

CREATE

COOKING WITH AMARANTH

Basic Amaranth Porridge

Try amaranth instead of oatmeal next time you want a hot breakfast. Toasting the seeds adds flavor but is optional. Make a large pot; amaranth porridge is easy to reheat in the microwave or on the stove top.

1 cup amaranth
3 cups water
Pinch of salt

To toast the amaranth (optional), heat a heavy skillet over medium heat. Add the amaranth, stir constantly for about 4 minutes until the grains just start to pop and turn a golden color. To cook, bring the water to a boil and add the salt and amaranth. Return to a boil, cover, reduce heat to a simmer. Simmer until the water is absorbed and the grains are tender, about 20 to 30 minutes. Add additional water if needed to desired consistency. Amaranth cannot be overcooked and the seeds will always retain a slight crunch. Serve with honey, maple syrup or brown rice syrup. Makes approximately 2 cups. Store leftovers in the refrigerator for up to 5 days. Reheat in microwave or stove top, adding more water if needed.

Amaranth Pops!

Amaranth pops like popcorn. Use a high-sided pan, at least 6 inches, because these little seed like to dance! Sprinkle popped seeds on yogurt, vegetables or salads. Add a little honey, maple syrup or brown rice syrup and eat like cold cereal.

¼ cup amaranth seeds
1 high-sided pan

Heat the pan over medium high heat. The pan is ready when a drop of water sizzles as it hits the pan. Add ¼ cup amaranth seeds at a time to the hot pan. Stir constantly and quickly till the majority of the seeds are popped taking care not to burn the seeds. Amaranth seeds will burn easily and all of them will not pop. There will be some toasty, un-popped seeds in a batch of popped amaranth. ¼ cup seeds yields one cup popped.

Amaranth is an excellent source of plant protein. It contains all the essential amino acids including lysine, which is limited in other grains.

Besides quality protein, amaranth is also a good source of calcium, phosphorus, iron, zinc, magnesium and vitamins E and B.

Granola Bars with Popped Amaranth

½ cup brown rice syrup	1 cup regular rolled oats
3 tablespoons honey	1 cup popped amaranth
Pinch of salt	1 cup nuts of choice
1 tablespoon butter	1 cup dried fruit of choice

Other add-ins: coconut, sesame seeds, sunflower seeds, etc. Reduce the amount of nuts or dried fruit for additional add-ins for example ½ cup nuts and ½ cup coconut.

Combine the brown rice syrup, honey, salt and butter in a small saucepan and bring to a boil. Remove from heat. In a large bowl, combine oats, popped amaranth, nuts and dried fruit. Pour brown rice syrup mixture over dry ingredients and mix thoroughly. Line a 9 x 9 inch pan with parchment paper or spray with cooking spray. Press mixture firmly into pan and bake at 300 °F for 30 minutes. Cool completely and cut into bars.

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Almond Crackers with Amaranth

½ cup amaranth flour
½ cup almonds
1 cup whole wheat pastry flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
⅓ cup cold water
2 tablespoons butter, chilled
½ teaspoon salt

Preheat oven to 350°F. Toast the amaranth flour in a saucepan over medium heat for 2 minutes, stirring constantly. Put the almonds in a food processor and process to a coarse meal. Add the amaranth flour, whole-wheat flour, baking powder, and salt and pulse once or twice to mix. Cut the butter into chunks. Add to the flour mixture and pulse to form a crumbly meal. Add enough water to make a pliable dough, similar to pie dough. Turn an 18 x 12 inch jelly-roll pan upside down and grease the bottom. Center the dough on the pan and press out to a rectangle. Cover with wax paper and roll the dough nearly to the edge of the pan to a thickness of 1/8 inch.

With a pizza cutter or knife, cut the dough into 1½ inch strips. Cut 1 ½ inch strip on the diagonal to form diamond shapes. Bake for about 15 minutes or until golden brown. Eat while still warm, or cool and store in an airtight container for up to a week. To reheat, place in a hot oven for 3 to 4 minutes.

Amaranth is easy to cook. All you need is a pit, water and heat. The seeds can be toasted before cooking or a full, rich flavor. Soak amaranth overnight for quicker cooking time.

Whole grain amaranth and amaranth flour can be purchased at some grocery stores, health food stores, specialty stores or online (bobsredmill.com, arrowheadsmill.com).

Amaranth, Quinoa, and Corn Chowder

3 tablespoons butter
1 ½ cups finely chopped onion
1 cup finely diced celery
½ cup finely diced red or green bell pepper
¼ teaspoon salt plus more to taste
¼ cup amaranth
½ cup quinoa, thoroughly rinsed
¼ teaspoon dried thyme
4 cups fresh or thawed frozen corn kernels
1 cup milk
2 tablespoons minced fresh flat-leaf parsley

In a large, heavy pot, melt 2 tablespoons of the butter over medium-high heat. Stir in onion, celery, bell pepper, and ¼ teaspoon salt. Cook, stirring frequently, until the vegetables are soft, about 5 minutes.

Stir in the amaranth and 3 cups of water. Bring to a boil over high heat. Stir in the quinoa and thyme. Return to a boil. Reduce the heat slightly and cook at a gentle boil, partially covered, for 10 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a blender or food processor, puree 3 cups of the corn kernels with 1 cup water. When the quinoa has cooked for 10 minutes, stir the corn purée and the remaining corn kernels into the soup. Add salt to taste. Reduce the heat and simmer until the quinoa and amaranth are tender, 3 to 5 more minutes. When the quinoa is done, there will be no starchy white dot in the center of each grain, and some the germs' "tails" may unfurl and float freely. On close inspection, the amaranth will look like tiny opaque bubbles floating on the surface.

Stir in the milk and remaining tablespoon butter. Add more salt, if needed. Divide into portions and garnish each with a little parsley.



Storing Amaranth

- Whole grains contain oils that are susceptible to oxidation, especially when cracked, rolled or ground into flour.
- Store Amaranth seeds in a food grade container in a cool dry place for up to a year.
- Store amaranth flour and amaranth flakes in the refrigerator or freezer for six months to keep them from going rancid.
- Cooked amaranth can be kept in the refrigerator for five days.

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