings Per Container

Amount Per Serving

Calories 50 **Calories from Fat 5**
% Daily Value*

Total Fat 1g **1%**

Saturated Fat 0g **0%**

Cholesterol 0mg **0%**

Sodium 0mg **0%**

Total Carbohydrate 12g **4%**

Dietary Fiber 2g **8%**

Sugars 10g

Protein 1g

Vitamin A 4% • Vitamin C 8%

Calcium 2% • Iron 2%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Saturated Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Calories per gram:

Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4

Cranberries may be baked with a sweetener to make a topping or sauce, or they can be added to baked goods, such as muffins. They are also good chopped with oranges to make a relish.

Varieties

There are four major varieties of cranberries: European, American, Mountain, and Highbush.

American

This variety is the most common in the United States. The U.S. Department of Agriculture uses this variety as the standard for fresh cranberries and cranberries used for juice. This variety is bright red.

European

This variety is smaller than the American and is eaten less often than other varieties. It is primarily ornamental.

Mountain

This variety is approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch in diameter and is bright red to dark red. It is occasionally found in markets.

Highbush

This variety is primarily used for jellies, jams, and sauces. It is also used as an ornamental fruit.

Make Cranberries Part of Your 5 A Day Plan



- Add dried cranberries to your favorite hot or cold cereal for a tangy twist on breakfast.
- As an easy way to include cranberry in your diet, drink 100% juice blends that include cranberry juice.
- Sneak a few cranberries into your blueberry muffins to add color and flavor.
- Cranberries are not only for turkey. Top chicken or pork with a cranberry relish for a nice change.

Recipes

Cranberry Vegetable Risotto

Makes 4 servings

Each serving equals two 5 A Day servings

2 Tbsp butter

1 small onion, diced

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup Arborio rice

1 cup low-sodium vegetable broth

1 cup sliced portabella mushrooms

1 cup diced asparagus

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup sweetened dried cranberries

2 Tbsp minced fresh basil

1 Tbsp Parmesan cheese

Preheat oven to 425°F. Grease a medium casserole dish.

Melt butter in a large saucepan. Add onion and cook over medium heat until soft. Add rice; cook for 2 minutes. Add broth; bring to a boil for 2 minutes. Stir in remaining ingredients, except Parmesan cheese.

Pour mixture into casserole dish. Cover and bake for 30 minutes. Stir in cheese. Serve immediately.

Nutritional analysis per serving: calories 285, protein 5g, fat 5g, percent calories from fat 15%, cholesterol 10mg, carbohydrates 55g, fiber 4g, sodium 199mg

Cranberry Apple Crisp

Makes 9 servings

Each serving equals one and a half 5 A Day servings

5 cups pared, sliced tart apples (about 6 medium apples)

1½ cups fresh or frozen cranberries

1/3 cup sugar

½ cup all-purpose flour

½ cup brown sugar

1 tsp cinnamon

¼ cup butter



Preheat oven to 375°F. Lightly grease a 9-inch square baking pan.

Layer apples and cranberries in pan sprinkling with sugar as you layer.

Topping: Mix flour, brown sugar and cinnamon. Work in butter until light and crumbly. Sprinkle topping evenly over apples and cranberries.

Bake 45 minutes or until apples are tender.

Nutritional analysis per serving: calories 173, protein 1g, fat 4g, percent calories from fat 19%, cholesterol 9mg, carbohydrates 36g, fiber 2g, sodium 5mg

Cranberry Pie

Makes 8 servings

Each serving equals one 5 A Day serving

2 cups cranberries, whole

2 cups blueberries

1 cup sugar

3 Tbsp flour

1 9" ready-to-bake pie crust

Mix berries. Combine sugar and cornstarch. Stir into mixed berries. Spread mixture into ready-to-bake pie shell. Bake at 425°F for 1 hour.

Nutrition information per serving: calories 150, protein 1g, fat 1g, percent calories from fat 5%, cholesterol 0mg, carbohydrates 36g, fiber 2g, sodium 13mg

Cranberry Turkey Salad

Makes 4 servings

Each serving equals two 5 A Day servings

10oz cooked turkey breast, cubed

4 cups romaine lettuce, torn into small pieces

1 large red apple, cored and cut into small pieces

1 orange peeled and segmented (or use a small can of mandarin oranges)

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup dried cranberries

3 Tbsp walnuts, coarsely chopped

3 kiwi fruit, peeled and sliced

In a medium bowl, combine turkey, apple pieces, cranberries, orange, and walnuts.

Dressing:

1 cup jellied whole-berry cranberry sauce

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup frozen orange juice concentrate, thawed

In a small bowl, mix cranberry sauce and orange juice concentrate. Arrange lettuce leaves among four plates. Just before serving gently toss turkey mixture with dressing. Garnish with kiwi slices.

Nutrition information per serving: calories 213, protein 15g, fat 4g, percent calories from fat 18%, cholesterol 31mg, carbohydrates 30g, fiber 7g, sodium 446mg

Cranberry Salsa

Makes 8 servings. Each serving equals one 5 A Day serving



4 oz 100% cranberry juice blend
1½ cups diced tomatoes
1 cup fresh cranberries, sliced thin*
¼ cup ripe medium avocado, diced
½ cup pineapple, diced
½ cup scallions (including green tops), sliced thinly
2 Tbsps. lemon juice
¼ cup jalapeno peppers, chopped fine
2 cloves crushed garlic (1 tsp.)
Fresh ground pepper, as desired

Place juice into a saucepan. Boil for about 5 minutes until reduced to about 1 Tbsp of syrup. Place the reduced juice and all remaining ingredients into a medium bowl and stir until incorporated. Chill and serve immediately with favorite chips and vegetables.

* Fresh cranberries may be stored in your freezer for up to 1 year.

Nutrition information per serving: calories 39, protein 1g, fat 1g, percent calories from fat 19%, cholesterol 0mg, carbohydrates 8g, fiber 2g, sodium 7mg