

A Bushel of Facts About Wisconsin Apples

The apple is the most versatile of fruits. If you're interested in finding new ways to prepare apples, the

Wisconsin Apple

Growers Association has many recipes, including winners from the state apple recipe contest.



DID YOU KNOW?

Apples are one of the few fruits that you can find fresh any time of the year, all over the country. Apple trees begin to bear fruit when about 4 or 5 years old, and occasionally apple trees that are 200 years old are still producing apples.

About 1/2 of the U.S. apple crop is processed into apple products such as applesauce, pie filling, jams, jellies and juice.

The average U.S. consumer eats about 65 apples (or 22 pounds) per person annually.

BUSHELS OF HEALTH BENEFITS

Apples are unique. They differ from other foods because they're one of the best sources of pectin, a type of fiber. Research indicates that pectin limits the cholesterol the body absorbs and may be an important link in preventing heart disease. Dieters often find apples an ideal food, because they're sweet and bulky, yet only have 80 calories per medium apple. They fill you up, not out.

CHOOSING A HEALTHFUL SNACK

Apples come in all shades of reds, yellows, greens and dual tones of these--so don't just look for red color to tell you an apple is prime for eating.

Check the skins--should be smooth, reasonably bruise-free; too many bruises or decay spots indicate too ripe or poorly handled. Don't pinch -- you may add another bruise! Light russet doesn't hurt quality or flavor.

A PECK OF APPLE TIPS

Store small quantities in your refrigerator, in plastic bags in the crisper--between 34 and 40 degrees Fahrenheit. Don't allow them to freeze. Because apples can absorb odors from other foods stored in the same area, keep apples in plastic bags. The plastic also helps apples retain their own moisture.

Apples ripen six to ten times faster at room temperature than if they were refrigerated. One or two days sitting on a counter top and the fresh crunch of your apples is lost forever.

Lemon juice helps prevent apple discoloration.

Baked apples in the microwave are quick and easy.

Be careful about sugar--too much spoils the natural flavor and makes them mushy.

Spread apple slices with peanut butter for an easy children's snack; or dip slices in honey and roll in granola.

HISTORY OF APPLE GROWING IN WISCONSIN

Apple seeds were brought to Wisconsin and planted by settlers as early as 1800. During this time there were no commercial orchards, although most of the state's early farms included an orchard to provide fruit for the farm family.

The first commercial apple orchards in Wisconsin were planted between 1830 and 1850. These early

orchards produced many different apple cultivars, some of local origin. With its short growing season and severe winters, only the most hardy apples could be grown successfully in Wisconsin. In 1890 the Wisconsin State Horticultural Society, a forerunner of the **Wisconsin Apple Growers Association**, established trial orchards in many parts of the state.

Many of these orchards were failures, but the project supplied information that was necessary for successful commercial apple production in Wisconsin.

Commercial orchards are now found in 46 of Wisconsin's 72 counties, comprising about 7,400 acres and producing about 56 million pounds of fruit worth over \$9 million per year. Most of the commercial acreage is found in four locations in the state. The most concentrated areas are at Gays Mills in Crawford County (1,500 acres), Door County area (2,000 acres), Bayfield County, and in the greater Milwaukee area.

HOW MUCH-- HOW MANY

One pound of apples consists of:

- ❑ 4 small apples 3 medium apples
2 large apples
- ❑ Two medium apples are equivalent to one cup grated apple.
- ❑ About two pounds of apples make one 9" apple pie
- ❑ A peck of apples weighs 10.5 pounds. A bushel of apples weighs about 42 pounds and will yield 20-24 quarts of applesauce.
- ❑ One pound of apples yields 3 cups diced apples or 2-3/4 cups pared and sliced apples.

APPLE CIDER or JUICE

People are often confused about the difference between apple "cider" or "juice." Many



times the names are used interchangeably for freshly pressed juice of apples. Most apple growers prefer to call their fresh, no sugar added, natural beverage "cider". Freshly pressed apple cider from Wisconsin growers contains all the flavor and nutrients of fresh apples. These "liquid apples" are great served hot or cold and contain 87 calories per 6 ounce serving.

INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT

Many Wisconsin apple growers are involved with Integrated Pest Management (IPM). This program is a monitoring program using Pheromone traps to determine the presence of damaging insects. This information, together with daily temperature records and rain fall or leaf wetness information, helps growers to reduce the number of sprays applied to the orchard as well as target specific pests and avoid the random reduction of desirable predators.

QUICK CARAMEL APPLE SNACK

Melt a few Kraft caramels in the microwave. Core and slice an apple into large wedges. Dip the tip of the apple wedge into the melted caramel, then bite and enjoy! Add chopped nuts if desired.

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