FOOD OF THE MONTH

BERRIES

BERRIES such as blueberries, strawberries and raspberries are loaded with health promoting vitamins and phytonutrients that act as powerful antioxidants. Along with a high fiber content, adding berries as an in-between meal time snack will provide oodles of energy and will help you to feel full longer. Berries of all varieties can be eaten as a quick snack on their own, added to yogurt to make a quick and easy breakfast parfait, or baked into wonderful healthy whole food treats and desserts.

The peak season for berries in our climate zone range from June to August. Fruit of all varieties should be eaten at their peak of ripeness to best provide you with all of the health promoting nutrients. Purchasing or picking local is the best option.

Berries are fruits that are lower on the Glycemic Index which is a numerical scale used to indicate how fast and how high a particular food raises blood sugar levels. Glucose, the body's source of energy is delivered to cells throughout our bodies via our bloodstream and is primarily derived from the carbohydrates in the foods we eat. Consuming the whole fruit helps to slow digestion and thereby slows the release of sugar into the bloodstream maintaining a more balanced level of insulin. Low in calories, berries are best served fresh and raw, not juiced or dried.

STRAWBERRIES contain more vitamin C in a one-cup serving than one orange and are particularly high in folic acid, a required nutrient for pregnant moms.

RASPBERRIES contains 8 grams of fiber in one cup which is 1/3 the daily recommended amount. (We should be getting approximately 25-35 g of fiber every day).

BLUEBERRIES contain 20 types of anthocyanin, antioxidants that give berries their blue-violet colour. Other berries contain only three or four types.

The best way to select berries are when they are fully ripe and vibrant in colour. Once picked, berries will not ripen further. Look for plump berries, not soft or mushy and without mold.

PROPER STORAGE IS VERY IMPORTANT.

Make sure to refrigerate once you get them home. Cleaning berries, especially raspberries which are the most delicate, must be washed with care. To prevent berries from becoming water logged, wash them right before eating or using in a recipe.

Wash them thoroughly in cold, running water just before cooking. Sometimes they may require a light scrub. Trim the neck and bases. Peeling of skin is not advised as the skin contains many healthy beneficial nutrients.

FOOD
OF THE
MONTH   BERRIES

PARKDALE
FOOD CENTRE
NEIGHBOUR TO NEIGHBOUR

YOUR
LOCAL
FOOD
BANK
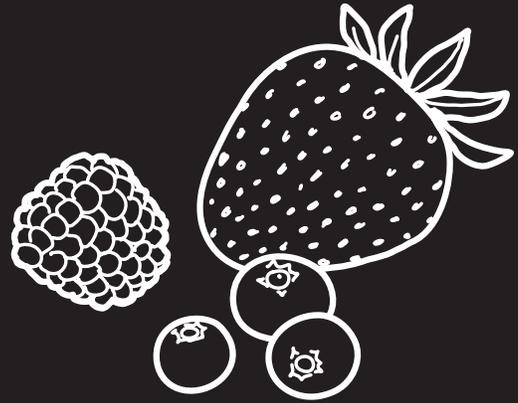
BREAKFAST BERRIES

PARKDALE
FOOD CENTRE

BERRIES PARFAIT:

Layer sliced strawberries, or whole blueberries or raspberries, (Or a combination of all three), with plain yogurt in a glass for a colourful parfait dessert. This makes a healthy and protein packed breakfast or snack and is visually pleasing to children for an after dinner dessert.

OATMEAL PORRIDGE:

Mix fresh berries in your morning oatmeal for a sweet breakfast treat. Adding in some sunflower or pumpkin seeds will give an added boost of nutrients and a bit of crunch.

BERRIE CRUMBLE Serves 6

PARKDALE
FOOD CENTRE

FRUIT MIXTURE INGREDIENTS

- ☐ 1 cup each of blueberries, strawberries and raspberries or 3-5 cups of any combination of fruit
- ☐ ¼ cup sugar
- ☐ ¼ cup flour
- ☐ ¼ tsp cinnamon

TOPPING INGREDIENTS

- ☐ ½ cup rolled oats
- ☐ ¼ cup flour
- ☐ ¼ cup brown sugar
- ☐ ¼ cup sugar
- ☐ Pinch of salt
- ☐ 4 TBS cold butter

DIRECTIONS:

1 In a pie dish or casserole dish combine fruit mixture stirring gently

2 Combine all dry ingredients together.

3 Break butter into small pieces and add to dry ingredients.

4 Gently toss together using fingers until mixture is crumbly and well combined

5 Sprinkle topping mixture over fruit and bake for 45 minutes or until fruit is bubbly and topping is golden brown.

CROCK POT VERSION

1 Using the same ingredients add the fruit mixture and place in crockpot stirring all ingredients gently.

2 Sprinkle topping mixture over the fruit.

3 Cook on low for 4-5 hours.