BLUEBERRY MONTH

One of the many designations for July is – National Blueberry Month. So as you enjoy summer, enjoy the Frederick County Blueberry Season. You’ll see blueberries in the grocery store, at the Farmer’s Markets, at the local orchards, and you can even pick your own.

Blueberries are one of the easier fruits to harvest yourself – nice bushes, plentiful berries, very little bending! So, with that in mind here are some good reasons to eat plenty of blueberries during National Blueberry Month!

- Low in calories, only 84 per cup
- High in Vitamin C supplying 24% daily need
- Good source of fiber, 3.4 grams in a cup
- Source of flavonoid - Anthocyanin
- Source of antioxidant - Resveratrol

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.

For some delicious blueberry recipes for fresh picked or frozen berries you picked earlier in the season, try our recipes below. Our former co-worker Nancy, who’s moved back to Maine, will tell you the Blueberry Gingerbread is the best and we would have to agree since she made it for us several times, usually with her Maine blueberries! For more info and recipes check out their website at www.blueberrycouncil.org.

Agricultural Research Magazine just announced a new blueberry variety has been developed by scientist at the USDA, Agriculture Research Service, called Nocturne. Especially cold hardy it
is ideal for Frederick County home owners, averaging 12 pounds per plant. Expect to see it within the next two years for purchase.

**NANCY’S BLUEBERRY GINGERBREAD**
Of course Nancy says it tastes better with Maine blueberries!

1/2 cup shortening  
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 SCONES**

3/4 cup low-fat buttermilk  
3 tablespoons sugar  
1 teaspoon vanilla  
1 large egg  
1/4 cup cornmeal  
1 cup all-purpose flour  
1 cup whole wheat flour  
4 teaspoons baking powder  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
3 tablespoons chilled butter, cut into small pieces  
1 cup fresh or frozen blueberries  
Cooking spray

Preheat oven to 375°. Combine first 4 ingredients in a medium bowl, stirring with a whisk. Lightly spoon flour into dry measuring cup, level with a knife. Combine flours, baking powder and salt in a large bowl, stirring with a whisk. Cut in butter with a pastry blender or 2 knives until mixture resembles coarse meal. Gently fold in blueberries. Add milk mixture, stirring just until moist (dough will be sticky).
Turn dough out onto a floured surface, pat dough into an 8-inch circle. **Resist temptation to knead the dough; doing so would break apart the tender blueberries. Cut dough into 10 wedges, and place the dough wedges on a baking sheet coated with cooking spray. Bake scones at 375° for 18 minutes or until golden. Serve warm. Makes 10 servings. NOTE: Leftover scones are nice with tea later in the day. Also, make scones a day or two ahead, and store in an airtight container.

**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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