North Carolina Cooperative Extension - Cleveland County Center

Cleveland County Kitchen

Developed by: Nancy Abasiekong, Extension Agent, Family & Consumer Sciences and Annie Thompson, Extension Admin. Assistant September 2015

Food of the Month - Peaches

Peaches – A Sweet, Juicy Taste of Summer!

The tree ripened peaches we get at North Carolina farmers markets, roadside stands and other local markets are a sign of summer and a real treat! According to the North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services (NCDA&CS), buying locally produced NC peaches means purchasing peaches that have been allowed to mature and ripen on the tree. Often, this makes them sweeter than the commercially grown peaches available to us from other states.

Peaches are referred to as "stone fruits" because the seed is very large and hard.

Peaches are 'in-season' in North Carolina the end of May into early September. During this time, you can find fresh peaches at farmers markets, local farm stands and at some local grocery stores.

Types of Peaches

There are three general types of peaches, but many varieties grown in NC.

Clingstone (CS) – early season fruit, the flesh clings tightly to the pit. These peaches are best for cooking and canning.

Freestone (FS) – peach flesh readily separates from the pit. Very versatile; best for eating fresh, as a dessert, cooking or freezing.

Semi-freestone (Semi-CS) – Flesh is a little harder to separate from the pit. Good for eating fresh, as desserts, cooking or freezing.

Nutrition Facts Label for Peaches

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 medium peach (147g)

Amount Per Serving	
Calories 60	Calories from Fat 0
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 0.5g	1%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	0%
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 0mg	0%
Total Carbohydrate 15g	5%
Dietary Fiber 2g	8%
Sugars 13g	
Protein 1g	

Vitamin A 6%	Vitamin C 15%
Calcium 0%	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

History

Did you know?

- China is the native home of peaches. They began to be cultivated there around 200 B.C. From there they made their way to Persia, Greece, and many of the temperate countries in Europe, i.e. Italy, Spain and France.
- By the mid 1700s, peaches were becoming more popular and were being grown in the United States.
- The Romans called peaches "Persian apples."
- Spanish explorers brought peaches to the New World, where several Native American Indians cultivated peaches. Thomas Jefferson is said to have planted peaches at Monticello in 1802.

- Peaches are not the largest agricultural crop in NC; however, they do contribute significantly to the state's economy. In 2014, NC produced 4,380 tons of peaches ($5.9 million in value).
- North Carolina has a unique peach industry. It sells 90 percent of its crop directly to consumers - as fresh market peaches.
- North Carolina produces an average of 35 million pounds of peaches each year for the fresh markets, raking ninth in production.

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Storage Tips

- To ripen peaches, hold at room temperature 1 to 4 days. For quicker ripening, place in a loosely closed paper bag – at room temp. Check daily. (Note: putting unripe fruit in the refrigerator can cause loss of flavor, texture, and moisture and may result in discoloration of the interior flesh.)
- Store ripe peaches at room temp. and use within 1 to 2 days.
- Wash fully ripe peaches in cool running water. Dry and place ripe peaches in a plastic bag. Refrigerate and use within one week.
- For best flavor, serve peaches at room temperature.

To Prepare

- To peel peaches, bring a saucepan of water to a rolling boil. Place the unpeeled peach into water for approximately 30 seconds. Remove peach carefully from boiling water with a slotted spoon and plunge into bowl of icy water. Using a paring knife, gently pull skin away from the flesh of the peach, being careful not to damage the fruit.
- To prevent peeled, cut-up peaches from darkening – sprinkle with lemon or orange juice or ascorbic acid.

Serving Ideas

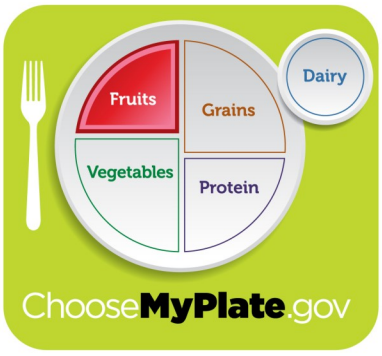
- Eat peaches fresh – unpeeled or peeled.
- Top your breakfast cereal (hot or cold) with fresh peaches.
- Bake delicious peach cobblers, pies (1 or 2 crust), or sonkers.
- Use fresh peaches in refreshing Peach Ice Cream or as a topping over slices of Angel food or Pound cake.
- Add sliced or chopped peaches to fresh greens to give your salad a new twist.

Nutrition Benefits

Peaches are a sweet treat that not only tastes good, but are packed with many nutrients. Check out the Nutrition Facts Label to see the powerhouse of flavor and nutrition found in a medium sized peach.

- A good source of vitamin C (promotes the immune system and skin health, helps the body resist infections) and vitamin A (important to healthy vision); riboflavin and beta-carotene.
- A good source of dietary fiber (important for digestive health)
- Low in calories (40-60 calories)
- Sodium-free
- Fat-free, cholesterol-free

Peaches can be part of a healthy diet and can help you increase your fruit consumption. This is important as you make half your plate fruits and vegetables, as recommended by the **Choose My Plate Dietary Guidelines**.



Selection Tips

Peaches are perishable, so handle them with care. They bruise easily and the bruised spots begin to decay quickly. For delicious ripe peaches, choose ones that:

- Locally grown – this will give the freshest flavor and support local agriculture
- Have firm, fuzzy skins that have a creamy to yellowish golden under-color. (The redblush does not necessarily indicate ripeness – it depends on the variety.)
- Two additional indicators of ripeness are a well-defined crease and a good fragrance.
- Sweetness and size will depend on the variety
- Select peaches that "give" slightly for immediate use. Firm, but ripe peaches can be held at room temperature for a few days and will ripen further.
- When selecting white-fleshed varieties, look for pale white skin with a pink blush.

Avoid:

- Green under-color (will not ripen well), brownish or wrinkled peaches.
- Overripe or soft fruit that has large flattened bruises or show any other signs of decay.

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Peach, Tomato & Avocado Salad

Photo: Pinterest

Ingredients
2 medium peaches, peeled & diced
2 large tomatoes cut into chunks
1/4 cup red onion, thinly sliced
1 medium avocado, (not too ripe - diced)
1 Tbsp vinegar
1 1/2 tsp olive oil
1 tsp honey
1/8 tsp salt
1/8 tsp black pepper
1/4 cup low-fat shredded mozzarella cheese
2 Tbsp torn basil

Directions
1. Combine prepared peaches, tomatoes, red onion, and avocado in a bowl.
2. Combine vinegar, olive oil, honey, salt and black pepper. Whisk together with a fork and drizzle over fruit/veggie mixture.
3. Cover bowl and refrigerate to blend flavors.
4. Sprinkle with cheese and basil. Serve.

Yield: 4 servings

Yield:

One pound of fresh peaches yields:

* 2-4 medium sized peaches.
* 2 cups sliced
*1-1/2 cups pureed

For additional information and recipes, see: *"TOP 10 Ways to Enjoy Peaches"*
http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/top-10-ways-to-enjoy-peaches
Source: fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org

To Preserve Peaches

Peaches and nectarines can be frozen (syrup pack, sugar pack, crushed or purée, or as a Peach Pie Filling). Peaches can also be canned, pickled, dried or made into jam or chutney.

For information on how to freeze peaches or nectarines, see the National Center for Home Food Preservation website at - http://nchfp.uga.edu/how/freeze/peach.html.

For canning information see - http://nchfp.uga.edu/how/can_02/peach_sliced.html

NC Cooperative Extension **September 2015**
Cleveland County Center
130 South Post Road, Suite 1
Shelby, NC 28090
704-482-4365
cleveland.ces.ncsu.edu
clevelandcountykitchen.org

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Fruit Blast Smoothie

Source: NC Cooperative Extension, The Produce Lady

Ingredients:

½ cup low-fat or skim milk ½ cup nonfat plain, vanilla, or Greek yogurt 1 tsp. honey, optional
1 cup frozen unsweetened fruit (peaches, blueberries or strawberries) Ice cubes, optional

Directions:

Put all ingredients into blender. Cover, start on puree speed, then pulse blender until smooth. (Can add ice cubes gradually to reach desired consistency.) Yield: 2 / 1-cup servings.

Variations:

- Add ½ fresh or frozen banana or other fresh or frozen fruit combinations
- 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, process.
- Omit ice cubes for a thicker smoothie.

Fresh Fruit Pops

Ingredients:

Seasonal fruit (peaches, watermelon, strawberries, etc.) Skewers

Directions:

Wash fruit and cut into chunks. Place the fruit pieces onto skewers. Place in freezer just until frost forms on the fruit. Serve and enjoy.

Source: NC Cooperative Extension, The Produce Lady.

Chicken with Red Wine and Peaches

4 boneless, skinless chicken breast halves
1/2 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
1/4 tsp. salt
3 Tbs. flour
1 Tbs. olive oil
3 shallots, thinly sliced
1/2 cup dry red wine or chicken stock
2 firm ripe peaches, sliced
1/2 cup loosely packed fresh basil, sliced into thin shreds

Directions

1. Flatten the chicken breasts to an even thickness. Season with the pepper and salt. Coat with flour shaking off excess.
2. Heat a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add 2 teaspoons of the olive oil.
3. Add chicken breasts and cook for approximately 12 minutes, turning once. To check the doneness insert a food thermometer into the thickest portion and be sure it registers a minimum of 160°F and the juices run clear. Remove the chicken to a plate.
4. Add the remaining oil and the shallots to the skillet. Cook stirring frequently, for 2-3 minutes or until the shallots are softened.
5. Add the wine or broth and stir to scrape up any brown bits on the bottom of the pan.
6. Increase the heat to medium-high and add the peaches. Cook for 2 minutes, stirring frequently, until the wine reduces slightly.
7. Return the chicken and any juices on the plate to the skillet. Cook for 1 to 2 minutes, stirring frequently, or until the chicken is hot. Stir in the basil.

Yield - 4 servings Source: NC Coop. Extension, Sally McNeill, Family & Consumer Science Extension Agent, Union County
2010 Summer Recipes from Sally's Kitchen - Week 3.