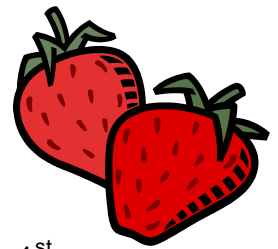


STRAWBERRIES



Strawberry picking season is just around the corner. Strawberries are the 1st fruit to ripen in the spring. Their flavor is influenced by weather, the variety and stage of ripeness when harvested. 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.

1 cup strawberries contain:

50 calories	23 mg calcium
1 gm protein	95 mg vitamin C
11 gm carbohydrates	44 IU vitamin A
0 gm fat	4 gm dietary fiber

1 pound of strawberries = 4 cups of sliced strawberries

Strawberry Trivia:

- Greek & Roman times, the strawberry was a wild plant
- Strawberries were considered a symbol of Venus, the Goddess of Love, because of its heart shapes and red color.
- American Indians ate crushed berries mixed with cornmeal & baked into strawberry bread. When Colonists tried this they modified the recipe & created “Strawberry Shortcakes”.
- Over 53% of 7-9 year olds pick strawberries as their favorite fruit.
- Average of 200 seeds in every strawberry.
- Strawberries are the **ONLY** fruit with their seeds on the outside.



How to Pick A Strawberry:

- Look for bright red berries with fresh green caps.
- Visually check each package, making sure there are no signs of mold growth. If one berry is molded, mold spores travel throughout the entire package.
- U-pick strawberry farms sell berries by the pound:
 - Select plump, firm, fully red berries
 - Small berries are often most flavorful
 - Do not over fill your carton with berries, they bruise easily
 - Grasp the stem just above the berry between the forefinger & thumbnail; pull with a slight twisting motion.
- Berries to be used immediately may be picked any time of day, but if you plan to hold the fruit for a few days, try to pick in the early morning or on cool, cloudy days. When picked in the heat of day the berries become soft and easily bruise.

How to Store and Serve A Strawberry:

- Refrigerator storage does not improve the quality of fresh berries.
- Should be left at room temperature for a few hours.
- Store unwashed berries loosely covered with plastic wrap in the coldest part of refrigerator for 2-3 days.
- DO NOT wash berries until ready to use.
- To wash: place berries in a colander & rinse under cold running water.
- After washing, remove the green cap with a plastic tipped vegetable peeler or paring knife without removing any fruit.

