

Growing & Harvesting

Grow. Purchase grapes adapted for your area. Plant in spring in full sun on a south facing slope. Immediately after planting, prune each cane back to 2-3 healthy, live buds. Shoots will grow from these buds, creating the trunk of the grapes. For cold climates, two or more trunks are recommended. Visit www.msueextension.org for more information or contact your Extension office.

Harvest. Grape harvest in northern climates occurs in the fall. Allow fruit to ripen on the vine as it will not further ripen once picked. Harvest grapes when the seeds and cluster stems seem to turn brown and woody. The cluster should be cut from the vine with a small length of stem attached, taking care not to rub the “bloom” (gray or white powder) from the fruit. Bloom is a naturally-occurring substance which protects grapes from moisture loss and decay.



Selection

Grapes come in different varieties. Green grape varieties should have a slightly yellowish, translucent hue rather than a true, opaque green. Red grape varieties should be mostly red and have a rich, reddish-purple hue. Blue-black grape varieties should have a deep, rich, dark hue. Choose plump, firm grapes that are firmly attached to stem.

Storage

Store in the refrigerator, wrapped in a perforated plastic bag. Perforations in the bag allow excess moisture to escape. Avoid storing grapes next to strong-smelling food, such as green onions or leeks.

Nutrition Information

Most fruits are rich in fiber and phytochemicals, but provide negligible amounts of saturated fat, *trans* fat, cholesterol, and sodium and are gluten-free. Grapes are rich in potassium and have only 52 calories per half-cup serving.

Uses

Grill. Pierce the grape with a skewer to grill alone or with vegetables. Grapes are done when tender.

Frozen. Freeze a few grapes to use for snacks or add to drinks instead of ice cubes.

Raw. Rinse and eat off the stem. Slice grapes in half and add to green salads, or chicken salads for sandwiches.

Sauté. Heat pan to high, add butter or oil to coat bottom of pan, and add grapes. Sauté until lightly brown, about 3-5 minutes. Remove from heat and add to sauces or pour over fish or meat dishes.

Preserve. For information on preserving grapes, look for MontGuides: *Freezing Fruit; Drying Fruit; Processing Fruit, Tomatoes, and Mixtures in a Pressure Canner; and Making Jams, Jellies and Syrups*. Visit www.msueextension.org for more information or call your Extension office.

Food Safety Tips

1. **Clean.** Wash hands and food contact surfaces before and after preparation.
2. **Chill.** Keep produce and food cool and chill promptly.
3. **Separate.** Keep produce and food separate from raw meats and eggs.
4. **Cook.** Cook food to a safe temperature.

Questions? Click on www.foodsafety.gov

Preparation: Step-by-Step



Wash hands. Rinse grapes thoroughly by placing under running water with hand or in colander.



Remove grapes from stem to eat or for in recipes.



Hold on both sides to secure a grape for slicing.
Slice in half or quarters for salads.



Enjoy in salads, yogurt, desserts, and preserves.

For More Information:

Montana State University Extension: www.msuxextension.org
MSU Extension Master Gardener: www.mtmastergardener.org
MSU Extension Food and Nutrition: www.msuxextension.org/nutrition
MSU Extension Nutrition Education Programs: www.buyeatlivebetter.org

Information provided by:

California Table Grape Commission. (2013) Grapes from California. <http://www.freshcaliforniagrapes.com/index.php>
Fruits & Veggies More Matters. (2012). Grapes: Nutrition. selection. storage. <http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/grapes>

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