



BERRIES

What is It?

- Raspberries, strawberries, and blackberries are all members of the rose family, which also includes apples, pears, almonds, peaches, plums, apricots, cherries, and of course, roses.
- Raspberries and blackberries aren't technically berries but are made of many little fruits, or drupelets, clustered together. The average raspberry has about 100 drupelets, each with its own seed.
- Washington state is the world's largest producer of blueberries and frozen red raspberries, and one of the top producers of blackberries.
- Pacific northwest-grown strawberries are well known for being unbeatably sweet and juicy.
- Washington has many native berry varieties, including a native blackberry, strawberry, and blueberry. They can be found growing in the wild during the spring and summer months.



Grow It

Berries can make a great addition to school gardens because they are perennials, meaning they continue growing for many years. Unlike many fruit trees, berries can typically be grown in a relatively small space. Strawberries are fast growing, will provide berries during their first season, and depending on the variety, may be ready to harvest in May and June. Blueberries, raspberries, and blackberries, however, take 2-3 years before they provide significant yield and are typically ready for harvest during the summer season when school may not be in session.

Specific growing needs of berries varies widely depending on the specific type and variety. Generally, berries prefer to be planted in a sunny location and kept evenly moist. To improve plant health, fertilizer or organic matter can be applied to berries in the early spring. Follow fertilizing instructions specific to the type and variety of berry.

Blackberries and raspberries will multiply quickly and may be best grown in a container. Look for dwarf varieties of raspberries. Stakes or trellises can help support plants as they become heavy with fruit, while allowing airflow to move through plants and making it easier to find and harvest berries.

Raspberries grow low to the ground and are also quick to multiply. They can be given their own space in the garden or can be allowed to mingle and spread with other plants. Blueberries grow into small bushes. These bushes will continue to grow for many years, providing more berries as they mature, but they will not multiply into new plants.



Raspberries with Banana Cream

Learn It

For children and adults

Objectives

- Increase knowledge in the growth, selection, storage and use of raspberries.
- Demonstrate when and how to wash berries.
- Demonstrate the use of raspberries in a recipe.

Materials

- Enlarged photograph of a raspberry
- Fresh raspberries
- 1 cup measuring cup

What You Say	What You Do
<p>Today we are going to be learning about a kind of fruit. I'm going to give you some clues, and I want you to try to think of what it is. After each clue, raise your hand if you think you know what it is.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's a member of the rose family, so it grows on bushy plants with pokey stems. • Washington grows 90% of this frozen fruit in the United States. • It is usually red, but can also be gold. Sometimes it's purple, and even black. • We call it a berry, but technically it is a kind of fruit called an "aggregate fruit" because it's made up of a cluster of a bunch of tiny little fruits (called drupelets). • Their name comes from a very old French word—"raspe", which referred to berries with rough skins or that grew in dense bushes. • They fit nicely on the tips of your fingers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name off each clue, allow a few guesses before moving on to the next clue. • After someone guesses the answer, or you tell them, show them visuals of raspberries.
<p>The amount of fruit we need each day depends on our age, but ranges between 1-2 cups of fruit a day, with small children needing at least 1 cup and older children and adults needing 2 cups. You can eat fruit fresh, frozen, canned, dried, or as juice.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold up measuring cup to show what one cup looks like.





Raspberries with Banana Cream

What You Say	What You Do
<p>What are some different ways that we can eat raspberries? (Possible answers: Fresh, in salads or pie, in fruit smoothies, mashed into a sauce for pancakes or French toast.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have people name their favorite way to eat raspberries.
<p>In Washington, raspberries are usually ready to be picked from June through August. Has anyone ever picked raspberries before?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If anyone raises their hand, prompt them to share their experience; what the plant looked like and how the berries were picked.
<p>When selecting raspberries, look for brightly colored berries that are plump and don't have any black spots. Check berries closely to ensure that there are no signs of mold. If even one berry is molded, the mold spores will have likely spread throughout the whole package.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If using fresh raspberries in the food prep activity, show what a bright red raspberry looks like.
<p>To wash raspberries, place them in a strainer or colander and rinse them under cold running water. Do not let the berries sit in the water, as they will lose flavor and color. Remember not to wash them until they are going to be eaten or used.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If possible, demonstrate the process of washing raspberries.





Raspberries with Banana Cream

Make It

Be sure to follow local Food Safety rules and regulations. Learn more here: [Food Safety Rules and Regulations | Washington State Department of Health.](#)

Equipment List:

- Measuring cups
- Measuring spoons
- Knife
- Cutting board
- Fork
- Rubber scraper
- Bowl

What You Say	What You Do
<p>Today we are going to be making raspberries with banana cream. Let's look at the ingredients. What two fruits will we be using in our recipe today? (Answer: raspberries and bananas)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call on someone to answer.
<p>As we talked about earlier, we should be eating 1-2 cups of fruits per day, depending on our age. This fun and easy recipe can help us to reach that daily goal.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold up measuring cup again to demonstrate what 1 cup looks like.
<p>We will be mashing the banana, a small amount of juice and yogurt with a fork until it is almost smooth.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate how this process is done.
<p>We will wash the raspberries and then slice them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss how to rinse berries gently with water.



Raspberries with Banana Cream

What You Say	What You Do
<p>Let's read through the entire recipe and then begin.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read recipe aloud.

<p>Recipe: Raspberries with Banana Cream Yield: 12 small servings</p>	
Ingredients	Directions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1/3 cup low-fat, plain yogurt • 1/2 ripe banana • 1/2 ounce fruit juice (orange works well) • 2 cups strawberries, sliced • 1 teaspoon honey • Dash cinnamon 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Combine yogurt, banana, and juice in a bowl and mash with a fork until mostly smooth. 2. Wash and slice berries. 3. Scoop banana cream into a dish and top with berries. Finish with a drizzle of honey and a sprinkle of cinnamon.

Activity adapted from South Dakota State University Extension [Pick It Try it! Like it! Curriculum](#).

Explore interactive taste test resources to encourage participants to try what you made!

[Taste-Testing Event Resources](#)

Eat It

- Berries are a great source of vitamins, including vitamin C, which helps with healing, keeps skin and gums healthy, and supports immune function. They also contain fiber, which is important for maintaining a healthy heart and digestive system and regulating blood sugar.

Play It

Enjoy this activity sheet on the next page!



Blueberries, credit: WSDA



Raspberries, credit: WSDA

Read It

- It's Time for Berries! by Ceporah Mearns & Jeremy Debicki
- More Blueberries! By Susan Musgrave, Illustrated by Esperança Melo (Illustrator)
- Berry Magic, by Teri Sloat and Betty Huffmon
- Blueberries for Sal, by Robert McCloskey

More About It

- Lesson for preschool, by Harvest for Healthy Kids: https://mhccheadstart.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/HfHK_Berries.zip
- Lesson for 3rd-5th grade: [Bunches of Berries | Washington Agriculture in the Classroom](#)
- Lesson for 9th-12th grade: [Strawberry Breeding and Genetics | Washington Agriculture in the Classroom](#)
- Activities for elementary school, by Washington Grown Harvest of the Month: [Educators Flyer Berries.pdf](#)
- Lessons for all grades, by New Hampshire Harvest of the Month: [nh_hom_07_july_berry_lesson.pdf](#)