



PEARS

Cafeteria Connection

Tell Me about Pears

In 1966, Joseph C. Long discovered a pear tree growing on his property on Orcas Island, Washington and named it the Orcas pear. Orcas pear trees are a variety of European pears that are loaded each year with large, juicy, and flavorful fruit that ripens in early September.

Other European pear varieties include bosc, green anjou, red bartlett, comice, forelle, red anjou, stark crimson, bartlett, and seckel. Asian pears are also commonly grown in Washington, and include varieties like chojuro, hosui, and Korean giant.

Nutrition Facts

- Pears are one of the most easily digested fruits. They are an excellent source of dietary fiber, which is important for maintaining a healthy heart and digestive system and regulating blood sugar. A medium pear has six grams of fiber, which is 21% of the recommended daily allowance.
- Pears contain vitamin C, a proven antioxidant. Vitamin C helps with healing, keeps skin and gums healthy, and supports immune function.
- Pears also offer potassium, an electrolyte that helps build muscle and keeps the heart healthy.

Crediting Information

- Pears, whether fresh or canned, contribute to the Fruit meal pattern component by volume served. For example, 1/2 cup pears credit as 1/2 cup fruit.
- Pear sizing is designated by count—the number of pears that fit in a standardized box designed to hold 4–5 bushels of pears. Sizes generally run from the large 60 count to the small 150 count. The smaller the count, the larger the pear.
- The most common size pear in Child Nutrition Programs is 120 count, which equates to 3/4 cup fruit.
- 100 count pears are also common, which equates to 1 1/4 cup fruit.
- Fruits may be fresh, frozen, canned (packed in water, fruit juice, or light syrup), and/or pasteurized, full-strength fruit juice, referred to as 100% juice, to credit as a fruit component. Dried fruits, including freeze-dried fruits, credit differently for each program, so please check with your specialist.





Selection and Storage

- European pears don't ripen on the tree or in the refrigerator. Leave them at room temperature to ripen and reach peak flavor.
- European pears are ripe when they yield to gentle pressure at the neck, where the stem attaches to the fruit. Pears that are soft elsewhere are overripe and will be mushy.
- Once ripe, European pears can be refrigerated until you're ready to use them. Be aware that while refrigeration will delay further ripening, it won't stop it completely. Since fresh pears tend to absorb odors, store them away from foods like onions.
- Asian pears should be firm to touch and crispy when eaten. They ripen fully on the tree and can be eaten right away.
- Asian pears can be stored for about a week at room temperature or up to three months in the refrigerator.

Recipes

- [Berry Delicious Applesauce Kansas Recipe for Schools](#)
- [Whipped Cream Cheese and Pear Toast USDA Recipe for Child Care Centers](#)
- [Fruit and Nut Butter Pita Pockets USDA Recipe for Child Care Centers](#)

Sourcing

- [Find Pears](#)

Culinary Tips

- A ripe pear is delicious on its own or used in recipes. The flesh of peeled or cut pears will eventually brown, although this natural oxidation won't change the pear's quality or taste. To prevent browning, dip cut pears in a solution of half water and half lemon juice, or sprinkle with a commercial citric acid powder.
- Anjou pears are the most abundant and can be green with a sweet, almost citrus flavor, or red with a sweeter, slightly spicy flavor. Enjoy Anjou pears fresh, in a chutney or pie.
- Available almost year-round, bartlett pears deliver classic pear flavor and are great for canning or puréeing.
- The firm texture and bold flavor of bosc pears make them best for poaching or baking.
- Sweet, petite seckels are perfect pears for snacking.
- Asian pears have a similar texture and water content to apples, making them an ideal substitute for apples in many dishes.
- Flavors that complement this versatile fruit include warm spices such as allspice, ginger, cardamom, cinnamon, cloves, and nutmeg, and nuts, such as pistachios, almonds, and pecans.