

JULY – Featured Fruit: BLUEBERRIES



WASH. EAT.



(how easy is that?)



Hello, we're **Brandon and Bronwyn Blueberry!**¹

We enjoy hiking and playing in the wilderness. That's why we're wearing hiking shoes and carrying a backpack and walking stick. And you know, for our outdoor adventures, we like to pack blueberries because they travel well and are refreshing and flavorful!

Facts

Blueberries are the second most popular berry in the United States.

Everyone loves these delicious sapphire-colored berries, and summertime, mid-June through mid-August, is when they are in season.

Our love affair with summer berries has resulted in a 50% increase in consumption of blueberries during the last 10 years.

History

Blueberries have been around for thousands of years and were once called "star berries" because of the star-shaped calyx on the top of each berry.

Explorers made note of wild blueberries on their explorations.

Lewis and Clark found that Indians in the Northwest Territory smoked wild blueberries to preserve them for the winter.

One of the first meals the two shared with the Indians was venison that had wild blueberries pounded into the meat and then was smoked and dried.

The cultivation of blueberries is a recent development. At the turn of the century, a New Jersey botanist, Frederick Coville, began to cross different varieties of wild blueberries.

He wanted to create an easily -grown blueberry for home gardens and farms.

Today, most cultivated blueberries are highbush plants, growing to 10 to 15 feet for easy hand or machine harvesting.

Source: ¹Dole 5 A Day. www.dole5aday.com

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Where Grown

Blueberries are native to North America and 95% of the world's commercial crop is grown in North America (United States and Canada).

Michigan and New Jersey produce 66% of all the blueberries in the United States, followed by North Carolina and Oregon/Washington.

Over 200 million pounds of blueberries are grown every year in North America.

Types

Wild lowbush blueberries continue to grow in Maine and Canada. They are picked mostly by hand and are smaller in size and darker in color than the cultivated blueberries. Wild blueberries are delicious and have a unique flavor.

Northern highbush varieties make up about 95 percent of cultivated blueberries, which grow primarily in the northern regions of the United States and in British Columbia.

Rabbiteye varieties make up the remaining 5 percent of blueberries, which grow better in southern regions of the United States. Fruits of highbush blueberry are blue-black with a powdery, silver-white "bloom" on their surface.