

Peaches

History

The peach was once believed to have originated in Persia. In fact, it was nicknamed the “Persian Apple.” However, it actually originated in China. It probably reached Persia along caravan routes of the pre-Christian era. Eventually, the peach was introduced in Europe through Greece and then Rome. The peach was probably brought to America by Columbus on his second or third voyage. The Indians then spread peach trees to many regions of America before the white settlers arrived.

Buying & Storage Tips

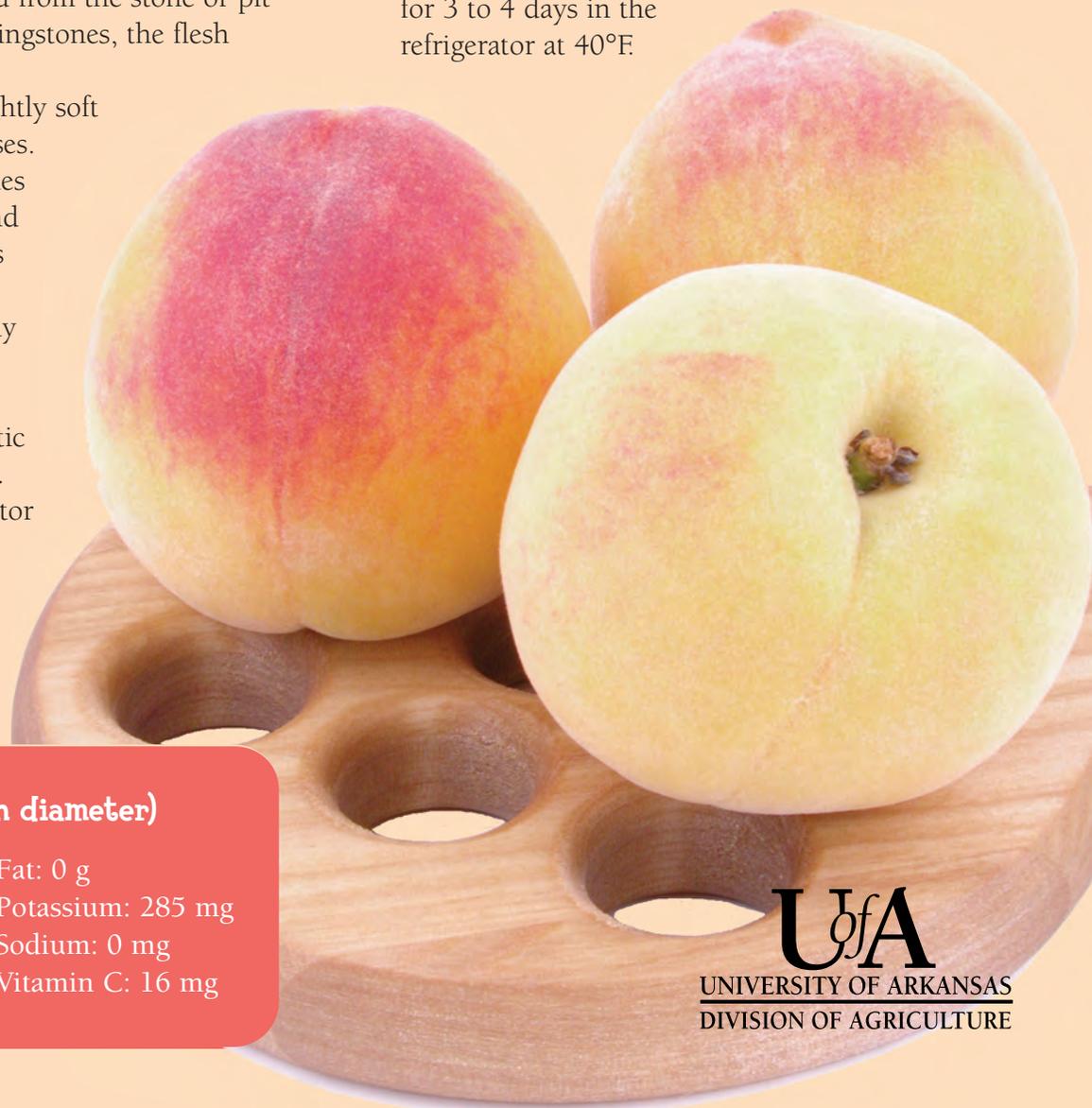
- Arkansas peaches are available from early June through August.
- Peaches are classified as clingstone or freestone. The fruit is easily separated from the stone or pit in freestone varieties. In clingstones, the flesh adheres tightly to the pit.
- Select peaches that are slightly soft to firm and free from bruises. Avoid green-colored peaches because they are unripe and will not become sweeter as the color changes.
- Ripe peaches have a creamy or golden undertone. The amount of rosy “blush” on the surface is a characteristic of the variety, not ripeness. Fragrance is also an indicator of ripeness.
- Approximately 3 to 4 peaches equals 1 pound. One pound

Preparation Tips

- To peel peaches, dip in boiling water for 20 to 30 seconds. Immediately dip in cold water and skin will slide right off. Riper fruit needs less scalding time to loosen peels.
- Peaches brown rapidly when exposed to air. To prevent this, dip halves or slices in 1 quart of water with 3 tablespoons lemon juice or three crushed 500 milligram vitamin C tablets or use a commercial ascorbic acid mixture such as FruitFresh®.
- Peaches are delicious in recipes or eaten right out of your hand. Slice over cereal, ice cream or plain cake.

yields 2 cups sliced peaches or 1 1/2 cups of pulp or puree.

- The amount of time required to ripen peaches will vary depending on the firmness of peaches, but expect about 2 to 4 days.
- Ripe peaches can be stored for 3 to 4 days in the refrigerator at 40°F.



1 medium peach (2 2/3 inch diameter)

Calories: 58	Fat: 0 g
Carbohydrate: 14 g	Potassium: 285 mg
Protein: 1 g	Sodium: 0 mg
Fiber (peach with skin): 2 g	Vitamin C: 16 mg

Peaches are low in calories, fat free and sodium free. They are a good source of vitamin A and vitamin C and provide potassium and fiber to the diet.

Recipes

Peach Crumble

- 2 cups fresh peaches, sliced
- 1/3 cup graham cracker crumbs
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
- 2 teaspoons reduced-fat margarine
- Vegetable oil spray

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spray an 8- x 8- x 2-inch baking pan with vegetable spray and place sliced peaches in the bottom of the pan. Combine graham cracker crumbs, cinnamon and nutmeg; mix well. Blend margarine into the crumb mixture and sprinkle over peaches. Bake uncovered for 25 to 30 minutes. Remove from oven and let cool slightly before serving. Serves 4. Serving size: 1/2 cup.

Calories: 74 Fiber: 2 g
Protein: 1 g Cholesterol: 0 mg
Fat: 2 g Sodium: 57 mg
Carbohydrate: 15 g

Fresh Peach Salsa

- 3 1/2 cups diced peeled peaches (about 2 1/2 pounds)
- 1/4 cup diced red onion
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 tablespoon minced seeded jalapeño pepper
- 1 tablespoon white vinegar
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- 1 garlic clove, minced

Combine all ingredients in a bowl, and stir well. Cover and chill. Serve with pork, chicken or fish. Serves 14. Serving size: 1/4 cup

Calories: 22 Carbohydrate: 6 g
Protein: 0 g Fiber: 1 g
Fat: 0 g Cholesterol: 0 mg
Sodium: 1 mg

Spinach Salad with Peaches and Pecans

- 1/2 cup pecan pieces
- 2 ripe peaches
- 4 cups fresh spinach, rinsed and dried
- 1/4 cup poppy seed salad dressing

Poppy Seed Dressing

- 1/4 cup white wine vinegar
- 4 teaspoons sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon dry mustard
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
- 2/3 cup vegetable oil
- 1 tablespoon poppy seeds

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Arrange pecan pieces in a single layer on a baking sheet and roast in preheated oven for 7-10 minutes, until they just begin to darken. Remove from oven and set aside. Peel peaches (if desired) and cut into bite-sized pieces. Combine peaches, spinach and pecans in a large bowl. Toss with 1/4 cup poppy seed dressing until evenly coated. Serves 4. Serving size: about 1 cup.

Calories: 215 Fiber: 3 g
Protein: 2 g Cholesterol: 0 mg
Fat: 19 g Sodium: 96 mg
Carbohydrate: 12 g

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