

Cleveland County Kitchen

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

December 2015



Nutrition Facts Label for Pecans

Pecan Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 oz (about 20 pecan halves)	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 196	
Calories from Fat 171	
	% DV/DRI*
Total Fat 20g	31%
Saturated Fat 2g	12%
Trans Fat 0g	
Polyunsaturated Fat 6g	30%
Monounsaturated Fat 12g	50%
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 0mg	0%
Potassium 116mg	3%
Total Carbohydrate 4g	1%
Dietary Fiber 3g	8%
Sugars 1g	
Other Carbohydrates 0g	
Protein 3g	3%
Vitamin A 0%	Vitamin C 0%
Calcium 2%	Iron 9%
Vitamin E ¹ 3%	Thiamin 16%
Riboflavin 3%	Niacin 2%
Folate 11%	Vitamin B ₆ 5%
Phosphorus 11%	Magnesium 8%
Zinc 12%	Copper 38%

*Percent Daily Values (%DV) established by the USDA for a 2,000 calorie diet are presented for fats and protein. Percent Dietary Reference Intakes (%DRI) are presented for all other nutrients based on standards established by the National Academy of Sciences for males aged 19-50. Daily nutrient requirement is affected by age, gender, pregnancy and lactation; depending on these factors, your daily reference intake may be higher or lower than those presented here.
¹Vitamin E as α-tocopherol. Pecans also contain β, γ and δ tocopherols.

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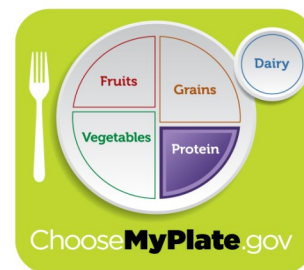
Food of the Month - Pecans

Pecans are a delicious tree-nut that are often associated with the holidays, but you can enjoy them all year long. Pecans are harvested late October into January with the peak season around Thanksgiving and Christmas. Pecans are packed with good nutrition – containing more than 19 vitamins and minerals – and we are all familiar with their rich flavor and distinctive texture. Pecans are part of the culture and food traditions of the South. They are available in many forms – whole in the shell (freshest and most flavorful form), shelled – halves or pieces, vacuum –packed in jars, cans or plastic bags.

Pecans – Healthy Nuts Packed with Flavor & Nutrition!

The 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (MyPlate) recommend that our daily diets include protein from a variety of sources. Protein sources include not only lean meats or poultry; but also seafood, eggs, beans and peas, soy products, unsalted nuts and seeds.

MyPlate also reminds us when choosing fats, to select heart-healthy polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats like those found in nuts, seafood, seeds and oils. Pecans are an excellent source of protein and make a healthy



addition to the diet. Over 90% of the fat in pecans is heart-healthy unsaturated fat. Eating a handful of pecans (about 18-20 halves) equals about 1-ounce, which is 2 of the 5 or more protein servings needed each day (general rule for nuts/seeds 1-ounce equivalent: 1/2 ounce nuts/seeds).

Did You Know?

- Pecans are one of the few modern foods and only tree nut native to North America.
- Native Americans were the first to cultivate pecan trees.
- Antoine, an African-American slave gardener from Louisiana, is credited with improving nut varieties by successfully grafting a new pecan variety in 1846. This new variety known as "Centennial" won the Best Pecan Exhibit at the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exposition.
- The U.S. produces approximately 80% of the

world's pecans. Some of the leading pecan producing states include: Georgia (#1 in production), Louisiana, New Mexico, Mississippi,

Florida and Texas (the pecan tree is also the official state tree for these states). North Carolina ranks 10th in pecan production.



Nutrition

Pecans are -

- High in unsaturated, heart-healthy fats (like almonds, pistachios, and walnuts). Research on diet and health indicates adding these nuts to a low-saturated fat, cholesterol-lowering diet, may provide some protection against heart disease.
- Dietary cholesterol-free (like all plants, nuts and legumes).
- A good source of: copper, zinc, potassium, thiamine (vitamin B1) and vitamin B6, magnesium, phosphorous, vitamin E, iron, and dietary fiber.
- One of the best tree-nut sources of antioxidants.
- Low in carbohydrates (per serving - 4 g), making them a very low glycemic index food. Persons with diabetes or who are at risk for diabetes can eat pecans in moderation, as part of a healthy diet.
- Naturally sodium free – choose unsalted pecans/nuts.
- Relatively high in calories (196 calories per 1-ounce serving); use in moderation in order to manage weight.



Selection

Unshelled Pecans

- Heavy for their size
- Shells with no holes or cracks
- No signs of insect or moisture damage
- Do not rattle when shaken (rattling- sign nuts are dried out & aging)
- Select bulk pecans from covered bins

Shelled Pecans

- Smooth, Plump and uniform in size
- Should not be shriveled or rubbery
- Color - golden to light brown
- Shelled/package pecans: check expiration date
- If possible, smell nuts to avoid rancid nuts

Storage

Proper storage is important - pecans can become rancid. Store in sealed moisture-proof plastic bags/containers, label & date.

Unshelled:

- Store up to 3 months at room temperature or 6-12 months in a cool, dry place. Refrigerate up to 9 months; Freeze up to 2 years.
- **Shelled:** refrigerate up to nine months or freeze up to two years.
- Pecans can be thawed and refrozen without quality loss of flavor or texture (within the two-year storage time).
- Pecans remain fresh up to two months after being removed from cold storage.

Preparation

To Roast: Roast nuts BEFORE chopping into smaller pieces.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Lightly coat a rimmed-baking sheet with cooking spray or line with parchment. Spread pecans evenly in a single layer. Bake for five to six minutes or until golden. Remove from pan to cool.

Microwave Toasting: (Works well for small amounts of nuts or seeds – 1 Tablespoon to ½ cup)

Time may vary depending on size, type, temperature of nuts and type of microwave. Use a flat, microwave-safe dish, spread nuts/seeds evenly in a single layer.

Add a small amount of soft butter, margarine, or oil to nuts/seeds (1/2 teaspoon fat per ½ cup nuts/seeds).

Microwave on high for 1 minute.

Stir and microwave 1 more minute.

Check to see how toasting is going, add additional time in 30 second to 1 minute times, as needed, until nuts/seeds are lightly browned and smell fragrant. Be careful not to burn.

Nuts can also be oven toasted or stove-top toasted.

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Spinach, Strawberry & Pecan Salad

1 pound baby spinach, washed and dried
 1 pint strawberries, washed and halved
 1/4 cup pecans, toasted

Dressing

1/3 cup raspberry vinegar
 1 teaspoon dried mustard
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1/4 cup sugar
 1 cup olive oil
 1-1/2 Tbs. poppy seeds

Combine dressing ingredients except poppy seeds in a blender. Blend until mixed well. Add poppy seeds and stir dressing by hand.

Toss dressing with spinach, strawberries and hot pecans. The hot nuts will slightly wilt the greens.

Calories: 230, Carbohydrates: 12g, Total Fat: 20g, Cholesterol: 0mg, Saturated Fat: 2.5g, Dietary Fiber: 5g

% of Calories from Fat: 78%, Sodium: 190 mg, Protein: 4g

Source: Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Services

Apple Pecan Squash

2 medium acorn squash 1/2 cup butter
 2 cups finely chopped apples 1 tsp. cinnamon
 1/2 tsp. salt 2 tsp. lemon juice
 1 cup chopped pecans, divided Nutmeg, to taste

Directions

Cut squash in half crosswise and remove seeds. Bake, cut side down, at 350 degrees F for 45 minutes.

Scoop out cooked squash from shells and reserve shells.

Mix squash with butter, apples, cinnamon, salt, lemon juice and 3/4 cup chopped pecans. Spoon into shells and top with a dash of nutmeg and 1/4 cup chopped pecans. Bake at 350 degrees F for 10 minutes. Serves 4.

Source: N.C. Cooperative Extension, The Produce Lady



Serving Ideas

Pecans can be eaten plain as part of a healthy snack or added to a variety of other foods.

Sprinkle over or add to hot or cold cereals, yogurts, salads, main or side dishes, quick breads, or use as a coating for poultry or seafood. Pecans can also be substituted in recipes for most other nuts.

For additional ideas on healthy ways to enjoy pecans, check out, **Top 10 Ways to Enjoy Nuts**, from the Fruits & Veggies - More Matters website:

<http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/top-ten-ways-to-enjoy-nuts>

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Spiced Chili Pecans

1 Tablespoon water	1 egg white (large)	2 Tablespoons honey
3 cups unsalted pecans or mixed nuts	1 teaspoon salt	1/2 teaspoon chili powder
1 teaspoon smoked paprika	1 teaspoon cumin, ground	1 teaspoon coriander, ground

1. Preheat oven to 300°F.
2. Whisk water, egg white, honey in a large bowl. Add pecans/nuts and toss well to coat.
3. Mix together next 5 ingredients. Sprinkle over nuts, making sure nuts are coated evenly.
4. Spread pecans/nuts on a parchment-lined (or ungreased) baking sheet. Bake for 15-25 minutes. Stir to loosen pecans from baking sheet. Allow to cool completely on sheet pan. Store in air-tight container.

Source: AgriLife Extension Texas A&M System

Trail Mix

Trail Mix (16 servings • Serving size: 1/4 cup)

1 cup pecans (or other nuts)
 1/2 cup dark chocolate chips or M&M's
 1 cup dried fruit
 1/2 cup dried cranberries
 1 cup cereal* squares
 1/2 cup sunflower seeds (optional.)



Measure ingredients and put in a large zip-close bag. Shake to mix. Portion into single-serving zip-close bags.

* Substitute nutrient-rich foods such as whole-grain: cereal, crackers, popcorn and/or pretzels
 Per serving: 140 calories, 20 grams carbohydrate, 6 g fat, 3 g protein
 Source: adapted from North Dakota State University Extension Service

Roasted Vegetable & Pecan Salad

2 medium zucchini	2 medium summer squash	1 red onion
4 plum tomatoes	3/4 cup chopped pecans	4 teaspoons olive oil
1/2 teaspoon salt, divided	2 to 3 teaspoons Balsamic vinegar	
4 cups mixed salad greens	24 pecan halves	Parmesan cheese shavings (optional)

Directions

- Heat oven to 400°F. Lightly oil two baking sheets. Cut zucchini and summer squash lengthwise in half, then cut each half crosswise into large chunks (about 1 1/2-inch thick). In medium bowl, toss zucchini and squash with chopped pecans, 2 teaspoons olive oil and 1/4 teaspoon salt. Spread mixture in a single layer on one baking sheet. Set aside.
- Cut red onion into 1-inch thick wedges and place in same bowl. Cut tomatoes lengthwise into quarters and add to onion. Toss onion and tomatoes with remaining 2 teaspoons oil and 1/4 teaspoon salt. Spread mixture in a single layer on second baking sheet.
- Roast all vegetables 5 minutes. Turn vegetables and pecans and roast 4 to 5 minutes longer or until most of the vegetables are just tender and lightly browned-do not overcook. Combine all the vegetables and chopped pecans in a large bowl, sprinkle with vinegar and gently stir.

To serve, divide salad greens among plates. Top each with a mixture of vegetables and chopped pecans. Pour any liquid in bowl over vegetables. Garnish each serving with 3 pecan halves and, if desired, Parmesan cheese.

Source: International Tree Nut Council Nutrition Research & Education Foundation, NutHealth.org.