



## Fruits and Vegetables

### Lesson: Peaches

#### Getting Started

1. Review lesson plan before each session.
2. Copy handouts:
  - a. *Choosing & Storing Peaches*
  - b. *Fun & Easy Ways to Eat Peaches*
  - c. Recipes (4)
3. Gather supplies needed for lesson and activities.

#### Supplies Needed

1. Handouts for participants
2. Ingredients for a specific recipe you choose to prepare.
3. Supplies for tasting recipe, such as plates, forks or spoons, and napkins.
4. Fresh, canned and/or frozen peaches to display and refer to during lesson (*can use as prizes for participants who answer questions, etc.*).

#### Beginning the Lesson

1. Introduce yourself by name and the organization you represent.
2. Summarize the lesson by giving the objectives.
3. Let the group know the lesson will be informal and they can ask questions any time.

#### Objectives – The participants will:

1. Understand the benefits of eating 5 fruits and vegetables daily.
2. Know how to choose and store peaches.
3. Learn new ways to cook and prepare peaches.
4. Understand the nutrition benefits of eating peaches.



## Script

### Introduction

#### Introduction

*(Display fresh, canned and/or frozen peaches to refer to during lesson. Can use as prizes for participants who answer questions, etc.)*

Let's take a look at our headline (*display handout/overhead/ with headline*). What may be the secret to staying healthy and fit as we age? **Eating 5 to 9 servings of colorful fruits and vegetables every day – 5 A Day the Color Way, our age-defying formula for health that may help:**

- 1. Fight cancer.**
- 2. Fight heart disease.**
- 3. Fight effects of aging** (on eyesight, memory, immune function and painful inflammation).

Remember, if there is one thing certain about diet, it is that you may reduce your risk of cancer, heart disease and other conditions associated with aging if you eat at least 5 servings of colorful fruits and vegetables daily, as part of an overall diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol.

Today we are going to talk about the Georgia fruit—peaches. Peaches are the third most popular fruit grown in America. *How many of you have grown peaches before?* As most of us know, peaches are a round juicy fruit with a downy yellowish-red skin, with a rough pit and a sweet, warm taste. We are going to take a closer look at Georgia's favorite fruit.

#### Short History of Peaches:

*Does anyone know where peaches came from?* Although grown in Georgia, peaches first came from China. They go back to the 10th century B.C. and are often found in pictures from that time. The Chinese have developed many different types of peaches.

The peach got its name around 300 B.C. when a Greek philosopher thought it came from Persia and named this lovely fruit to that country. In the New World, peaches date back to the 1500's, brought first to Latin America by early Spanish colonists. Peaches were first grown in Georgia during the colonial period of the 1700s. After the Civil War, Georgia peach growers developed superior new varieties, which boosted the commercial peach industry and made Georgia the "Peach State."



## **Description and Storage:**

*Did you know that peach trees can be grown from peach pits?* But don't start getting your pie crusts ready yet—it takes about 3 years for a peach tree to produce any fruit. A peach tree can grow to be 30 feet tall and can live for 40 years. But to make harvesting easier, they are only allowed to grow about 12 feet high. Peaches are a temperate climate fruit with a peak season in June, July, and August. Fresh Georgia peaches are available only 12 weeks each year, from mid-May to early August. A familiar cousin to the peach is the nectarine, which has a thin, smooth skin and firm flesh. Peaches must be picked ripe because they do not ripen well after they have been picked. You can keep peaches for one to three days, but you have to be very careful because one small bruise and it will go bad on that spot.

You'll want to keep peaches, still fairly solid to touch, at room temperature in a brown paper bag for 2 to 3 days until their skin yields slightly to gentle pressure. Ripe peaches should be kept refrigerated in a single layer for no longer than five days. Overripe (extremely soft) peaches should be used at once, either fresh or in cooking.

*Does anyone know why you store peaches in a brown paper bag?* As peaches are ripening, they produce ethylene gas, which is a natural ripening hormone. A loosely closed paper bag keeps ethylene gas close to the fruit so it ripens more effectively. Paper bags also help prevent peaches from shriveling by holding in the humidity (moisture) produced by fruit during ripening. Plastic bags do this TOO well, allowing a buildup of moisture on the surface of the fruit, which may hasten decay. A paper bag "breathes" a bit, maintaining just the right environment for ripening.

## **Choosing Peaches in the Store or Market:**

*So, for those of us that don't grow our own peaches, how do you pick the best peach at the store?* Well, you begin by looking for ones with a creamy to gold background that indicates ripeness. The amount of red on peaches depends on the variety—it is not always a sign of ripeness. Look for peaches that have a well-defined crease and a good fragrance. Gently squeeze the peach in your palm, and if it gives a little to the pressure and smells sweet, it is ready to eat. Shriveling at the stem end or excessive softening are indications of overripe peaches.

When selecting canned peaches, choose ones that say, "packed in it's own juice," and "no sugar added." Remember to check out the food label and choose canned peaches that are healthy for you!

**Using Peaches:**

Summer in Georgia just wouldn't be the same without fresh peaches. With the perfect combination of flavor and nutrition, peaches can be enjoyed in appetizers, desserts, and everything in between. The most popular way to use peaches is just to eat them fresh, after washing them with running water. Peaches can be dried, canned, frozen, made into jams, jellies, and preserves, used as a filling for desserts, and used as an ingredient in many other dishes, from appetizers to entrees. Fresh peach ice cream and peach pie are some local favorites. Peaches are often used in cobblers, crisps, or gently cooked with brown sugar. Peaches are also delicious as a topping for breakfast cereals, salads, pancakes or waffles. Try slicing up a peach and mixing it in a bowl of low-fat vanilla yogurt for a healthy, refreshing snack! Look at your handout, *Fun & Easy Ways to Eat Peaches* for more ideas on how to enjoy this delicious and nutritious fruit!

If you have a bundle of ripe peaches and don't know what to do with them, you can make jam! You also can slice them up and freeze them for winter use. Refer to your handout on *How to Freeze Peaches* to perfectly freeze those delicious summer fruit for later use. You could even make juice from extra peaches. Peach juice is nectar from the gods according to the Romans!

If a recipe calls for peeled peaches, dip peaches in boiling water for 30 to 60 seconds and then plunge them into iced water for a minute to stop the effect of the heat. Peaches brown quickly when exposed to the air, so they should be sprinkled with lemon or lime juice, or a fruit keeper if not eaten or cooked immediately.

**Nutrition Benefits of Peaches:**

With only about 40 calories per fruit, peaches pack a punch of nutrients! One medium peach (2 ½-inch diameter) is a good source of fiber, potassium, vitamin A, and niacin, and a very good source of vitamin C. Vitamin C has many roles in protecting your health, including attacking harmful free radicals in your body and protecting you from infection by keeping your immune system healthy. It also helps form your body's connective tissues, keeps blood vessels healthy so you don't bruise easily, keeps your gums healthy so they don't bleed, and helps your body absorb iron from plant foods.

One medium fresh peach or 1/2 cup of canned peaches counts as one serving of your "5 A Day." It should be easy for you to get your 5 A Day this summer with all the delicious Georgia peaches! *What are some of your favorite ways to eat peaches?* Discuss healthier versions of favorite peach dishes.

**Activity:**

Get out the handout that says, "*Ways I Eat Peaches.*" Lets write down ways we love to eat peaches and ways we plan to eat more peaches. Think of healthy alternatives to your less-healthy favorites. (Discuss what people write down or share).



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<http://www.nutritiondata.com/facts-001-02s01ja.html>

Peaches and Nectarines. The Fruit Pages. June 15, 2004. <http://www.thefruitpages.com>

The Food Stamp Program provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact your local food stamp office, food bank, or senior center.

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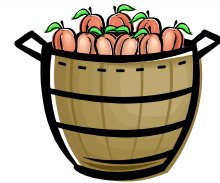
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## Choosing & Storing Peaches



### Choosing Peaches:

- Look for peaches with a creamy to gold background that means ripeness (the amount of red on peaches depends on the variety—it is not always a sign of ripeness)
- Look for peaches that have a well-defined crease and a good fragrance
- Gently squeeze the peach in your palm, and if it gives a little to the pressure and smells sweet, it is ready to eat
- Shriveling at the stem end or excessive softening mean peaches are overripe

### Storing Peaches:



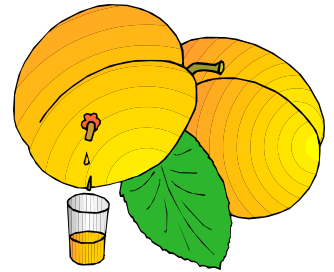
- Once peaches are ripe, store in refrigerator no more than 5 days
- Slice ripe peaches and freeze them for up to 12 months
- Overripe peaches should be used at once



## Fun & Easy Ways to Eat Peaches

Whether fresh, canned, or frozen, peaches taste great in a variety of ways! Eat peaches for snacks, with meals and desserts. However you choose, make peaches part of your 5 a day goal. Here are some ways peaches can be enjoyed:

- Add sliced peaches to cereal
- Make a peach smoothie or shake by mixing peaches in a blender with bananas, 100% juice, and ice
- Top waffles and pancakes with peaches
- Make a breakfast parfait by layering peaches, low fat yogurt and crunchy cereal in a tall glass
- Mix peaches with low fat cottage cheese or yogurt
- Make a fruit salad with peaches, blueberries, strawberries, raspberries, and bananas for a delicious fruity dessert
- Bake, broil, or sauté peach slices along with chicken
- Grill peach halves with barbeque chicken
- Add slices to a frozen low fat yogurt or angel food cake
- Pack a fresh peach for snack or lunch

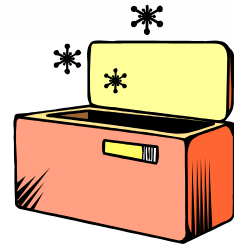


\*Adapted from Dole 5 A Day, at

[http://www.dole5aday.com/ReferenceCenter/Encyclopedia/Peaches/peaches\\_5aday.jsp](http://www.dole5aday.com/ReferenceCenter/Encyclopedia/Peaches/peaches_5aday.jsp)



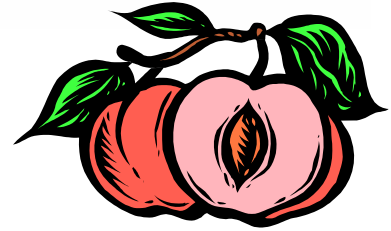
## How To Freeze Peaches:



1. Choose fully ripened peaches that soft enough to eat and peel easily (if not, let them ripen at room temperature a day or two).
2. Wash, pit and peel your peaches.
3. Put peaches into a bowl of cold water to which you have added some lemon juice or crystallized ascorbic acid (the same as "powdered" ascorbic acid). This will slow darkening while you work.
4. Slice the peaches into a plastic, 1-quart freezing container, leaving 1/2 inch head space to allow for the peaches and juice to expand when they freeze. (Using freezer bags is not best because the peaches dry out).
5. Dissolve 1/4 teaspoon of crystallized ascorbic acid (Vitamin C) in 1/4 cup of cold water. Pour this mixture over the sliced peaches.
6. Sprinkle 1/4 cup of sugar over the peaches, more or less according to your taste.
7. Seal the container and shake gently once or twice. Put the container into your freezer—peaches keep well for a year (but usually they are eaten much faster!)
8. To defrost, put the plastic container in a pan of warm water for 10-20 minutes. Use immediately after defrosting.



## Ways I Eat Peaches



Ways I love to eat peaches:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

NEW ways I plan to eat peaches:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.



## Cool & Easy Peach Pie

One 9-inch graham cracker crumb crust, chilled in freezer

1 envelope unflavored gelatin

1/3 cup frozen orange juice concentrate

2/3 cup peach nectar\*

1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract

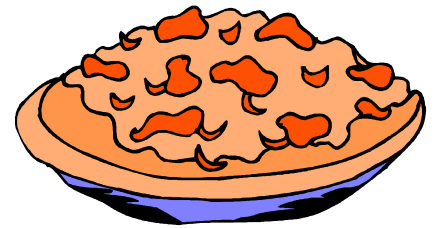
1 cup (one 8-ounce carton) low-fat plain yogurt

2 cups fresh peaches, peeled, pitted and sliced

(about 1 pound or 4 medium peaches)

\* Buy at store, or make at home by pureeing peaches and adding water.

Sweeten with a little sugar if desired.



1. Soften gelatin in peach nectar over low heat. Stir until dissolved. Stir in orange juice and vanilla.
2. Chill until slightly thickened, then whip until fluffy. Fold in yogurt and whip again.
3. Remove crust from freezer and arrange one cup of peach slices on the bottom. Pour in two-thirds of the filling. Arrange the rest of the peaches on the filling and pour in remaining filling. Chill until set. Garnish with peach slices. Makes 8 servings.

### Nutrition Facts per serving

### Serving size: 1 slice

Total calories

198

Total fat

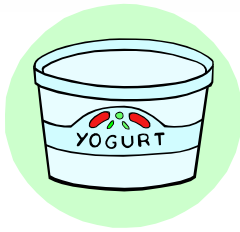
7 g

Total carbohydrate

31 g

Adapted from University of Missouri Extension, at

<http://missourifamilies.org/features/nutritionarticles/harvesttohealth/peaches.htm>



## Peach Parfait



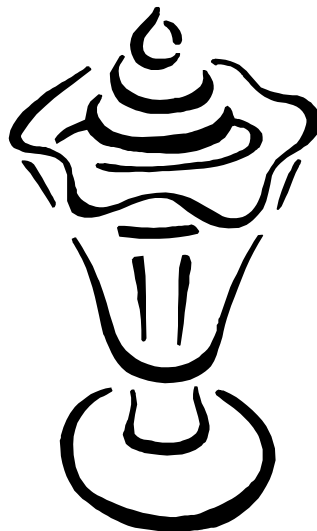
- 1 cup fresh peaches, diced
- 1/2 cup low fat vanilla yogurt
- 1/3 cup low fat granola

1. Place half of the fruit in the bottom of a parfait glass.
2. Top with half of the yogurt and half of the granola. Repeat. Serve immediately. Makes 1 serving.

### Nutrition Facts per serving

Serving size: 1 parfait

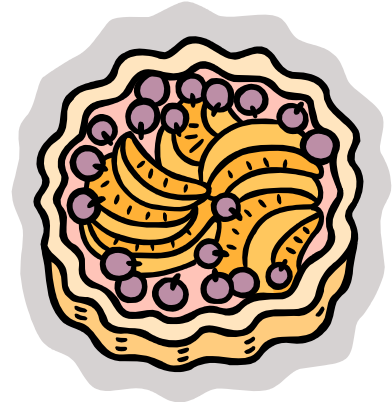
Total calories	310
Total fat	3.5 g
Total carbohydrate	46 g





## Country Peach Tart

Pastry for single-crust 9-inch pie  
4 cups peeled, pitted, sliced fresh peaches  
or frozen unsweetened peaches, thawed  
1/2 cup Equal® Spoonful\*  
1 Tbsp all-purpose flour  
1/2 tsp ground cinnamon  
1/4 tsp almond extract  
\*May substitute 12 packets Equal sweetener



1. Roll pastry on floured surface to 12-inch circle. Transfer to an ungreased baking sheet.
2. Combine peaches, Equal®, flour, cinnamon and almond extract. Toss gently to coat. Arrange peach mixture on pastry, leaving 2-inch border around edge of pastry. Bring pastry edge toward center, overlapping as necessary.
3. Bake tart in preheated 425° F oven 25 to 30 minutes or until crust is golden and peaches are tender. Serve warm or at room temperature. Makes 8 servings.

<b>Nutrition Facts per serving</b>	<b>Serving size: 1 slice (1/8 of tart)</b>
Total calories	161
Total fat	7 g
Total carbohydrate	23 g

Recipe provided by Equal, at  
<http://www.equal.com/Recipes/Detail.aspx?recipe=Country+Peach+Tart>



## Chicken Salad with Peaches

- 2 large fresh peaches
- 2 cups chicken, cooked and chopped
- 1/2 cup thinly sliced red onions
- 1/2 cup low-fat or fat-free poppy seed salad dressing
- 6 cups mixed salad greens
- 1/4 cup toasted walnuts, chopped

1. Chop one peach into 1/2-inch pieces. Place in a large bowl with chopped chicken and onion. Toss with enough dressing to coat.
2. Add salad greens and walnuts to bowl and toss to coat.
3. Serve salads on large plates. Cut remaining peaches into thin wedges and place on top to garnish. Makes 4 servings.

<b>Nutrition Facts per serving</b>	<b>Serving size: about 2 1/2 cups</b>
Total calories	245
Total fat	7g
Total carbohydrate	20g

Recipe adapted from Recipezaar, at  
<http://www.recipezaar.com/recipe/getrecipe.zsp?id=70667>



