



MONONA GROVE FARM TO SCHOOL



HARVEST OF THE MONTH

Wisconsin Harvest of the Month is a statewide campaign that encourages kids and families to eat more fruits and vegetables. Each month schools showcase one seasonal, Wisconsin-grown fruit or vegetable.

This month we are featuring:

Cranberries!



CRANBERRIES

Wisconsin is the nation's leading producer of cranberries, harvesting more than 60 percent of the country's crop.

You can find cranberries in many forms:

- Fresh
- Frozen
- Dried
- Canned
- 100% Juice

WHAT IS THE FARM TO SCHOOL PROGRAM UP TO IN DECEMBER?

Some of our K-3 have been learning about **The food groups/MyPlate** in November and will continue into December.

MyPlate is a resource you can use to plan the amount of each food group you and your family should eat each day.

What other food topics do you think are important for our students? Contact **Wes!**

December Calendar

Happy Holidays!

Join us Thursdays!
Plan on School Lunch!

Dec. 1st

Cranberry Wojapi

Dec. 8th

Cranberry Sauce

Dec. 15th

Spinach Salad with Cranberries



Visit the [Monona Grove Website](#) to apply for **free/reduced** meals!



Brussel sprouts are still in season into December.

Cranberry Facts

- ✓ Only 5 percent of Wisconsin's cranberry crop is sold as fresh berries.
- ✓ Cranberries are used as ingredients in over 1,000 food and beverage products.
- ✓ Sailors and whalers brought cranberries on board to prevent the development of scurvy.
- ✓ Cranberries are sometimes called bounce berries because they bounce when ripe.
- ✓ The state fruit of Wisconsin is the cranberry.



CRAVE CRANBERRIES



Select – Cranberries are available fresh, frozen, canned, dried, and as 100% juice. If selecting fresh, choose plump, firm berries with a deep red color.

Store – Refrigerate cranberries for up to 2 months or freeze for up to 9 months.

Prepare – Sort and discard bruised cranberries. Do not thaw frozen cranberries. Simply rinse the frozen berry and add to your favorite muffin or stuffing recipe.

Cranberries are The Harvest of the Month!

Add cranberries to your favorite family meals:

- Toss cranberries on oatmeal or cold cereal.
- Mix dried cranberries, raisins, cereal, and nuts for a healthy snack mix.
- Add cranberries to salads for a refreshing punch of tartness.

Make meals and memories together. It's a lesson kids will use for life.

Did you know?

Cranberries are the state fruit of Wisconsin! 62% of the cranberries grown in the United States come from Wisconsin.



Nutritious, Delicious, Wisconsin!
#WIHarvestoftheMonth



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Extend the life of fall seasonal foods into the winter by preserving them!



December Nutrition Lesson

Cranberries and other berries are part of the **Fruit Group**.

The amount of **fruit** you need to eat is a little different for everyone. We need between 1 and 2.5 cups a day depending on our age.

Nutrients are common across many berries, but they can each have slightly different amounts. For instance strawberries have more Vitamin C than grapes, but grapes contain more of certain B Vitamins than strawberries.

Botanically: grapes, currants, tomatoes, cucumbers, eggplants, and bananas are all berries. Strawberries and raspberries are not. However culinarily, berries typically include any small edible fruit.

1 cup of Berries =
1/2 cup dried cranberries
About 8 large strawberries
22 seedless grapes
1 cup fresh/frozen blueberries



Health Benefits of Berries

- ✓ Manganese helps the body form connective tissue, bones, blood clotting factors, and hormones.
- ✓ Potassium helps your nerves to function and muscles to contract. It helps your heartbeat stay regular helps move nutrients into cells.
- ✓ Vitamin K helps to make various proteins that are needed for blood clotting and the building of bones.
- ✓ Antioxidants are substances that may protect your cells against free radicals, which may play a role in diseases.



Many forms of the Cranberry



Cranberries can be enjoyed in many forms. As mention previously, only 5% of WI cranberries are sold fresh! What do we do with the other 95%? Fruit are an important part of our diet so find out which way you like to enjoy them best! **Fresh berries** can be eaten raw, but they do tend to be very tart!

Dried

Dried Cranberries are a quick and delicious way to make sure you get your recommended intake of fruit. They can easily be added to salads, cereals, and sweet or savory recipes. Be mindful of your sugar intake as dried cranberries usually contain added sweetener.



Juice

100% cranberry juice contains the nutrients of cranberries in the form of a drink! Like dried cranberries, it is important to consider many juices contain added sugar. Juices also lack the fiber content that the whole berry contains.



Frozen

Frozen cranberries can last up to a year in an air tight container! Freezing can effect the texture slightly after being thawed, but maintain the nutritional value of fresh. These are mostly used in cooked dishes, and typically don't need to be thawed before cooking.



Canned

Canned or jellied cranberries, that many people enjoy during a holiday meal are another popular form of this fruit. While delicious and convenient, they do typically contain lots of sweetener in the form of high fructose corn syrup.



Making this side dish at home allows you to control the amount and type of sugar used!

Check out the next page for a simple cranberry sauce recipe!



CRANBERRIES: QUICK & EASY

- Toss cranberries on oatmeal or cold cereal
- Mix dried cranberries, raisins, cereal, and nuts for a healthy snack mix
- Add cranberries to salad



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Recipes and Local Produce

Cranberry Sauce (Jellied Cranberries)

Ingredients (only 3!)

12 ounces fresh cranberries
1 cup sugar
1/4 cup water

Optional Additions - Spices (clove, cinnamon, cardamom) or Orange Zest (if using frozen cranberries, start with 16oz cranberries and increase sugar to 1 1/3 cup and water to 1/3 cup)



1. Combine the cranberries, sugar, and water in a heavy saucepan. Bring to a boil.
2. Reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer for about 10 minutes, stirring frequently.
3. Pour the cranberry sauce mixture through a mesh sieve into a bowl. (optional)
4. Allow the mixture to cool and put into refrigerator to set for at least 2 hours.

No thickeners are needed. Cranberries are naturally high in pectin! Simmer longer for a thicker sauce. If you simmer long enough, the sauce will take the shape of whatever container you use once chilled, so get creative!

Send a Recipe

Next months Harvest item will be:
Sweet Potatoes!

Send in your family's favorite recipe that features **sweet potato** or share your favorite ways to eat **sweet potatoes!**

If sharing a recipe, include a picture of the finished product and your family enjoying it!



Local Produce

New menu items in November were sourced locally from:

Pleasant Valley Acres, LLC - Our maple roasted butternut squash featured squash from this farm in Sullivan, WI.

Parrfection Produce - Squash for our Delicata Smiles were from this produce aggregator in Monticello, WI.

Follow the Monona Grove SD [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) pages for more updates, pictures, and events. Reach out to **Wes** with questions and suggestions!

Contact: **Wes** MG F2S Specialist - weston.broske@mgschools.net

