

Introduction

You can buy them at a roadside stand or farmers' market or you can pick them yourself. Picking strawberries has become an early summer tradition for many Maine families. In addition to the opportunity of selecting your own fresh vine ripe fruit, there is the appeal of an outing to a local farm and the chance to express support for local agriculture. This publication can help you get the most out of the Fresh Maine Strawberry season. It contains tips on selecting, picking and handling berries, as well as recipes for fresh berries. You can extend the season by following the directions for freezing berries. Remember, the Fresh Maine Strawberry season only lasts a few weeks. Don't miss the chance to enjoy this nutritious treat.

Nutrition

Not only are strawberries good to eat, they are good for us. An excellent source of Vitamin C, a cup of fresh strawberries provides almost twice the Recommended Daily Allowance. Capping, injuring, cutting, or juicing, however, will reduce the vitamin content. Strawberries, therefore, should not be cleaned until just before you use them.

NUTRITION PER CUP

| | |
|---------------|------------------|
| Calories | 55 |
| Protein | 1.0 gram |
| Fat | 0.7 gram |
| Carbohydrates | 12.5 grams |
| Calcium | 31.0 milligrams |
| Sodium | 1.0 milligram |
| Potassium | 244.0 milligrams |

Strawberries are also a source of Vitamin A, Iron and other minerals.

Ways to use fresh strawberries

Fresh Maine Strawberries without any trimmings are hard to beat. They are great combined with cereal, pudding, custard, other fruit and cooked rhubarb. And who doesn't love the old favorites such as strawberry shortcake and strawberries and ice cream?

Easy Strawberry Pie

1 cup sugar
3 tbsp. cornstarch
1 cup water
3 tbsp. strawberry jello
1 prepared pie shell
Cold fresh strawberries



Blend together:
1 cup sugar, 3 tbsp. cornstarch
Add:
1 cup water
Cook until thickened, remove from heat.

Add:
3 tbsp. strawberry jello
Pour over prepared pie shell filled with cold fresh berries.
Chill pie until glaze sets.



What to look for

The largest strawberries are not necessarily the tastiest, since size is influenced by many factors such as variety and growing conditions. Pick dry, firm, fully ripe berries, with green fresh looking caps. Part the leaves and look for hidden berries ready for harvest! Avoid berries with large uncolored or seedy areas which indicate poor taste. Berries with a dull shrunken appearance or that are soft, indicate over ripeness or the beginning of decay.

For More Information
Call The Produce Division

207.657.2877

752 Mayall Rd.
New Gloucester, ME 04260



From field
to your
table

Pick Your Own

Maine
Farm Fresh
Strawberries

Late June through mid-July

M-W 7:00 am - 1:00 pm
Th-Su 7:00 am - 6:00 pm, weather permitting

752 Mayall Rd.
New Gloucester, ME 04260

Recipes



Strawberry Pizza

Crust:

- 1/2 cup powdered sugar
- 1 1/2 sticks margarine, softened
- 1 1/2 cups flour

Mix the above ingredients and spread on a 12" pizza pan. Bake for 20 minutes at 350°. Cool.

Filling:

- 1 package (8 oz) cream cheese, softened
- 1 can (14 oz) sweetened condensed milk
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1/3 cup lemon juice

Beat cream cheese until fluffy; add condensed milk, vanilla and lemon juice. Spread over crust and cool until firm.

Topping:

- 3 cups frozen strawberries, thawed
- 1 cup sugar
- 4 tbsp. cornstarch

Mix together and bring to a boil, stirring constantly until thickened. Cool and spread over filling.

Strawberry Rhubarb Crisp

- 3/4 cup sugar
- 3 tbsp. cornstarch
- 1 cup old fashioned or quick oats, uncooked
- 1 tbsp. lemon juice
- 1/2 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- 1/2 cup flour
- 2 pints sliced strawberries
- 1/3 cup margarine
- 1 cup rhubarb slices
- Whipped cream for topping



Combine granulated sugar, cornstarch, and cinnamon. Add to combined fruit and juice, toss lightly. Spoon into 8" square baking dish. Combine oats, brown sugar and flour, cut in margarine until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Sprinkle over fruit. Bake at 375°, 10-15 minutes or until lightly browned and bubbly.

Strawberry Rhubarb Coffee Cake

Filling:

- 3 cups frozen sliced strawberries, thawed
- 3 cups frozen diced rhubarb
- 2 tbsp. lemon juice
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/3 cup cornstarch

Make the filling first so it can cool before use. Combine strawberries and rhubarb in saucepan. Cover and cook about 5 minutes. Add lemon juice, sugar and cornstarch and cook until thick.

Topping:

- 3/4 cup sugar
 - 1/2 cup flour
 - 1/4 cup butter or margarine
- Combine sugar and flour. Cut in butter to make fine crumbs.



Batter:

- 3 cups flour
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 cup butter or margarine
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 2 eggs, slightly beaten
- 1 tsp. vanilla

Preheat oven to 350°. Sift together flour, sugar, soda, baking powder and salt. Cut in butter to make fine crumbs. Beat together the buttermilk, eggs, and vanilla. Add to dry ingredients and stir until just moistened. Spread 1/2 batter in greased 9" x 13" pan. Carefully spread strawberry rhubarb filling over batter. Spoon remaining batter in small mounds over filling. Sprinkle topping over all. Bake 40-45 minutes.

Strawberry Jam Coffee Cake

- 2 cups flour
- 3/4 cup jam
- 4 tsp. baking powder
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 1 tbsp. sugar
- 1/4 cup chopped nuts
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1 tbsp. margarine
- 1/3 cup shortening
- 1/4 tsp. cinnamon
- 1/4 cup milk
- 1 egg, beaten

Sift together, flour, baking powder, sugar and salt. Cut in shortening to a coarse crumb mixture. Set aside 3/4 cup for topping. Combine milk and egg; add to crumb mixture, stirring only until moistened. Pat into greased, 8" x 8" pan, spread with jam. Combine reserved crumbs and remaining ingredients to make topping. Sprinkle over jam. Bake for 20-35 minutes in 400°

Taking care of picked berries

Cool the strawberries as soon as possible after picking. They will keep in the refrigerator for three or more days depending upon the initial quality of the berry. After a few days, however, berries will lose their bright color and fresh flavor. Do not clean the strawberries until just before use. Store them uncovered in a shallow container. When ready to use, wash them quickly in cold water, but do not soak them.

How to pick strawberries

Strawberries are a very tender fruit and will bruise easily if squeezed. The best way to pick fruit is to: Grasp the stem between the forefinger and thumbnail about 1/2 inch above the berry. Then with a slight twisting motion, pinch the stem and allow the berry to roll into the palm of your hand. Berries picked this way should then be gently placed into your picking container. Don't overfill your container or try to pack the berries down because injury will occur.

How to freeze strawberries

Strawberries are easy to freeze. There are three methods of freezing berries, dry-sugar pack, syrup pack and unsweetened pack. The dry-sugar pack gives the best flavor and color retention for sliced or crushed berries. For whole frozen berries a syrup pack is recommended because it produces a plump berry after thawing. Berries can be frozen without sweetening but they will not be as high quality as sweetened. Ascorbic acid (vitamin C) may be used to help prevent darkening of the berries. Eight quarts (12 lbs) of fresh berries will yield approximately 12 pints of frozen berries. No matter which type of pack you choose, be sure to use only firm, fully ripe berries. Wash only a few berries at a time in cold water and drain in absorbent paper. When packing containers, using whole, sliced or crushed berries, be sure to leave at least 1/4 inch to 1 inch air space. Berries should be thawed in the refrigerator in airtight container.

Dry-Sugar Pack

Halve, quarter, slice or crush berries. Sprinkle sugar over berries using 2/3 to 3/4 cup per pint of fruit. Gently turn berries over until the sugar is dissolved. Package and freeze.

Syrup Pack

Make syrup using 1 1/4 cups water to each cup of sugar. Place berries in containers and cover with cold syrup using about 1/2 to 2/3 cup of syrup for each pint container.

Unsweetened Pack

Pack whole, sliced, or crushed berries in containers. Cover with water or berry juice.