

Cherries & Anthocyanins

Aside from their great taste, one of the true wonders of fresh cherries is that they are packed full of beneficial antioxidants. Flavonoids are one group of antioxidants that we've talked about at length in previous issues of *Nutrition Roundup*. They are found in many fruits including apples, pears, and cherries.

Anthocyanins are flavonoids that are especially prevalent in cherries. They are the "coloring agent" that gives cherries, berries, fruit juice, and wine that deep red to purple hue. However, recent studies show that anthocyanins provide more than just color to fruits and fruit products. Like other flavonoids, anthocyanins protect against oxidation from occurring in the body's cells which may reduce the onset of several chronic diseases.

Perhaps the most exciting research to break about anthocyanins in cherries was found in a recent study by Dr. Glyn Howatson, of Northumbria University. He studied the effects tart cherries had on 20 marathon runners during the days leading up to their participation in the London Marathon, and for two days after the race.



Dr. Howatson found that athletes who drank the tart cherry juice recovered faster after taking part in the endurance race than those in the control group that received a placebo. Strength, inflammation, and oxidative stress were all reduced in the cherry juice group. Although more studies need to be conducted, he believes that the findings could provide athletes and arthritis sufferers with yet another reason to eat cherries (sweet or tart) and other anthocyanin-rich foods.

For more information on the health benefits of cherries, visit the Healthy Living section on Stemilt.com.

Sources:

1. Nutrition Science News. "Got Anthocyanins?" M. Sterling. December 2001. http://newhope.com/nutritionsciencenews/NSN_backs_Dec_01/antho.cfm

2. Howatson et al. "Influence of tart cherry juice on indices of recovery following marathon running." *Scandinavian Journal of Medicine and Science in Sports*, 2009.

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2010/04/100401131106.htm>

Peaches, plums may help fight breast cancer



Now you can add peaches and plums to the list of foods that may help combat breast cancer! That's because scientists at Texas AgriLife Research recently found that peach and plum extracts inhibited breast cancer cells (even aggressive types) in lab tests.

Published in the *Journal of Agriculture and Food Chemistry*, the study focused on breast cancer because of

its prevalence in women across the globe. Statistics from the World Health Organization show that breast cancer accounts for 16 percent of the cancer deaths in women.

Researchers believe that two phenolic compounds - chlorogenic and neochlorogenic - were responsible for destroying the cancer cells. Moreover, the peach and plum extracts were able to kill cancer cells without harming normal cells, which is not true of traditional chemotherapy.

Dr. David Byrne and Dr. Luis Cisneros-Zevallos, both of AgriLife Research, believe that this research could one day provide an alternative to chemotherapy, which takes a toll on the entire body.

During the study, they treated both normal and cancer cells with an extract from Rich Lady peaches and Black Splendor plums - two common varieties grown commercially. The two phenolic compounds found to be beneficial in the study are common in fruits, although not in as high concentrations as that of peaches and plums. Both researchers hope to continue studying the effect stone fruit varieties can have on cancer cells.

In addition to their potential cancer-fighting compounds, peaches and their fuzz-free counterparts, nectarines, are low in fat, contain potassium, and are a good source of vitamin C. In fact, one large peach contains 19 percent of the daily recommended dose of vitamin C, while a large nectarine contains 14 percent.

In 2009, Stemilt certified its entire crop of peaches and nectarines as organic. These summer fruits are harvested from late July to mid-September in eastern Washington, where long, hot days and cool nights combine to produce large-sized fruit with complex flavors.

Source:

Giuliana Noratto, Weston Porter, David Byrne, Luis Cisneros-Zevallos. "Identifying Peach and Plum Polyphenols with Chemopreventive Potential Against Estrogen-Independent Breast Cancer Cells." *Journal of Agriculture and Food Chemistry*, 2009; 57 (12)

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2010/06/100602111145.htm>

Nutrition Roundup from Stemilt Growers

8 Ways to Use Cherries at Every Meal This Summer



Cherry season is here again! Stemilt is harvesting cherries daily in eastern Washington. Our season continues into late August with our high-elevation orchards located as high as 3,500 feet above sea level.

With so many cherries coming to stores this summer, we thought we'd give you some ideas about how you can include this good-for-you fruit in every meal:

1. Wake up with Stemilt cherries: Add a cup of pitted and sliced fresh cherries to your morning cereal or oatmeal. The sweet flavor of cherries will take the bland out of your breakfast, while at the same time giving you a fiber and antioxidant boost!

2. Combine summer fruits for a filling snack: Keep your snacks fresh and interesting by combining fruits of different flavors. For the summertime, we recommend cherries and blueberries. Mix with plain yogurt for a calcium boost!

3. Toss cherries into your green salad at lunch: Cherries add a great sweet touch to a fresh salad at lunchtime. Try our Cherry, Feta Cheese & Mixed Green Salad recipe available under the Recipes section on Stemilt.com.

4. Add cherries to your kids' chocolate milk: Give chocolate milk a healthy boost with fresh Stemilt cherries. Slide the cherries on mint candy sticks or toothpicks to make eating around the pit easy.

5. Fill up on cherries and almonds for your PM snack: Not only do these two foods taste great together, but they'll also provide fuel for the body! From fiber and protein to beneficial antioxidants, eating this snack daily may reward you for many years to come.



6. Make dinner sweet and savory with two superfoods: Our Quinoa with Shrimp and Sweet Cherries recipe (see below) combines two superfoods in one yummy

dish that will feed the whole family! Quinoa is high in protein, while cherries contain antioxidants in every bite.

7. Fresh Cherries + Dessert = Summertime Bliss! There's no doubt that sweet cherries are a great addition to a number of classic desserts. From pies and tarts to hot fudge sundaes, add this fruit to your dessert for a fresh reminder that summer is here!



8. Trouble sleeping? Cherries can help! If you suffer from insomnia or just have trouble sleeping one night, try eating a handful of cherries. Cherries contain melatonin, a naturally occurring hormone produced by the pineal gland that helps regulate the body's internal clock. It's a natural way to help get a good night's sleep.

Quinoa with Shrimp and Sweet Cherries

INGREDIENTS

1/2 cup chopped onion
1 clove garlic, minced
1 TBSP of vegetable oil
1 can (14 oz.) chicken broth
1 cup quinoa, rinsed and drained
2 TBSP chopped Anaheim pepper
1/2 TSP salt
1/4 TSP ground pepper
2 cups pitted fresh Stemilt dark-sweet cherries
8 ounces small cooked peeled shrimp
1/4 cup chopped parsley
Prepared salsa, optional

PROCEDURE

Sauté onion and garlic in oil; add broth, quinoa, Anaheim pepper, salt, and ground pepper. Bring mixture to boil, reduce heat, cover and simmer 12 to 18 minutes or until all liquid is absorbed. Fluff mixture with a fork and gently stir in cherries, shrimp, and parsley. Top with salsa. Makes 6 servings.



Nutrition Information (per serving): 215 calories, 13.1 g protein, 5.5 g fat; 29.5 g carbohydrates., 74 mg cholesterol, 3.3 g fiber, 596 mg sodium.