



# STRAWBERRIES

## Varieties

June bearing strawberries produce a crop during a two to three week period in the spring. Everbearing strawberries produce three periods of flowers and fruit during the spring, summer and fall. Everbearers do not produce many runners. Day neutral strawberries will produce fruit throughout the growing season and are great for gardeners who have limited space. Strawberry varieties should be selected on the basis of dessert quality; preserving quality; disease resistance and season of maturation.

## Description

Strawberries are the first fruit to ripen in spring. One cup of strawberries is only 55 calories. Strawberries are a member of the rose family and generally feature the shape of a heart. The strawberry is the only fruit with the seeds on the outside of the fruit. There are, on average, 200 seeds on a strawberry. Fruit size of early varieties is smaller. The flavor of a strawberry is influenced by weather, the variety and stage of ripeness when harvested. Strawberries are delicate, requiring gentle handling to prevent bruising.

## Nutrient Content

One cup sliced strawberries, unsweetened

- calories: 45
- fat - 11%
- protein - 7%
- carbohydrate - 82%
- dietary fiber: 1.3-3.0g
- sodium: low
- Potassium: high
- Vitamin C: 140% - ounce for ounce more Vitamin C than citrus fruit

## Origin

In the early 18th century, French explorer discovered a plump red berry cultivated by the Indians of Chile in South America. They took several plants home and crossed with the wild meadow strawberries that had been discovered in colonial Virginia. The result was luscious strawberry that is similar to what we eat today. Ancient Romans believed that the berries alleviated symptoms of melancholy, fainting, inflammations, fevers, throat infections, kidney stones, halitosis, attacks of gout and diseases of the blood, liver and spleen.

## Recipe

### Strawberry Pie

1 baked pie crust  
3 oz. package of strawberry flavor Jello  
1/2 cup granulated sugar  
1-1/2 cup boiling water  
1 tblsp lemon juice  
1 pint of fresh strawberries  
whipped topping  
Mix jello powder with the sugar. Add boiling water and stir until thoroughly dissolved. Add the lemon juice. Refrigerate until mixture starts to gel. Arrange strawberries on crust. Spoon thickened gel over the berries and refrigerate. Serve with whipping topping.

## Uses

Strawberries can be used in a variety of different ways. Probably the first thing that comes to mind is a favorite mouth-watering dessert of berries mixed with fresh cream. Other ideas for using this fresh summer time fruit is to crush the berries and add them to fresh lemonade for a delightful change to this summer drink. Or perhaps, make a strawberry cooler by combining equal amounts of sliced berries, yogurt, and milk in a blender, sweeten with honey. For quick breakfast, top pancakes, waffles, french toast with fresh strawberries or just some strawberry syrup. Make strawberry butter by adding butter, strawberries and honey. Consider cooking up your favorite strawberry jam or how about a good strawberry pie.

## Availability

Fresh berry season begins with strawberries, the most popular of all berries. Although strawberries can be found in supermarkets almost any time of year, in Pennsylvania strawberry season is the 3-4 weeks from late May to late June when strawberry plants produce fruit at its best for our pleasure and nourishment. The exact timing of the season varies from year to year depending on weather conditions. You can experience the goodness of berry season by buying fresh picked strawberries or visiting a pick-your-own strawberry patch.