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Deborah Rhoades, MA, RD, FAND
Extension Educator, Family & Consumer Sciences

BLUE-TIFUL RECIPES FOR BLUEBERRY MONTH

July is – National Blueberry Month so grab your bucket and enjoy the Frederick County Blueberry Season. You'll see blueberries at local farmer's markets and orchards, and you can even pick your own. The Homegrown Frederick website, www.homegrownfrederick.com features a "Find Local Products," section to guide you where to find them.

Blueberries are packed with nutrition and easily fit into all types of diets. Some reasons to love them:

- Low in calories, 70 in one cup
- High in Vitamin C
- High in Vitamin K
- High in manganese
- Good source of fiber, 4.06 grams in a cup
- Heart healthy certified by the American Heart Association since they are fat, cholesterol, and sodium free
- Source of flavonoid - Anthocyanin
- Source of antioxidant - Resveratrol

For an overview of the many health benefits of this popular fruit visit the USDA Agricultural Research Service brief "Blueberries and Health," at <https://www.ars.usda.gov/plains-area/gfnd/gfhnrc/docs/news-2014/blueberries-and-health/> It will convince you to make them a daily fare. Research is ongoing on how blueberries can effect brain, gut and cardiovascular health, cancer prevention and insulin response.

Eat them for their health benefits or just because they are delicious. Enjoy them fresh while in season. Add them to your morning cereal, pancakes, waffles or plain/vanilla yogurt. Store in the refrigerator in their original carton or place in a sealed plastic container and use within 10 days of purchase.

To freeze, use fresh berries that are completely dry and place in resealable plastic bags and place in the freeze. Frozen berries keep for six months. Rinse before use.

Dried blueberries are great for snacking. One cup dried has 317 calories so be aware of portion size. They are great to keep on hand for making muffins or scones.

Blueberries are one the easiest fruits to harvest so with all this extra time at home plant a few bushes. Scientist at the USDA Agriculture Research Service, have developed a bush called **Nocturne**, especially cold hardy, and thus ideal for Frederick County home owners. Average productions is 12 pounds of berries per plant.

For some delicious blue-tiful ways to enjoy blueberries try our recipes. The blueberry council (<https://www.blueberrycouncil.org>) offers over hundreds of recipes everything from alcoholic beverages to chef creations. Who knew such a small little fruit could bring so much flavor and health! Bounce into markets and get some now.

NANCY'S BLUEBERRY GINGERBREAD

This recipe is a favorite of former Family & Consumer Science Educator, Nancy Lewis

1/2 cup shortening or butter
1 cup sugar
1 egg
2 cups sifted all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon ginger
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup milk
1 teaspoon baking soda
3 tablespoons molasses
1 cup blueberries
3 tablespoons sugar

Cream the shortening and sugar. Add the egg and mix well. Mix and sift together the flour, ginger, cinnamon, and salt, and add to the creamed mixture alternately with the milk in which the soda has been dissolved. Add the molasses. Add the blueberries and pour the batter into a greased and floured pan (9 x 9 square or round cake pan). Sprinkle the three tablespoons of sugar over the batter in the pan and bake at 350°F for 50 minutes to one hour. The sugar sprinkled over the top makes a sweet crusty topping when the cake is baked. This cake is delicious warm from the oven, cold, and even better when two days old.

BLUEBERRY WATERMELON FROSTY -- Recipe from [U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council](#)

1 container (6 ounces) frozen lemonade or limeade concentrate, unthawed
2 cups fresh blueberries
2 cups watermelon cubes, seeds removed
1 cup ice cubes

In a blender container, combine lemonade concentrate, blueberries and watermelon. Purée until very smooth. Add ice cubes. Blend until mixture is slushy. Add sugar, if needed.

BLUEBERRY SYRUP

2 cups fresh or frozen thawed blueberries
1/4 cup sugar
1/4 cup water
1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg

Combine all ingredients in a small saucepan and bring to boiling over medium heat. Reduce heat to low; simmer for about 7 minutes or until syrup is thickened. Makes about 1 1/2 cups.

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Deborah Rhoades, MA, RD, FAND, is a licensed Registered Dietitian, Fellow of the Academy of Nutrition Dietetics, and Extension Educator in Family and Consumer Sciences.

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