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LIGHTEN UP IN THE NEW YEAR WITH BLUEBERRIES

It's a new year! Are you ready for a new you? Changing eating and exercise habits isn't easy, but eating good-for-you foods that are delicious and satisfying can help you stick to your plan and achieve your goals. Blueberries are a great example of a tasty, versatile food that you can enjoy often.

Blueberries, both fresh and frozen, are available in markets now. When you have them on hand, you can take them straight from the fridge or freezer to use in many ways. For example, blueberries give a shot of fruity flavor sprinkled over cereal in the morning or tossed into a green salad for lunch. Or, take out a handful and pop them like candy! With only 80 calories per one-cup serving, blueberries fit right into your eating plan.

Blueberries also make a delicious ingredient in cooked dishes. **Savory Apple-Blueberry Compote** (photo), for example, adds a kick of flavor and color to pork or poultry. Apples and fresh or frozen blueberries give the sauce a slightly sweet, slightly tart flavor making it a refreshing and lighter alternative to gravy.

For lunch or as a side dish, toss together a **Blueberry Waldorf Salad** (photo).

Blueberries, crisp green apple wedges, celery, pecans and baby spinach are drizzled with a colorful blueberry vinaigrette. The vinaigrette can also be served on lettuce salads or as a dip for fresh fruit.

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Even if you're dieting, you can swing dessert when it's low-calorie, high-flavor **Blueberry Poached Pears**, which is just as delicious served at room temperature or chilled. If there's any left over, top it with yogurt the next morning!

Fresh and frozen blueberries are available virtually every day of the year. In North America, the blueberry harvest begins in April in the Southern states and moves north to Canada, extending through late September. In the winter and early spring, blueberries are imported from South America where growers and packers use some of the world's most modern techniques and equipment. Throughout the process, rigorous quality control measures assure that the fruit arrives in the U.S. as fresh and flavorful as possible.

The USDA recommends adults eat two cups of fruit a day – all year round. Fresh or frozen blueberries can help you fulfill that recommendation. A one-cup serving of blueberries is a good source of dietary fiber, vitamin C and manganese. They also contain antioxidants thought to help reduce the risk of chronic diseases.*

* Wu, X. et al. *J Food Composition and Analysis* 2004, 17: 407-422.

SAVORY APPLE-BLUEBERRY COMPOTE

- 1 tablespoon butter or margarine
- 2 Golden Delicious apples, peeled, cored, and thinly sliced
- 1/4 cup thinly sliced onion
- 1 teaspoon cornstarch
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 cup fresh or frozen blueberries, divided
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice

In a medium skillet over medium heat, melt butter. Add apples and onion; cover and cook, stirring frequently, until apples are almost tender, 3 to 4 minutes. Meanwhile, in a small bowl, whisk together cornstarch, sugar, salt and pepper; stir in 2/3 cup water. Stir water mixture and 1/2 cup of the blueberries into the apples; cook, stirring gently, until thickened and sauce begins to color, 1 to 3 minutes. Remove from heat, stir in lemon juice and remaining 1/2 cup of blueberries. Serve with sliced pork or ham, chicken, turkey or game.

YIELD: 4 portions (about 1/2 cup each)

Photo #: BC-45

Per portion: 101 calories, 19 g carbohydrate, 3 g total fat, 2 g saturated fat

BLUEBERRY WALDORF SALAD

- 1 cup fresh or thawed frozen blueberries, divided
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 2 tablespoons orange marmalade
- 2 teaspoons lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 4 cups (about 4 ounces) baby spinach
- 1 tart apple (e.g. Granny Smith), cored and thinly sliced
- 2 ribs celery, cut into 1-1/2-inch matchsticks (about 1 cup)
- 1/3 cup pecan or walnut halves, toasted

To prepare dressing: In a blender container, combine 1/2 cup of the blueberries, oil, marmalade, lemon juice, mustard and salt; blend until a smooth, thick dressing forms. In a bowl, toss spinach with apple slices, celery, pecans and remaining 1/2 cup blueberries. Arrange equally on four serving plates. Just before serving, blend dressing again until smooth; drizzle over the salads. Serve immediately.

YIELD: 4 servings

Photo #: BC-IC-21

Per portion: 255 calories, 19 g carbohydrate, 20 g total fat, 2 g saturated fat

BLUEBERRY POACHED PEARS

- 4 ripe, firm, pears, halved, cored and peeled
- 1 cup dry white wine or white grape juice
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 3 strips lemon rind (each 3 x 1/2-inch)
- 1 cup fresh or frozen blueberries
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice

In a small skillet, arrange pears flat side down. In a small bowl, stir wine and sugar until sugar dissolves; add to skillet along with lemon rind; bring to a boil. Lower heat to medium; cover and simmer until just tender, 5 to 7 minutes. Remove pears to a medium bowl. Discard lemon strips. Stir blueberries and lemon juice into hot poaching liquid. Pour over pears. Cool to room temperature; cover and refrigerate until ready to serve. To serve, divide into 4 dessert dishes or wine glasses; garnish with fresh mint sprigs, if desired.

YIELD: 4 portions

Per portion: 121 calories, 31 g carbohydrate, 0.5 g total fat, 0 g saturated fat

PHOTO CAPTIONS:



Savory Apple-Blueberry Compote adds vivid flavor and color to roast pork.

Photo #: BC-45



Crisp and vibrant Blueberry Waldorf Salad is served with a tasty blueberry dressing – easy to make in the blender!

Photo #: BC-IC-21

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Free Leaflet

GET ON BOARD WITH BLUEBERRIES!

Get a free leaflet filled with amazing blueberry facts and yummy recipes! Designed for families with young children, “Get on Board with Blueberries” is filled with family fun. You’ll find easy recipes, such as Blueberry Dessert Pizza and Blueberry Fruit Pops that the kids can help make.

The leaflet offers information and tips for parents and caregivers, including a chart of the USDA recommendations for the amount of fruit for children.

To order the leaflet, send us a note or email. If you’d like a quantity of up to 100 leaflets for classroom or other group use, please specify the number and how you will use them.

Get on Board with Blueberries!

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(In your email include your name and mailing address and specify the name of the leaflet on the subject line.)

Check www.blueberry.org for blueberry information and easy recipes.

