



Cranberry 101



Join us as we celebrate the mighty cranberry! For centuries, cranberries have been part of our history, holiday traditions and a healthy way of life. Read on to learn more...

.... The Cranberry Harvest - A Journey from Bog to Bottle



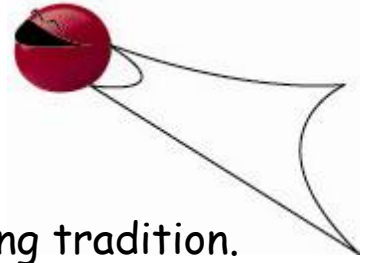
Cranberries grow on vines in sandy fields called "bogs." Each fall, growers harvest millions of pounds of cranberries from their farms in the U.S. and Canada. Long ago, cranberries were picked by hand. Later growers used large wooden scoops, resembling large combs, to lift berries off their vines. Today's growers use two methods: wet and dry harvesting.

Wet Harvesting: In wet harvesting, a dry cranberry bog is flooded with water. Once the bog is flooded, water reels (often called "egg beaters") drive through the water loosening the berries from their vines. Since cranberries contain pockets of air, berries float to the surface of the water. Then, the floating berries are corralled, loaded into trucks and shipped to factories where they are made into cranberry juices, juice drinks and foods.



Dry Harvesting: In dry harvesting, growers use a machine with moving metal teeth to comb the berries off the vines. Berries are collected in a burlap sack at the back of the machine. Helicopters are often used to transport the sacks of harvested cranberries because heavy trucks can damage delicate cranberry vines. Most fresh cranberries, sold in the produce section of your supermarket each fall, are harvested using this method.

..... Good and Good For You



Cranberries are an important part of our Thanksgiving tradition. But did you know that cranberries also help keep your body healthy? These fun facts show how the super cranberry has been part of a healthy way of life for hundreds of years.

- Long before the Pilgrims arrived in 1620, Native Americans mixed deer meat and mashed cranberries to make pemmican—a kind of “super food” that stayed fresh for long periods of time and provided energy during cold, harsh winters. Native American medicine men also used cranberries to draw poison from arrow wounds.
- In the 1850's, American whaling ships took barrels of fresh cranberries on their two-year long voyages. Cranberries provided the crew with fresh fruit and enough vitamin C to prevent scurvy.
- American soldiers during World War II used about one million pounds of dehydrated cranberries a year to keep healthy and energized.
- Today, the cranberry is valued as one healthy little berry. Cranberries contain powerful nutrients that help clean your body on the inside to strengthen your defenses. These nutrients help keep bad bacteria from sticking in the body. Here's how:



Bacteria need to attach to your insides in order to cause an infection and make you sick.



Compounds in cranberries attached themselves to the bacteria and prevent them from sticking to your insides.



This allows the bad bacteria to be easily and harmlessly flushed out of your body.

..... The History of Cranberries

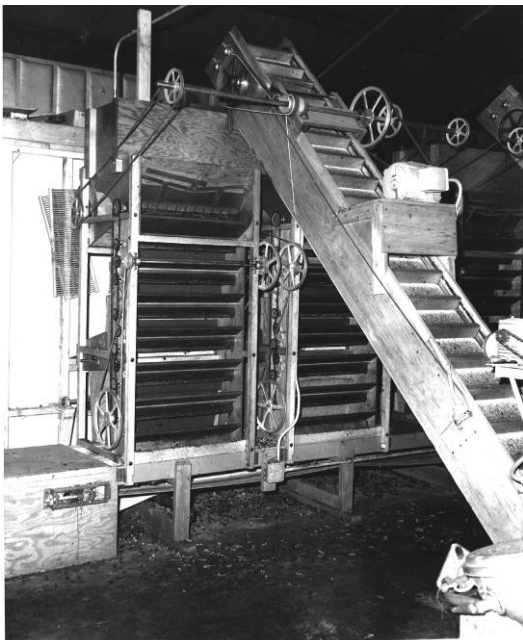


Native Americans ate cranberries fresh, mashed with cornmeal and baked into bread. They also used the berries to treat wounds and to dye rugs and blankets.

Farmers built their bogs on land already flattened by natural forces like glaciers over 200 years ago.

Pilgrims first learned how to use cranberries from the Native Americans, and legend has it that cranberries were served at the first Thanksgiving in 1620 in Plymouth, along with wild turkey, beans, and corn. A recipe for cranberry sauce is featured in the *Pilgrim Cookbook of 1663*.

Cranberries were first commercially-harvested in 1816 in Dennis, Massachusetts, on Cape Cod.



In the 1880's, a New Jersey grower named John "Peg Leg" Webb discovered the "cranberry bounce." Instead of carrying his crop down from the storage loft of his barn, he poured them down the steps. Only the freshest, firmest fruit reached the bottom; rotten or bruised berries remained on the steps. This discovery led to the invention of bounceboard separators. This equipment, still used today, helps separate rotten berries that don't bounce from the fresh ones that do.





..... Cranberry Fun Facts

Cranberries are grown in bogs made up of acid, peat soil and sand near wetland systems.

Cranberries are primarily grown in five U.S. states - Massachusetts, Wisconsin, New Jersey, Oregon and Washington - as well as in British Columbia and Quebec, Canada.

Many family-owned cranberry bogs have been passed down from generation to generation, with some farms more than 100 years old.



Legend has it that cranberries were served at the first Thanksgiving. For 75 years, Ocean Spray cranberry products have been a Thanksgiving icon. Today, over 91% percent of Thanksgiving dinners include cranberry sauce. That's over 3 million pounds of jellied cranberry sauce or nearly 2 berries for each person on Earth.

Cranberries have been known by many different names. Eastern Indians called them "sassamanesh" while the Cape Cod Pequots and the South Jersey Leni-Lenape tribes named them "ibimi," for bitter berry. The Algonquins of Wisconsin called the fruit "atoqua." German and Dutch settlers came up with the term "crane berry," because the cranberry blossom resembles the head and bill of a crane. From that we arrive at what we call the cranberry.



When cranberry blossoms begin to open in late spring, farmers bring bees into the bogs (about 2 hives per acre) in order to pollinate the plants. The pollination period, about 3 weeks long, is one of the most important times of the growing year. No pollination means no fruit. A honeybee will visit an average of 50 to 100 cranberry blossoms in one collection trip.

..... Cranberry Kitchen



Mayflower Sweet Potatoes

Ingredients:

6 small sweet potatoes
6 tablespoons butter or margarine,
softened
2 tablespoons half and half
2 tablespoons brown sugar
1 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice
Dash salt
1/3 cup Ocean Spray® Craisins®
Sweetened Dried Cranberries
3/4 cup miniature marshmallows
6 4-inch squares white paper, optional
6 toothpicks, optional

Directions:

Poke potatoes all over with a fork. Place in single layer in microwave. Microwave for 5 minutes on High. Turn potatoes over and cook an additional minute at a time until softened, if necessary.

When potatoes are cool enough to handle, cut off the top 1/3 of the potato. Scoop out flesh into a large mixing bowl, leaving a 1/4-inch shell. Place shells on a baking sheet and set aside.

Add butter, half and half, brown sugar, pumpkin pie spice and salt to sweet potato pulp. Whip potatoes until creamy, using a potato masher or electric mixer. Stir in sweetened dried cranberries. Spoon mixture back into skins. Cover and refrigerate at this point until 30 minutes before serving time.

Meanwhile, children can make white paper sails. Decorate sails like the Mayflower, and add children's names, if desired. Cut 2 slits for toothpick mast near the bottom center of each sail. Thread toothpick through slits in sail.

Preheat oven to 350°F. Arrange marshmallows over top of potatoes. Bake potatoes, uncovered, for 10 to 15 minutes or until marshmallows are golden brown and potatoes are hot. Place potatoes on serving platter and insert a sail into each potato. Makes 6 servings.

Oatmeal Cranberry White Chocolate Chunk Cookies



Ingredients:

2/3 cup butter or margarine, softened
2/3 cup brown sugar
2 large eggs
1 1/2 cups old-fashioned oats
1 1/2 cups flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 6-ounce package Ocean Spray® Craisins®
Original Sweetened Dried Cranberries
2/3 cup white chocolate chunks or chips

Directions:

Preheat oven to 375°F.

Using an electric mixer, beat butter or margarine and sugar together in a medium mixing bowl until light and fluffy. Add eggs, mixing well. Combine oats, flour, baking soda and salt in a separate mixing bowl. Add to butter mixture in several additions, mixing well after each addition. Stir in sweetened dried cranberries and white chocolate chunks.

Drop by rounded teaspoonfuls onto ungreased cookie sheets. Bake for 10-12 minutes or until golden brown. Cool on wire rack.

Makes approximately 2 1/2 dozen cookies.



Cranberry Fudge

Ingredients:

- 2 cups semi-sweet chocolate chips
- 1/4 cup light corn syrup
- 1/2 cup powdered sugar
- 1/4 cup evaporated milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 6-ounce package Ocean Spray® Craisins®
- Sweetened Dried Cranberries, any flavor
- 1/3 cup chopped walnuts or pecans, optional

Directions:

Line the bottom and sides of 8 x 8-inch pan with plastic wrap. Set aside.

Combine chocolate morsels and corn syrup in a medium saucepan. Cook over low heat until melted and smooth. Remove from heat. Add powdered sugar, evaporated milk and vanilla; stir vigorously until the mixture is thick and glossy. Add sweetened dried cranberries and nuts; mix well. Pour into prepared pan.

Cover and chill until firm, about 8 hours. Cut into 1 1/2-inch squares. Store covered in refrigerator. Serve at room temperature.

Makes 25 pieces.

Wildberry Whoopie Pops



Ingredients:

2 cups Ocean Spray® White Cranberry Wildberry Juice Drink, chilled
1 cup strawberry yogurt
2 1/2 cups individually-frozen whole strawberries
2 tablespoons powdered sugar, if desired
1/4 cup mini chocolate chips

Supplies:

8 6-ounce paper cups
8 craft sticks

Directions:

Put all ingredients, except chocolate chips, in a blender. Blend for a few seconds on high speed or until ingredients are thoroughly combined. Pour 1/2 cup mixture into each of the paper cups. Freeze 30 minutes or until slightly slushy.

Stir 1 teaspoon chocolate chips into each cup. Insert wooden craft sticks in center of cup. Freeze an additional 1 1/2 to 2 hours or until completely firm.

Peel paper cup away from pop, or dip outsides of cups in warm water to loosen. For longer storage, place frozen pops in large resealable freezer bag. Freeze up to 2 weeks.

Makes 8 pops.



..... Cranberry Crafts

With some simple ingredients, your kids can whip up these no-bake creations for the holiday table. Their eyes will fill with pride when the compliments roll in.



Cranberry Ice Candle

Supplies:

1 empty, pint-size carton of milk, clean and dry
1-2 12-oz. bags Ocean Spray® Fresh Cranberries
1 floating candle
Water
Orange slices, acorns, small leaves or other decorations

Directions:

Start with a pint-size carton of milk or half and half. Open the carton all the way and clean well.

Carefully pour water and Ocean Spray® Fresh Cranberries into carton filling to about an inch

below top of carton. If desired, drop in a few orange slices, acorns, small leaves or other decorations along the sides of the carton.

Place floating candle or tea light on top of the cranberries and water in center of arrangement. Carefully place the carton in the freezer on a flat surface and freeze overnight.

Once completely frozen, gently peel away carton to reveal the frozen contents. Dip carton in warm water if needed to loosen. Place frozen centerpiece in shallow bowl or deep plate.

Caution: Have an adult light the candle. Children should not light candle or play with the lit candle. Do not leave lit candles unattended.

Candle will last for a few hours, depending on room temperature. Check frequently and discard extra water from bowl as needed.

These simple garnishes are almost as fun to make as they are to eat.

Cranberry Sauce Cut-Outs



Supplies:

1-2 16-oz. cans Ocean Spray®
Jellied Cranberry Sauce
Cookie cutters in assorted shapes
Lettuce leaves
1-2 oranges, cut into 1/2-inch slices
Individual plates or platter

Directions:

Cut an orange into 1/2-inch round slices. For younger children, have an adult do the slicing. Set aside.

Open the top of the cranberry sauce can with a can opener. Insert a rubber spatula into the can, between the edge and the sauce to break the air seal. Gently shake the can to slide the log of sauce onto your plate or serving dish.

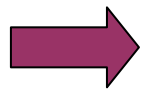
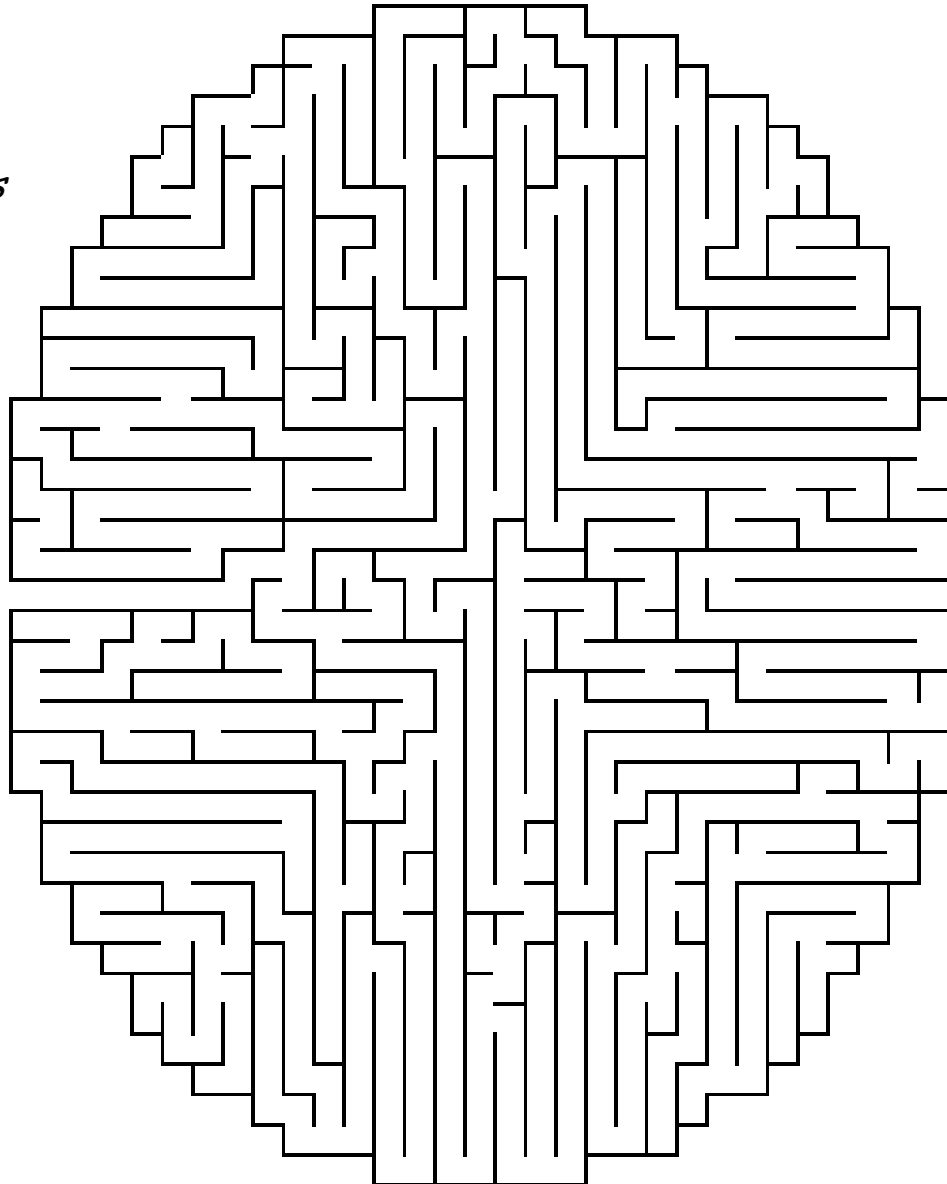
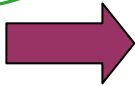
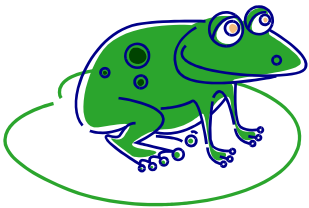
Slice the jellied sauce log into 1/2-inch slices. Again, for younger children, have an adult help with the slicing. Place individual slices on cutting board. Use a cookie cutter to cut out a turkey shape from the center of each slice. Or use other shapes like leaves, stars, etc. Place leftover sauce in a dish and refrigerate to use with leftovers or as a sandwich spread.

Using a spatula, gently place the sauce shapes on top of orange slices and lettuce leaves. Garnishes can be placed on individual dessert plates for each place setting, or grouped on a serving platter.

..... Cranberry Activities

On average, every acre of cranberry bog is supported by 4 to 10 acres of wetlands, woodlands and uplands. This area offers refuge to a rich variety of wildlife including bald eagle, osprey, great blue heron, fox, deer, wild turkey, Canadian Geese, turtles and frogs.

Guide Mr. Frog through the cranberry bog to his home...



Solve the Cryptogram...

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