

OLYMPIA FOOD CO-OP'S  
PRODUCE NEWSLETTER

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### Let's Eat Some Berries!

One of the coolest things about writing this produce newsletter is reading last year's issue from the same month and seeing how the weather is the same or very different from last



year, and noting how that affects what crops are available. *Last year, local strawberries were ready in mid-May, while this year, they are still small and green, and will likely ripen at their more usual time of mid-June.* Even though we've had some warm days over the past few weeks, it was such a long, cold, wet spring, that these jeweled treasures are taking a little longer to get going this year than they did last year. We have been seeing fantastic quality on berries from California already this year, however, so I thought I'd go ahead and give a little primer on berries. They're one of my favorite snacks to enjoy. Of course they're delicious all on their own, but I've also included a few recipes for special treats!- Erin, OFC Produce Manager

**Strawberries:** The Co-op's primary strawberry grower during local season is Helsing Junction Farm, located in Rochester, Washington. Strawberries lend themselves well to both sweet and savory dishes, and are excellent paired with spinach and almonds in a salad. Strawberries are generally ready in Olympia in mid-June, and their season will often continue until mid-July.

**Blueberries:** The Co-op's primary blueberry grower during local season is Burnt Ridge Nursery, located in Onalaska, Washington. Blueberries are the classic smoothie addition. They are also wonderful on top of oatmeal or other breakfast cereal. Blueberries are usually ready in Olympia in July, and their season may extend into September.

**Raspberries, and Blackcap Raspberries:** While we don't have any farms who regularly grow these berries for the Co-op, we do occasionally get small quantities from The Okanogan Producers Marketing Association. If you've never tried Blackcap Raspberries, give them a try, they are a very unique fruit!

### The Importance of Buying

#### Organic Strawberries

According to the Environmental Working Group's 2015 report "Shopper's Guide to Pesticides in Produce," strawberries are among the 12 foods on which pesticide residues have been most frequently found. Additional research in 2011 has also shown non-organically grown strawberries to contain a high number of pesticide residues, including residues from 14 different pesticides."(from whfoods.com) If you don't buy all organic produce, make sure that the strawberries you buy are. The co-op's strawberries are always certified organic, whether they are grown locally or coming from Oregon, California, or

#### Berry Nutrition

**Strawberries:** Very high in vitamin C, full of antioxidants, high in folate and manganese, and with a lower glycemic index than many other fruits. Strawberries have largely been studied for their anti-inflammatory effects in the body, their positive benefit to the cardiovascular system, and their help in regulating blood sugar.

**Blueberries:** Very high in anthocyanin antioxidants, blueberries have long been touted as a "superfood". Their antioxidant protective benefit has been studied most notably in relation to the cardiovascular system, but has also been shown to improve brain function, and



## Mixed Berry Crumble

[Co+op, stronger together](#)

Total Time: 40 minutes; 15 minutes active

Servings: 8

Ingredients

1 cup rolled oats

3/4 cup light brown sugar

3/4 cup whole wheat pastry flour

1/2 teaspoon salt

2 teaspoons lemon zest

1/2 cup unsalted butter, melted

4 cups fresh strawberries, stems removed

2 cups fresh raspberries

1 cup fresh blueberries

2 tablespoons sugar

1 tablespoon arrowroot or cornstarch

1 teaspoon vanilla

Preparation

Heat the oven to 400°F. In a large bowl, combine the oats, brown sugar, flour, salt and zest. Add the melted butter and stir to mix. Reserve. Place the berries in a 2-quart baking dish, and sprinkle with sugar, arrowroot or cornstarch, and vanilla. Toss gently to coat, until well combined. Crumble the oat mixture over the berries in the dish. Bake for 25 minutes, or until the topping is golden and the juices are thick and bubbly all the way around the dish. Let cool on a rack for 5 minutes before serving.

*Note: If you can't find all of the berries fresh, you can substitute some frozen berries or just use 2 types of berries.*

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## Berry Yogurt Ice Pops

[Co+op, stronger together](#)

Total Time: 30 minutes active; 6 hours total

Servings: 8

A tasty and healthy way to beat the heat and extend the berry season (if you can stand not eating them right away)!

Ingredients

2 cups fresh berries, washed and chopped (use a single kind or a variety)

1/4 cup sugar

2 tablespoons honey

1/4 cup water

1 teaspoon lemon juice

1 1/2 cups plain, nonfat Greek yogurt

Preparation

In a saucepan, bring the berries, sugar, honey and water to a boil. Simmer for a few minutes to dissolve the sugar, remove from heat, and pulse in a food processor until just chunky. Place the mixture into a small bowl and cool it in the refrigerator for 15-20 minutes. Whisk or fold the yogurt and lemon juice into the berry mixture until thoroughly combined. Pour the mixture into molds (see Tips & Notes) and freeze for at least 5 hours. Run molds under hot water to release the ice pops.

Serving Suggestion

Freeze the ice pop mixture in ice cube trays, and serve two or three in a tall glass of ginger ale for a fun summer cooler. For a non-dairy version, substitute soy yogurt or coconut milk yogurt for the Greek yogurt.

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