



Holiday Cooking

Sweeten The Season With Delicious, Nutritious Dried Fruit

(NAPS)—Here's encouraging news for many people who like to indulge around the holidays: you can enjoy a sweet treat as a snack, a sauce, a spread and even dessert, that's actually good for you. That is when you whet your appetite for dried fruits such as cranberries and cherries.

According to studies published by the National Institutes of Health, dried fruit consumption, in contrast with fresh fruit, can provide significant proportions of daily requirements of several micronutrients, particularly folate, and that people who eat dried fruit tend to weigh less and ingest more nutrients, than those who don't.

Ounce for ounce, dried fruits contain more fiber and more protective antioxidants than fresh fruit, adds Harvard's Dr. Anthony Komaroff. The fiber fights heart disease, obesity, some types of cancer and possibly degenerative brain diseases.

What's more, the anthocyanin in cherries may help with muscle recovery after a workout.

Basically, dried fruit can be a great and easy way to enhance nutrient density.

There are many ways you and your family can enjoy these tasty treats, during the holidays or at any time.

Here are a couple of easy recipes you may care to try:

Oatmeal Smoothie With Dried Fruit

- ½ cup nut milk
- ½ cup old-fashioned rolled oats
- ½ cup yogurt (optional)
- 1 teaspoon chia seeds
- 1 teaspoon flaxseed milled
- 1 teaspoon hemp seeds
- ½ banana mashed

Dried cherries, dried cranberries, nuts, and/or spices to top

Add milk, oats, yogurt, chia seeds, flaxseed, hemp seeds, and banana to a bowl and stir. Transfer to jar, place lid on jar and refrigerate for 5–8 hours. Top with dried fruit, nuts, and/or spices and enjoy.



Four pounds of dried fruit can go a long way toward making your holiday baking and cooking more nutritious and delicious.

For the more sophisticated palates among your family and friends, there's this:

Cran-Cherry Rosemary Spread

- 8 ounces of cream cheese, softened**
- 1 Tablespoon fresh rosemary**
- 2 Tablespoons dried cranberries, chopped**
- 1 teaspoon fresh chives**
- 2 teaspoons heavy cream**
- 1 Tablespoon dried cherries, chopped**
- 1 teaspoons garlic powder**

In a medium bowl, combine the cream cheese, cranberries, cherries, heavy cream, and garlic powder. Finely chop the chives and rosemary and place into the bowl. Mix thoroughly with a fork until combined well. Scoop into a serving dish and place in the refrigerator until ready to serve

Making these recipes even easier is that you can now get a four pound box from Michigan's dried fruit experts, Graceland, that includes a two pound bag of dried cranberries and a two pound bag of dried cherries. It's available at Meijer's throughout MI.

Learn More

For further facts, tips and recipes, go to www.gracelandfruit.com.