



Cleveland County Kitchen

Developed by: Nancy Abasiokong, Extension Agent, Family & Consumer Sciences and Annie Thompson, Extension Admin. Assistant

June, 2015



Food of the Month - Blackberries

Blackberries - A Nutritious & Delicious Summer Treat!

Eating fresh, juicy berries – blackberries, blueberries and raspberries – is a real summer treat! Do you have memories of picking blackberries in farm fields, gardens, along the roadside or in your own backyard?

An easier way to get fresh blackberries is to select them at farmers markets or roadside stands. Blackberries are plentiful and 'in-season' in Cleveland County mid June through August. July, National Berry Month, is the peak season for blackberries.

Did you know?

- Blackberries and raspberries belong to the rose or genus Rubus family.
- They are part of the group of small fruits often referred to as 'brambles' or 'caneberries.' An early name for blackberries was brambleberry or bramble.

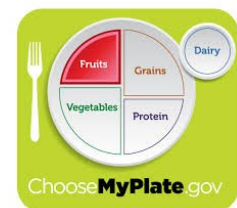
- Blackberries are native to Asia, Europe, as well as North and South America. They have been used, for eating and medicinal purposes, in Europe, for over 2,000 years.
- Blackberries are different from black raspberries – they taste different and have a solid center (compared to raspberries, which have a hollow center when picked).
- An excellent source of vitamin C, anti-oxidants, flavonoids, and fiber
- Good source of vitamins A, E, and K; potassium and folate
- One of the most important health benefits of berries is their high level of phytochemicals, non-nutrient components that are believed to help lower the risk of chronic disease.
- Relatively low in calories (1 cup contains 60-70 calories)
- Low in fat: saturated fat – free, and cholesterol free
- Sodium free

Blackberries – Packed with Flavor & Health Benefits!

Blackberries, a powerhouse of nutrients, make a delicious addition to a healthy diet. Healthy eating also means eating foods with a variety of colors, including foods from the blue/purple group. It is important to increase your fruit consumption - making half your plate fruits and vegetables.

Blackberries are:

Use the MyPlate icon below as a guide to healthy eating..



Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1/2 cup blackberries (72g)	
Servings Per Container 1	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 30	Calories from Fat 5
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 0mg	0%
Total Carbohydrate 7g	2%
Dietary Fiber 4g	16%
Sugars 3g	
Protein 1g	
Vitamin A 4%	Vitamin C 25%
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	

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Selection Tips

- Blackberries are perishable and must be handled with care. Choose blackberries that:
- Locally grown – this will give the freshest flavor and supports local agriculture
- Blue-black and uniform in color with some sheen
- Sweetness and size will depend on the variety

Look for firm, full-colored berries that are solid and have plump fruitlets, with no green hull attached.

Avoid:

- Blackberries that are red or unripe
- Moldy, overripe, soft, mushy or bruised berries
- Containers that are stained, leaking, or dirty.

Yield:

1 pint of blackberries = 4 to 5 (1/2 cup) servings of fresh uncooked fruit.

1 quart blackberries = 4 cups (approx. 1 1/2 pound)

4 cups blackberries are needed for each 9" pie

12 oz. bag of whole frozen blackberries = approx. 3 cups/berries

Storage Tips

- Check/sort berries as soon as you get home.
- Place un-washed berries loosely in a shallow container to allow for air circulation and to avoid crushing the berries.
- Immediately store loosely covered containers in the refrigerator.
- Use within 3-4 days.



Photo: Mark Longstroth, MSU Extension

To Prepare

- Just before using, pour a shallow layer of berries in a bowl or colander. Gently rinse or swish blackberries in a pan of cold water - Do Not Soak Berries. Lift out of water and drain or blot on paper towels. This process will also help bring the berries back to room temperature (enhances their flavor).
- Remove berries that are damaged, too soft or decayed.
- Enjoy fresh or in your favorite recipe
- For additional ideas, see: "Top 10 Ways to Enjoy Blackberries" at the Fruits & Veggies More Matters website:
www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/top-10-ways-to-enjoy-blackberries

Serving Ideas

- Create a yogurt parfait by mixing blackberries into plain or vanilla nonfat /low-fat (Greek) yogurt. Layer with granola and chopped nuts for a delicious and healthy breakfast, dessert or snack.
- Top your breakfast cereal (hot or cold) with blackberries.
- Add blackberries to your favorite muffin, waffle or pancake recipe.
- Bake delicious berry cobblers or pies (1 or 2 crust).
- Mix a handful of blackberries with fresh greens to give your salad a new twist. Serve with a vinaigrette dressing.
See the North American Raspberry Blackberry Association @ www.raspberrylblackberry.com for more information and recipes.

To Freeze Blackberries



Blackberries can be frozen now and used to make soft spreads later. Follow approved recipes.

Sugar Pack – Gently mix $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar with 1 quart (1-1/3 pounds) berries. Fill containers, leaving headspace. Seal, label and freeze.

Dry Pack (good for small whole fruits such as berries) – Pack berries into containers, leaving headspace, seal, label and freeze.

Tray Pack (dry pack variation) – Simply spread berries out in a single layer on a shallow tray and freeze. When frozen remove from tray, pack into containers, seal, label and freeze. This will allow small amounts of the frozen berries to be poured out and the package resealed.

Yogurt-Granola Parfait

1-3/4 cups plain or vanilla yogurt
6 Tbs Honey

8 oz fresh berries (blackberries, blueberries, raspberries and/or strawberries)
2 Cameo Apples 2-1/2 cups granola

Stir together the yogurt and 4 tablespoons of the honey in a small bowl.

Pick over the berries to remove any stems or leaves and halve or quarter larger berries.

Put the berries in a medium bowl.

Quarter and core the apples and cut them into 1/4 inch dice.

Stir the apples and the remaining 2 tablespoons of honey into the berries.

Spoon a few tablespoons of the granola into the bottom of each sundae dish or wine glass.

Top the granola with a few tablespoons of yogurt, then add a generous spoonful of the apple-berry mixture.

Repeat the layering 1 more time, drizzling any remaining juice from the fruit over the top.

Yield: 4 servings Source: Fruit & Veggies More Matters

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Grilled Blackberry or Raspberry Chicken Salad

1/2 cup raspberry or balsamic vinegar
2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
4 4-oz. boneless, skinless chicken breasts
1 pint blackberries or raspberries
1/2 cup snipped fresh chives

1/4 cup sieved blackberry or raspberry jam
1 teaspoon sugar
4 handfuls (4 oz) mixed baby greens
1 1/2 oz. crumbled feta cheese (or mild goat cheese)
Salt and freshly ground pepper

In a glass measuring cup, combine vinegar, jam, mustard, and sugar. Blend vigorously with a fork until smooth. Pour half of the dressing over chicken in a shallow dish (reserve remaining dressing to coat greens). Turn the chicken to coat evenly. Refrigerate for at least 10 minutes, or for up to one hour. Light an outdoor grill or preheat stovetop grill pan. Coat grill rack with cooking spray. Grill the chicken for six minutes on each side or until the meat thermometer registers 165 degrees F. Transfer to a cutting surface and let stand for five minutes before cutting crosswise into thin slices. Meanwhile, mix greens with reserved dressing and divide among four plates. Sprinkle evenly with berries. Top with chicken slices. Garnish with goat cheese and chives, dividing evenly. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Yield: 4 servings. Source: NC Cooperative Extension, Swain County

Blackberry Oatmeal Bars

1/2 cup all purpose flour
1/2 cup whole wheat flour
1 cup quick-cooking oatmeal
2/3 cup brown sugar
1-1/2 tsp. cinnamon
1/8 tsp. baking soda
1/2 cup fat-free vanilla yogurt
2-1/2 cups fresh blackberries, rinsed and drained
3 Tbsp. sugar
4-1/2 Tbsp. orange juice
2 tsp. cinnamon, divided
1 cup fat-free vanilla yogurt, optional



Photo: <http://hort.uark.edu/>

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Spray 10-inch baking dish with cooking spray. Combine flour, oatmeal, brown sugar, 1-1/2 teaspoons cinnamon, and baking soda in a medium bowl and mix well. Stir in yogurt just until combined. Set aside 1 cup of flour mixture. Press remaining mixture into bottom of baking dish. Bake 20-25 minutes. While crust is baking, prepare filling. Combine blackberries, sugar, orange juice and 3/4 teaspoon cinnamon in a medium saucepan; bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to low and simmer, uncovered, 8-10 minutes, stirring frequently, until slightly thickened. Remove from heat. Carefully spread filling over baked crust. Sprinkle with reserved crumb mixture and press into filling. Bake 20-25 minutes longer until topping is lightly browned and crisp. Cool on wire rack; cut into bars and serve with a dollop of fat-free vanilla yogurt sprinkled with remaining cinnamon if desired.

Source:

Natureripe Farms "Berry Blast" club; visit www.natureripefarms.com / / / North American Raspberry & Blackberry Association

Blackberry Vinaigrette

1 cup blackberries
1/2 cup red wine vinegar
1 Tbsp. brown sugar
1/4 tsp. ground ginger
1/4 tsp. cinnamon
1/2 cup olive oil

Rub berries through a fine sieve to remove seeds and to render up and juice. Combine juice, pulp, and all ingredients except oil in a small sauce pan. Cook, stirring over low heat until sugar is dissolved. Allow to cool and whisk in oil. Put in salad oil container. Shake up before serving.

Source:

Sherry Triplett, Hudson, NC // North American Raspberry & Blackberry Association

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Blackberry Peach Crumble

2 cups fresh blackberries
 2 cups peeled and sliced fresh peaches
 or 1 (16oz) bag frozen peach slices, thawed
 1 tsp. grated lemon peel
 2 Tbs. cornstarch
 1/3 cup, plus 1/2 cup packed brown sugar

1/2 cup all-purpose flour
 1/2 cup chopped blanched almonds (optional)
 1/4 tsp. salt
 6 Tbs. butter, cut into pieces

Combine blackberries, peaches, lemon peel, cornstarch and 1/3 cup brown sugar in a large bowl.

Pour ingredients into a lightly greased 8 inch baking dish.

Mix together flour, almonds, salt, and remaining 1/2 cup brown sugar. With pastry blender or two knives, cut in the butter until the mixture resembles coarse meal.

Sprinkle flour mixture over fruit.

Bake in a pre-heated 400°F oven for 30 minutes.

Cool 10 minutes prior to serving.

Yield 8, 1/2 cup servings

Source: University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension – Plate It Up / Kentucky Proud Recipe

Berry Smoothie

1 cup cold milk ½ cup fresh or frozen blackberries or raspberries 1-3 Tbsp. sugar Ice cubes

Directions:

Place ingredients in blender, cover, start on puree speed, then pulse blender speed until smooth. (Can add ice cubes gradually to reach desired consistency.)

Variations:

Add a banana or fresh or frozen peaches

Use vanilla yogurt, frozen yogurt, or ice cream instead of or in addition to milk. Adjust amounts as desired.

Add a few drops of vanilla flavoring or sprinkle of nutmeg or cinnamon.

Omit ice cubes for a thicker smoothie.



Berry Jams

9 cups crushed berries 6 cups sugar

Sterilize canning jars. Combine berries and sugar. Bring slowly to a boil, stirring occasionally until sugar dissolves. Cook rapidly to, or almost to, gelling point, depending upon whether a firm or soft jam is desired. As mixture thickens, stir frequently to prevent sticking. Pour boiling hot jam into hot jars, leaving 1/4-inch headspace. Wipe jar rims and adjust lids. Process 5 minutes in a boiling water bath.

NOTE: If seedless jam is preferred, crushed berries may be heated until soft and pressed through a sieve or food mill; then add sugar and proceed as above. 7-8 half-pint jars

Source: Preserving Food: Jams & Jellies, University of Georgia Cooperative Extension

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