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## **FRESH CRANBERRIES BOUNCE INTO MARKETS**

While today almost every fruit and vegetable is available year-round, there has been resurgence in eating seasonally and understanding when and how food is grown. One of the few fresh fruits available only in the fall, cranberries are bouncing back (yes, cranberries bounce!) into grocery stores this fall season.

Americans consume some 400 million pounds of cranberries each year, with 20 percent, roughly 80 million pounds, consumed Thanksgiving week. While cranberries can be enjoyed all year long, the taste of fresh, whole berries are unique to this time of year, available only from October through December.

Although Ocean Spray® cranberry sauce has been a staple on America's Thanksgiving tables for the last 80 years, most Americans are still unfamiliar with how this classic American fruit is grown. While the first crop was harvested back in 1816, there is still a lot to learn. Many people do not realize that Ocean Spray® is a cooperative, owned by the same folks who harvest the cranberries. More than 700 families strong, the cooperative is comprised of third-, fourth- and fifth-generation growers – one family has been harvesting cranberries for more than 138 years. You can meet the growers and learn more at [www.oceanspray.com/heritage](http://www.oceanspray.com/heritage)

Every year, when cranberries reach their peak color and flavor, distinct dry and wet harvest methods are used to pick the fruit. The dry harvest produces fresh, whole berries that are only sold as fresh produce in the fall while cranberries from the wet harvest are used to produce juice, sauce and dried cranberries. Ocean Spray's® cleverly created the name Craisins® for dried cranberries which is how they are typically referred to.

By enjoying produce in season, as Mother Nature intended, consumers take full advantage of the taste good, good for you benefits of the cranberry, while the fruit is at its peak in both flavor and nutrients. Adding cranberries to dishes this fall is a great way to meet your fruit requirements with the bonus of its healthy antioxidant properties. Just 1 cup of regular cranberries or 1/3 cup of Craisins® is equal to a serving of fruit. They are both naturally fat-, cholesterol-, sodium- free and a good source of fiber.

When choosing cranberries select firm, plump berries with a high luster. Good quality cranberries will bounce. Avoid brown or dark, as well as soft or leaky berries, since they may

produce an off-flavor. Color and size may vary depending on the variety of cranberry but all should have some red color. Cranberries can be stored in the refrigerator, as is from the store, for two weeks. They freeze well, unwashed and double-wrapped in plastic for nine to twelve months.

A 12-ounce bag of cranberries contains about 3 cups. To prepare fresh cranberries for cooking, sort out soft berries and stems, rinse in cold water, and drain well. Frozen berries should not be thawed before using; simply follow recipe directions using frozen berries.

Fresh cranberries contain 46 calories, 9 grams of fiber, and 12% of the RDA for vitamin C per 1 cup serving. They are an excellent source of antioxidants and a great addition to your favorite muffin batter. Use 1/2 cup chopped berries, sprinkled with 2 tablespoons of sugar, for every 6 muffins. They add color and tartness to homemade applesauce, baked apples and pies.

According to the National Kidney Foundation, drinking one cup of cranberry juice daily may help prevent recurrent urinary tract infections. Other cranberry products, like dried and fresh, provide similar benefits. Diabetics can find sugar-free cranberry drinks and make their own cranberry sauce using artificial sweetener.

Cranberries can put color, nutrition and good taste into your fall and winter menus. The cranberry ice is a refreshing dessert to end the Thanksgiving meal, or for a new twist on pumpkin pie try the ice cream tartlets.

## **CRANBERRY-ORANGE NUT BREAD**

1 cup whole wheat flour  
1 cup all-purpose flour  
1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder  
1/2 teaspoon soda  
1 cup sugar  
Boiling water  
Juice of 1 orange OR 3/4 cup orange juice  
2 tablespoons oil  
1 egg, well beaten  
1 cup chopped cranberries  
1/2 to 1 cup chopped walnuts

Combine flour, baking powder, soda, and sugar; set aside. Add enough boiling water to orange juice to make 3/4 cup liquid; add butter and stir until melted. Stir into dry ingredients. Add egg, mixing until smooth. Fold in cranberries and walnuts.

Spoon batter into a greased and floured 9x5x3-inch loaf pan; bake at 350° for 50-55 minutes or until bread tests done. Makes 1 loaf.

## **CRANBERRY-APPLE ICE**

2 pounds fresh cranberries  
4 cups unsweetened apple juice, divided  
1 cup sugar  
1 teaspoon grated orange rind

Wash cranberries; combine with 2 cups apple juice and sugar in a large saucepan. Cook 7 to 10 minutes or until cranberries pop. Place into an electric blender and process until smooth. Add remaining apple juice and orange rind to cranberry mixture. Chill.

Pour mixture into freezer can of a 1-gallon hand-turned or electric freezer. Freeze according to manufacturer's instructions. Makes 2 quarts (105 calories per ½-cup serving).

**NOTE:** Ice may be stored in freezer compartment of refrigerator until serving time. Let stand at room temperature 10 to 15 minutes before serving.

## **AUTUMN CHILL ICE CREAM TARTLETS**

12 mini-graham cracker pie shells  
1 14-ounce can Ocean Spray® Jellied Cranberry Sauce OR 1 1/2 cups homemade cranberry sauce  
1 15-ounce can pumpkin  
2 pints vanilla ice cream, slightly softened  
2 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice

Place pie shells in two 13 x 9-inch pans. Place cranberry sauce in small bowl and beat with a fork until smooth. Set aside.

Beat pumpkin, ice cream and pumpkin pie spice together in a medium bowl with an electric mixer. If mixture is too soft to mound, place in freezer for 20 minutes. Spoon 1 tablespoon of cranberry sauce into pie shell. Fill pie shells with pumpkin ice cream. Freeze until firm. Remove from pans, cover with plastic wrap or place in resealable food storage bags. Store in freezer.

To serve, lift tartlets out of foil pan, if desired, and place on serving dish. Let stand 30 minutes at room temperature to soften slightly before serving. Top each tartlet with a drizzle of cranberry sauce and a dollop of whipped cream. Makes 12 tartlets.

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