



K-State Extension Connection

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Celebrate Strawberry Season

Sure, you can find strawberries year-round. But there's nothing like the real, ripe, red, juicy in-season stuff. And, we're thanking our lucky stars that strawberry season's just beginning.



Strawberries are one of the first fruits to ripen in the spring. They are the siren call of early-season farmers markets in warmer and temperate climates, harkening people to market before that day's supply runs out. Perfectly ripe strawberries are best eaten out of hand, of course, but they also make great additions to salads and plenty of desserts.

The Romans prized wild strawberries for their medicinal properties. Ounce for ounce, strawberries have more Vitamin C than citrus fruit. According to the American Cancer Society, foods rich in Vitamin C may lower the risk of cancers of the gastrointestinal tract.

The American Indians were already eating strawberries when the Colonists arrived. The crushed berries were mixed with cornmeal and baked into strawberry bread. After trying this bread, Colonists developed their own version of the recipe and Strawberry Shortcake was created.

Red, juicy and conically shaped, the strawberry is a member of the rose family and has grown wild for centuries. Strawberries are the only fruit with seeds on the outside. The

strawberry probably got its name originally from the Anglo-Saxon word *strewaberige*, which means “spreading berry.”

Choose brightly colored, dry, firm, shiny, plump berries that still have fresh-looking green caps attached. Avoid soft, dull looking, or shriveled berries. Since strawberries do not ripen after being picked, avoid berries that are partly white or otherwise unripe.

It may seem obvious to say, but strawberries should smell like strawberries. Take a whiff before you buy.

Do not wash or hull strawberries until ready to use. Store (preferably in a single layer on a paper towel) in a moisture proof container in the refrigerator for 2-3 days.

To wash strawberries, place berries in a large colander and rinse gently with cool water. Lay strawberries in a single layer on a clean kitchen towel or layer of paper towels and pat dry.

When Measuring Strawberries

1 1/2 pounds = 2 pints or 1 quart

1 small basket = 1 pint

1 pint = 3 1/4 cups whole berries

1 pint = 2 1/4 cups sliced berries

1 pint = 1 2/3 cup pureed berries

1 cup = about 4 ounces

Strawberries are sugar-sweet, affordable, and omnipresent -- even if you can't pick your own, you'll find pints and quarts of them at your local Farmers Markets and in your supermarket's produce aisle. These berries are delicious on their own, sprinkled with sugar, or in breakfast recipes, desserts, and even salads. As the season for local strawberries approaches, enjoy this delicious and nutritious berry in a variety of ways.

For additional information, contact the Wildcat Extension District, Crawford County, 620-724-8233, Labette County, 620-784-5337, Montgomery County, 620-331-2690, Pittsburg Office, Expanded Food and Nutrition Education (EFNEP), 620-232-1930. Our website is <http://www.wildcatdistrict.k-state.edu/> or follow us on Facebook: Wildcat Extension District.

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