FRUITS

Cherry

FOOD$ENSE
UtahStateUniversity
NUTRITION, DIETETICS, & FOOD SCIENCES

Objectives

Participant will:

1. Explain a health benefit provided by cherries.
2. Describe cost- and time-effective strategies for incorporating cherries into family meals.
3. Explain how to select cherries.
4. Describe preparation and storage techniques for cherries, including cleaning, cooking, and storing.
5. Prepare and taste food that includes cherries.

Required Materials:

- Recipe ingredients and utensils for demonstrations.
- Lesson handouts (see pgs. 6-8).
- Required paperwork for program.

Optional Supplemental Materials:

- Cherries in various forms such as fresh, frozen, dried, etc.

Preparation Required:

- Practice lesson material so you are comfortable giving lesson.
- Practice recipes for demonstrations and understand recipe instructions and techniques.
- Gather ingredients and utensils needed for lesson and demonstration.
- Pre-chop fruits and vegetables needed for each demo.
- Make copies of handouts – enough for all class participants.
- Make copies of paperwork required by program.

LESSON PLAN

Introduction:

Time**:** 3-5 minutes

- Welcome the class and thank them for making time to come.
- Briefly introduce yourself and the program.
- **Ask the class:** Does anyone know when cherries came to the United States?
- Cherries were brought to the United States by ship in the 1600's.
- Cherry production began in the 1800's in Northern Michigan. The cherry trees flourished in this area because of the cool winds off Lake Michigan that allowed for cool summer temperatures.
- The cherry industry produces more than 650 million pounds of cherries per year in the United States alone.
- The sweet cherry season in the U.S. is from May to August while the season for tart cherries is between June-August.
- The states that produce the majority of cherries in the U.S. include: California, Michigan, Washington, and Oregon. Utah and a handful of other states do produce cherries during the summer months.

Objective 1: Explain a health benefit provided by cherries.

Time: 2-3 minutes

- **Ask the class**: Did you know that cherries contain 19 times more beta carotene than blueberries and strawberries? Beta carotene is a form of vitamin A which helps prevent eye problems, increases immunity, and prevents skin disorders.
- Cherries are jam packed with antioxidants called anthocyanins and melatonin. Anthocyanins help aid in the reduction of diseases such as cancer, diabetes, and heart disease. Melatonin regulates sleep cycles and heart rhythms.
- Cherries are rich in vitamin C, vitamin E, folate, iron, and magnesium.
- Cherries are also a great source of fiber, which is beneficial for good digestive health and to maintain healthy cholesterol levels.
- Cherries are also shown to help decrease memory loss!

Objective 2: Describe cost- and time-effective strategies for incorporating cherries into family meals.

Time: 3-5 minutes

- **Ask the class:** Cherries are commonly eaten fresh, especially this time of year in Utah. How do you incorporate cherries into your family's diet? Do you have any favorite recipes that include cherries (fresh, frozen, or dried)?
- Examples of easy ways to use cherries: juiced, added to salads and trail mixes, made into a great fruit spread that can be used in sauces for meats or sandwiches. Cherries are also a great snack when eaten plain!
- Cherries can be used as the main ingredient but they are more often used as an accent flavoring to other foods.

Objective 3: Explain how to select cherries.

Time: 2-3 minutes

- **Ask the class**: Does anyone have any tips on how to select fresh cherries at their prime?
- Cherries should be ripe on the tree before they are picked to eat.

- Select fresh cherries by the way they feel and their color. Pick cherries that are dark (color will differ depending on type of cherry). They should be glossy and they should not be soft when you press them. They should look plump but they should not be mushy.
- In Utah, cherries are at their peak in July.
- When they are not in season, they can be enjoyed frozen or dried. You can find them canned but make sure to look at the nutrition facts label to see how much sugar was added.

Objective 4: Describe preparation and storage techniques for cherries, including cleaning, cooking, and storing.

Time: 5-10 minutes

- To keep your cherries fresher longer, do not wash them until right before they are going be eaten to prevent mold growth and to keep the cherries better longer.
- Keep cherries stored in the fridge in a loose plastic wrapping (like what they are found in at the store) to allow for proper exposure to oxygen.
- Recipes using fresh cherries will often tell you to "pit" the cherries prior to baking or cooking. To pit cherries: Using a cherry pitter is the quickest way to remove the pits in cherries but there are many other methods that are just as easy. You can cut the cherries in half (from top to bottom) with a knife and then remove the pit with your finger or spoon. If you would like the cherries to remain whole, you can use a large **clean** bobby pin or paper clip. To do this, remove the stem and then push the paper clip into the top of the cherry. You should then be able to move the paper clip around until you are able to find the pit and pull it out.
- Freezing cherries is a great way to incorporate them later into your diet in the cooler seasons. To freeze cherries: Wash them and pat them dry with a towel. Next, remove the stems and pits. Place the cherries on a cookie sheet and place it in the freezer. After they have had time to freeze, remove them from the cookie sheet and place in a freezer bag. This helps prevent the cherries from clumping together. Make sure to label and date the bag. Try to eat them within a year for best taste and to prevent freezer burn.
- Dehydrating cherries is a great way to increase their shelf life. It also allows you to enjoy this fruit when it's out of season.
  Dehydrating cherries: Rinse the cherries and pat dry. Next, follow the instructions for pitting. Cut cherries in half if you haven't already. Then, follow the instructions on your dehydrator.

Objective 5: Prepare and taste food that includes cherries.

Time: 20 minutes

- Today we are going to make and taste a variety of recipes using cherries.
- This recipe makes a great appetizer although you could also use it as a snack or even a side dish. *Demonstrate Cherry Bruschetta (see recipe page 6).*
- Did you know that cherries, and most fruit for that matter, can really compliment a green salad? This sweet and delicate salad goes with just about anything! Don't be afraid to try it with chicken, fish, or a bean dish! *Demonstrate Cherry Pineapple Salad (see recipe pg. 6).*
- Cherry salsa is a great alternative if you're looking for a change from the standard salsa. You can always serve this as an appetizer, a snack, or even as part of a meal. *Demonstrate Cherry Salsa (see recipe pg. 7).*
- Do you ever get sick of the same old sandwiches for lunch? Ham and cheese or PB & J? Today, we're going to think outside of the box! This cherry and turkey wrap is a great alternative to the usual lunch. *Demonstrate the Cherry and Turkey Wrap (see recipe pg. 7).*
- If you're looking for a quick and healthy snack, look no further! *Demonstrate Popcorn with Cherries (see recipe pg. 8).*
- This cherry smoothie is perfect for a snack or as part of a meal. Smoothie recipes are very

easy to change depending on what you have in your fridge so you can alter the ingredients according to what you like and what you have on hand. Don't be afraid to add other fruits or even vegetables like spinach. *Demonstrate Cherry Smoothie (see recipe pg. 8)*.

Conclusion

Time: 5 minutes

- Cherries are a tasty, healthy way to get fruit into your breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacks. They are packed not only with abundant flavor but are loaded with good nutrition, too.
- **Ask the class**: What did you learn today that you didn't know about cherries before taking this class?
- **Ask the class**: What will you do differently to make cherries a part of your family's diet now that you have had this lesson?
- **Ask the class**: Are there any questions?
- Thank you for attending.

Serve samples.

References

- Ingredients, Inc. (2011). Top 10 benefits of cherries: A true superfruit. Retrieved form http://www.ingredientsinc.net/2011/08/top-10-health-benefits-of-cherries-a-true-superfruit/
- Washington State University (n.d.). History of cherries. Retrieved from http://cahnrs-cms.wsu.edu/sweetcherryresearch/about/history/Pages/default.aspx
- Agricultural Marketing Research Center. (2011). Cherries. Retrieved from http://www. agmrc.org/commodities__products/fruits/cherries.cfm.

This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – SNAP. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact 1-800-221-5689 or visit online at http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/. In accordance with Federal Law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, political beliefs or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (800)795-3572.

FOOD$ENSE
UtahStateUniversity
NUTRITION, DIETETICS, & FOOD SCIENCES

Cherries

Cherry Bruschetta

18 slices (½ inch thick) small baguette-style bread
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 ½ cups pitted sweet cherries, coarsely chopped
2 tablespoons lime juice
Zest from 1 lime
¼ cup chopped cilantro
¼ cup diced yellow sweet pepper (optional)
2 green onions, finely diced
Salt and pepper to taste

2 ounces fresh mozzarella cheese, thinly sliced
1 tablespoon coarsely chopped basil

Toast one side of baguette slices at 350ºF for 5 minutes. Turn slices and bake 5 minutes longer. Combine olive oil, cherries, lime juice, lime zest, cilantro, pepper, green onions, salt, and pepper; mix well. Top each slice of baguette with a thin slice of fresh mozzarella cheese, a heaping tablespoon of cherry mixture and basil. Serve warm or cold.
Yield: 6 servings

Don't worry if cherries aren't in season, you can always use frozen cherries...or... try the bruschetta with tomatoes instead!

Cherry Pineapple Salad

1 head romaine lettuce
1 (8 oz.) can pineapple chunks in juice
2 cups cherries, stemmed, pitted, chopped*
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
2 tablespoons cider vinegar
1 tablespoon honey
1 teaspoon dry mustard
½ teaspoon poppy seeds
Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

Rinse and drain lettuce; tear into bite-size pieces. Drain pineapple, reserving ¼ cup juice. Put lettuce, pineapple chunks and cherries in a large salad bowl; mix well. Combine vegetable oil, reserved pineapple juice, vinegar, honey, dry mustard and poppy seeds; mix well. season with salt and pepper. Drizzle dressing over lettuce mixture. Dressing may be refrigerated for several days, if desired.
Yield: 4-6 serving
**May use 1 cup dried tart cherries*

Cherries contain 19 times more beta carotene than blueberries and strawberries! Cherries are jam packed with the antioxidants anthocyanins and melatonin. Cherries are rich in vitamin C, vitamin E, folate, iron, and magnesium. Cherries are also a great source of fiber.

This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – SNAP. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact 1-800-221-5689 or visit online at http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/. In accordance with Federal Law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, political beliefs or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (800)795-3572.

FOOD$ENSE
UtahStateUniversity
NUTRITION, DIETETICS, & FOOD SCIENCES

Cherry Salsa

4 cups cherries, stemmed, pitted, and chopped
4 green onions, white parts only, chopped
¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro leaves
¼ cup lemon juice
1 clove garlic, minced
Salt and pepper, to taste

Mix all ingredients in a medium mixing bowl until well combined. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Serve with chicken, fish, beef, or vegetables.
This is especially good with roasted sweet potato wedges!
Yield: About 6 servings

Turkey and Cherry Wrap

1 cup dried cherries
¼ cup reduced fat garden vegetable cream cheese
2 10-inch flour tortillas
Handful of fresh spinach leaves
4 ounces sliced turkey
3 ounces very thinly sliced Monterey Jack or Swiss cheese

Boil 2 cups of water. Place cherries in a small bowl. Pour boiling water over cherries. Let stand for 5 minutes. Drain well and let cool slightly. Spread 2 tablespoons cream cheese evenly across each tortilla. Sprinkle each tortilla with cherries. Next, layer spinach over the cherries then layer turkey breast and Monterey Jack cheese on top. Roll up the tortillas and serve! For extra flavor, allow the wraps to sit in the fridge for an hour or so.
Yield: 2 wraps

Select fresh cherries by the way they feel and their color.

- They should be dark (color will differ depending on type of cherry).
- They should be glossy and plump.
- They should not be soft or mushy when you press on them.

This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – SNAP. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact 1-800-221-5689 or visit online at http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/. In accordance with Federal Law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, political beliefs or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (800)795-3572.

Popcorn with Cherries

1 teaspoon sugar
1 ½ teaspoons apple pie spice blend*
1 package popcorn
⅔ cup dried tart cherries
Butter-flavored non-stick cooking spray

Stir the apple spice spice blend and sugar; set aside. Pop popcorn according to the package directions. Pour popcorn into medium sized bowl. Add cherries. Lightly spray with no-stick cooking spray. Sprinkle with spice/sugar mixture; toss until coated.
Yield: 4 servings

**Don't have apple pie spice blend? You can substitute a little cinnamon, nutmeg, allspice, and ginger to get the same great flavor!*

Cherry Smoothie

½ cup frozen tart cherries, pitted
½ cup 1% low fat milk
¼ cup plain low-fat yogurt
2 tablespoons fresh blueberries
1 tablespoon frozen cherry juice concentrate
1 tablespoon honey
½ teaspoon pure vanilla extract
Sprinkle of cinnamon (optional)
8 ice cubes

Place all ingredients into a mixer and blend until smooth. Enjoy!
Yield: 2 Servings

To keep your cherries fresher longer, do not wash them until right before they are going be eaten.
Keep cherries stored in the fridge in a loose plastic bag to allow for proper exposure to oxygen.

Pitting Cherries:

- Use a cherry pitter ***or***
- Cut the cherries in half from top to bottom with a knife and then remove the pit with your finger or spoon ***or***
- Use a large **clean** bobby pin or paper clip – remove the stem and then push the paper clip into the top of the cherry – move the paper clip around until you are able to find the pit and pull it out.

Freezing Cherries:

- Wash cherries and pat dry. Remove stems and pits. Place cherries on cookie sheet in single layer and place in freezer. When frozen remove from cookie sheet and place in freezer bag. Label and date bag. Use within a year.

This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.
The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, call 1-800-221-5689 or visit online at http://www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/coalition/map.htm. In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture's policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, political beliefs or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

FOOD$ENSE
UtahStateUniversity
NUTRITION, DIETETICS, & FOOD SCIENCES