



# Blueberry BASICS

In addition to their sweet, delectable flavor and visual appeal, blueberries are jam-packed with good nutrition. They're a convenient little berry—at home in pies and pancakes, salads, smoothies and sauces. Or, simply wash and eat—no peeling, pitting or slicing needed!

## HOW TO BUY BLUEBERRIES

Fresh blueberries are most plentiful during the summer months, but you will find them in the market all year round, along with frozen, canned and dried blueberries.

When purchasing fresh blueberries, look for firm, plump, dry berries with smooth skins and a silvery sheen. Size doesn't matter, but color does—reddish berries aren't ripe, but can be used in cooking. Avoid soft or shriveled fruit, or any signs of mold. Containers with juice stains indicate that the fruit may be bruised.

## HOW TO STORE BLUEBERRIES

Refrigerate fresh blueberries as soon as you get them home, in their original plastic pack or in a covered bowl or storage container. Wash berries just before use. Use within 10 days of purchase.

## HOW TO FREEZE BLUEBERRIES

The secret to successful freezing is to use berries that are unwashed and completely dry. Discard berries that look bruised or shriveled. Place the berries, still in their original plastic pack, in a resealable plastic bag. Or, transfer berries to freezer containers or resealable freezer bags. The berries will freeze individually and you can remove just the portion you need. Remember to rinse them before using.

## BLUEBERRY SERVING SUGGESTIONS

- Add blueberries to your favorite muffin recipe—about 1 cup for each batch of 12 muffins. Gently stir in the blueberries at the end (unthawed, if frozen).
- Dot pancake batter with blueberries as soon as batter has been poured on the griddle.
- Make a breakfast parfait by layering blueberries with flavored yogurt and granola cereal in a tall glass.
- Sprinkle blueberries and chopped walnuts over dressed mixed greens.
- Serve blueberries with sour cream or yogurt or with a scoop of cottage cheese.

## BLUEBERRY NUTRITION FACTS

- Only 80 fat-free calories per cup, blueberries are a good source of dietary fiber and vitamin C.
- Blueberries rank high in antioxidants that help protect against cancer, heart disease and other age-related diseases.
- Researchers have found compounds in blueberries that help prevent urinary tract infection.
- Just one-half cup of blueberries helps meet the recommended 5 to 9 servings a day of colorful fruits and veggies.

### Quick Blueberry Sauce

- 1/4 cup sugar, more or less to taste
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 2 cups fresh or frozen blueberries
- 1/2 cup water or fruit juice

In a saucepan, combine sugar and cornstarch; stir in blueberries. Gradually stir in water. Over medium-high heat, bring to a boil, stirring constantly; boil until sauce is thick and blueberries are softened, about 1 minute. Serve over pancakes, waffles, ice cream or sherbet, cheesecake or sliced pound cake.

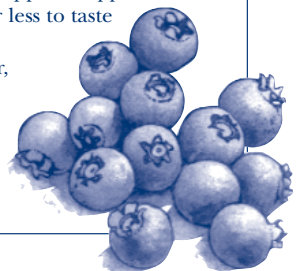
YIELD: About 1-1/2 cups

### Blueberry Smoothie

- 2 cups fresh, canned or slightly thawed frozen blueberries
- 1 cup (8-ounce container) lowfat vanilla or other flavored yogurt
- 1 cup fruit juice, such as orange, pineapple or apple
- 1 tablespoon honey or sugar, more or less to taste

In the container of an electric blender, place blueberries, yogurt, juice, and honey; whirl until smooth. Serve immediately.

YIELD: 2 or 3 portions (about 3 cups)



For more blueberry information visit the  
U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council at [www.usbbc.org](http://www.usbbc.org).