

## COOKING WITH CRANBERRIES

You will find fresh cranberries available in your supermarket produce section in the fall. While cranberries are in season, it's a good idea to buy extra bags for later use. Just put them in the freezer and enjoy fresh cranberry recipes year 'round! Cranberries freeze well for up to a year (wash in cold water before you use them, but not before freezing). When ready to use, do not thaw. Follow the recipe directions by simply using frozen berries in place of fresh berries.

### *Winning Recipes from the 2009 Wisconsin State Fair – Creative Cranberry Cooking Contest*

#### **Almond Cranberry Bread with White Chocolate Glaze**

Susan Nekich, Milwaukee, WI

##### **Bread:**

2-1/2 C all-purpose flour	1/4 C butter, melted
1 C granulated sugar	2 eggs
3 tsp baking powder	1-1/2 tsp almond extract
1/2 tsp salt	1-1/2 C fresh or frozen cranberries
1 C buttermilk	2/3 C. sliced almonds, chopped

In a large bowl, mix flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt; set aside. Beat buttermilk, butter, eggs and almond extract until blended. Combine with flour mixture. Stir in cranberries and nuts until just moist. Pour into greased and wax paper lined 9 x 5 loaf pan. Bake for 40 to 50 minutes in 325 degree oven, or until toothpick inserted in middle comes out clean. Cool in pan on wire rack 10 minutes. Remove from pan and cool completely.

##### **Glaze:**

1/4 C white chocolate chips	1-2 French vanilla coffee creamers
3 Tbsp powdered sugar	toasted almonds for topping

Microwave chips on high 30 seconds. Stir until melted. Beat in powdered sugar and thin with creamer to desired thickness. Drizzle icing over cooled loaf. Top with toasted almonds.

#### **Crimson Slaw**

Adriane Laabs, Milwaukee, WI

1/2 head red cabbage, shredded	2 Tbsp sugar
1/2 red onion, thinly sliced	1 tsp salt
6 Tbsp olive oil	1/2 tsp black pepper
2 Tbsp red wine vinegar	1/4 tsp ground mustard
2 Tbsp red wine	1 (6 oz) pkg. sweetened, dried cranberries

Mix cabbage and onion together in a large bowl. Combine all other ingredients and mix thoroughly. Pour over cabbage mixture, add cranberries and mix thoroughly. Marinate in refrigerator for at least one hour.

## CRANBERRY FUN FACTS

- ❖ Cranberries are native to North America. The 5 major states cranberries are grown in are: Wisconsin, Massachusetts, Oregon, New Jersey and Washington.
- ❖ Wisconsin is expected to be the top cranberry-producing state in the nation for the 15th consecutive year, producing more than 50% of the country's crop.
- ❖ The USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service projects that Wisconsin will yield 4.0 million barrels of fruit during the 2009 fall harvest. That is an approximate 11 percent decrease from Wisconsin's record 2008 harvest of more than 4.3 million barrels.
- ❖ The cranberry was officially named Wisconsin's state fruit on April 5, 2004.
- ❖ The first cranberry marshes in the state date back to the 1830s, even before Wisconsin was a state.
- ❖ In early times, cranberries were shipped to market in wooden barrels, transported by train. Each barrel weighed 100 pounds. Although many years have passed since cranberries were shipped in barrels, this unit of weight remains the industry standard.
- ❖ American recipes containing cranberries date from the early 18th century. Legend has it that Pilgrims may have served cranberries at the first Thanksgiving in Plymouth. Today cranberries are found in more than 1,000 products throughout the world.
- ❖ Cranberries score among the highest of all fruits in antioxidants. Diets including fruits and vegetables with high antioxidant values, like cranberries, may help support memory function and coordination.

# Wisconsin's Cranberry Harvest



**Wisconsin  
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Cranberry  
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Association**

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**Wisconsin** continues to be a national leader in cranberry farming and produces more than 50% of the cranberries that Americans consume each year. Cranberries are an important part of the state and local economies providing jobs and income for residents in both rural and urban areas.

Cranberries have long been Wisconsin's number one fruit crop. Some 250 growers in 19 counties in central, northern and western Wisconsin continue the tradition of cultivating this unique fruit, maintaining an agricultural heritage that began in the mid-1800s. Some marshes in the state have been successfully producing a crop for more than 100 years. Growers have a strong commitment to the land, local communities and their families, and receive great satisfaction from working the land and providing a food crop that people all over the world enjoy.

The cranberry is grown in low lying areas where the soil has an acidic nature and there is an abundant supply of water and sand. Water is used for irrigation, frost protection, winter flooding for weather protection, and harvesting. Sand is used as part of cultural practices to rejuvenate vines and encourage new rooting and fruiting upright growth. Although it may take three to five years for a new cranberry bed to produce a large enough crop for harvest, vines will continue to produce a crop for several decades.

Contrary to popular belief, cranberries do not grow under water or in standing water. The low-growing, perennial vines blossom in late June or early July. Honeybees assist in pollination and small green berries are evident by early August. The cranberry matures until fall when beds are flooded and the crimson berries are harvested.

Fruit to be sold fresh is harvested in the flooded marsh to gently remove the berry from the vine. The fresh fruit is transported to



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*Water Reel Harvesting*

warehouses where it is cleaned, dried, cooled and delivered for sale. Berries used for processed products are floated on the water, removed and taken to plants where they are cleaned and frozen for processing.

While Wisconsin cranberry marshes occupy more than 180,000 acres, cranberries are actually harvested on only about 18,000 of those acres. The balance, called support land, consists of natural and man-made wetlands, woodlands and uplands.

This support land is not directly used for growing cranberries; however, its network of ditches, dikes, dams and reservoirs is necessary to ensure an adequate water supply. Since this land is relatively inaccessible, it provides an ideal refuge for wildlife and valuable habitat where plant and animal life flourish.

These natural wetlands help to control flooding as well as filter and recycle water. Growers protect and manage these areas as part of their normal farming practices. As a result, cranberry marshes are familiar territory to rare and endangered species. Bald eagles, calypso orchids, sandhill cranes, trumpeter swans, loons, ospreys, wolves and other wildlife flourish on cranberry marshes in the state.

Cranberries offer several important health benefits. Not only are they a healthy, low-calorie, fiber-rich fruit, but they also help maintain a healthy urinary tract, healthy heart and healthy immune system.

- ❁ Several studies have confirmed that cranberries can play an important role in urinary tract health. In fact the National Kidney Foundation recommends one large glass of cranberry juice a day to maintain good kidney health.
- ❁ Results of medical research suggest that cranberries may be beneficial in the prevention of ulcers, which are linked to stomach cancer and acid reflux disease.
- ❁ Cranberries minimize the formation of dental plaque, which is a leading cause of gum disease.
- ❁ Ongoing research continues to suggest that cranberries may offer a natural defense against atherosclerosis, which is a primary cause of cardiovascular disease.
- ❁ Cranberries contain hippuric acid, which has antibacterial effects on the body, as well as natural antibiotic ingredients.
- ❁ Studies have supported the role of naturally occurring anticancer agents in fruits and vegetables. Recent studies have shown that these compounds found in cranberries help protect cells from damage that may contribute to certain types of cancer.

Although more research is needed to understand the role cranberries may play in preventing certain types of cancer, The National Cancer Institute does recommend eating at least five to nine servings of fruits and vegetables a day. Cranberries fit nicely into this important dietary recommendation. For more information on the health benefits of cranberries visit: [www.cranberryinstitute.org](http://www.cranberryinstitute.org).