

Reasons for the Seasons

Produce Tips for Placer & Nevada County Consumers

Local Season
April thru
August



STRAWBERRIES

Strawberries are the most popular of the berry family. The outside flesh is covered with tiny seeds. Can you guess how many seeds are in just one strawberry? If you guessed 200, you are right!

Nutrition Benefits

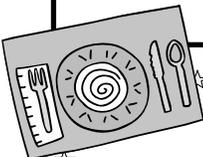
Strawberries contain more vitamin C than any other member of the berry family. One-half cup also supplies more fiber than a slice of whole wheat bread!

Strawberries are:

- ◆ Fat, cholesterol, or sodium-free
- ◆ Good source of fiber
- ◆ High in of vitamin C
- ◆ High in of folate

Serving Tips

- ◆ Stir berries into yogurt.
- ◆ Add berries to batters for pancakes, waffles, and muffins.
- ◆ Scatter on cereal.
- ◆ Puree berries with milk or juice for a delicious smoothie.
- ◆ Slice into a colorful fruit or spinach salad.
- ◆ Pour sparkling cider over berries for an elegant dessert.



Tips for Smart Snacking

- Offer snacks from the five food groups (Vegetables, Fruits, Grains, Protein, and Dairy) which make up *MyPlate*. Snacks should contribute nutrients without supplying too much energy.
- Involve children in creating and tasting healthy snacks. Kids can practice their fine motor skills.
- Kids like foods that appeal to their senses. They love eating finger foods and are more willing to try foods that vary in flavor, texture, color, and shape.
- Snacks can be nutritious, delicious, and inexpensive. Examples include: graham or animal crackers, pretzels, low-fat cheese, fresh fruits, vegetables, and filled and rolled tortillas.



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Locally Grown Varieties

Chandler, Brighton, Quinalt, Sequoia, Diamante

Shopping Tips

- ✓ Berries should be plump, dry, and firm with a bright red color and natural shine.
- ✓ The caps should be fresh, green, and intact.
- ✓ Choose berries very carefully. They often come in opaque boxes that may conceal inferior fruit beneath the perfect berries on the top.



Handling and Storage

- ◆ Store strawberries in the refrigerator and do not wash them until you are ready to eat them.
- ◆ Just before using, wash strawberries with the caps attached.
- ◆ For best flavor, allow the strawberries to reach room temperature before serving.
- ◆ Strawberries are picked at their peak of freshness and do not ripen after harvesting. They are only good for a few days, so eat them as soon as possible after you buy them.

Preparation

Sort berries before serving and remove any bad ones. Rinse the fruit under cold running water, drain, and gently pat dry. Keep the caps of strawberries intact until after they're rinsed and drained, as the opening left by the removal of the cap will allow the berries to absorb water. Use your fingers, a paring knife, or a strawberry huller to take off the caps.

- ◆ **Freezing:** Berries are highly perishable. Fortunately, berries freeze beautifully. Simply wash and drain them thoroughly, then spread them out in a single layer on a cookie sheet. Place them in the freezer until they are solidly frozen. Transfer berries to a heavy plastic bag. They'll keep for up to a year in the freezer.
- ◆ **Sauces:** Berry sauces can be made in minutes. Gently heat fresh or frozen berries in a small saucepan. Crush berries with a fork so that they release their juices and "melt" into a pourable sauce. Reserve some of the whole berries and stir them in after you take the pan off the heat. Add a little sugar to the sauce, if necessary. Stir in cornstarch dissolved in water for a thicker sauce.

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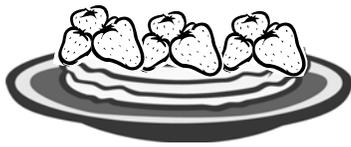
STRAWBERRY BANANA PANCAKES

(4 SERVINGS)

INGREDIENTS:

Strawberries:

- 2 cups sliced fresh strawberries
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract



Pancakes:

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 egg
- 3/4 cup milk
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 2 medium ripe bananas, cut into 1/4-inch slices

DIRECTIONS:

1. In a bowl, combine the strawberries, sugar and vanilla. Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour or overnight.
2. For pancakes, combine the flour, sugar, baking power, and salt in a bowl. Combine the egg, milk, and oil in a separate bowl. Stir into dry ingredients just until moistened.
3. Using a 1/4 cup measuring cup, pour the batter onto a lightly greased hot griddle; place 5-6 banana slices one each pancake. Turn when bubbles form on top; cook until second side is golden brown.

BREAKFAST IN A GLASS

(2 SERVINGS)

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 banana
- 1/4 cup strawberries
- 1/3 cup non-fat milk
- 1 (8 ounce) container non-fat plain yogurt

DIRECTIONS:

1. In a blender, combine banana, strawberries, milk and yogurt. Blend until smooth. Pour into glasses and serve.



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Coloring Activity Page for Kids



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2012

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