

ARONIA BERRIES



Your school is participating in Nebraska Harvest of the Month by highlighting aronia berries this month! This lesser-known fruit, native to the northeastern United States and traditionally used by Potawatomi Native Americans for food and cold medicine, has been gaining popularity in Nebraska due to its health benefits and plant hardiness. Aronia berries are also called chokeberry due to their high tannin content that produces a drying sensation.

SELECTION, STORAGE & COOKING:

- Aronia berries are only in season August and September, but can be preserved and purchased in many forms, from powder and frozen to juice and jelly.
- Processing as juices and jellies, baking with other ingredients, or freezing helps balance its dryness. Try adding aronia to smoothies or in the recipe included here to see for yourself!

NUTRITIONAL VALUE

Aronia have the highest amount of antioxidant activity among all fruits on record. They are also a great source of fiber, vitamins C & K, manganese, zinc, and potassium.

ARONIA MUFFINS

Ingredients

- | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| • ½ cup butter (room temp) | • ¼ tsp salt |
| • 1 cup sugar | • 2 cups flour |
| • 2 large eggs | • ½ cup milk |
| • 1 tsp vanilla | • 2 ½ cups aronia berries frozen |
| • 1 tsp baking powder | • 1 tsp nutmeg |

Directions

1. Mix butter until creamy, then add sugar and beat until fluffy.
2. Beat in eggs, one at a time.
3. Beat in vanilla, baking powder & salt.
4. Fold in half of flour, then half of milk and repeat.
5. Fold in aronia berries.
6. Spoon into 18 greased muffin cups and sprinkle a dash of nutmeg on each muffin.
7. Bake at 375°F for 15-20 minutes.

<https://americanaronia.org/aronia-muffins>

SEASONAL AVAILABILITY:



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SEASONAL AVAILABILITY:



LEARN MORE ABOUT HARVEST OF THE MONTH

www.education.ne.gov/ns/farm-to-school/harvest-of-the-month

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FUN WITH ARONIA BERRIES



MAKE YOUR OWN BERRY INK

Can't find Aronia berries? No problem, you can still enjoy this activity by using blueberries or blackberries.

Supplies:

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------------|--|
| • ½ cup of ripe berries
(edible varieties only) | • measuring cups
and spoons | • wooden spoon |
| • ½ teaspoon vinegar | • large mixing bowl | • baby food jar or prep
bowl with cover |
| • ½ teaspoon salt | • strainer | |

Steps:

1. Place your berries in the strainer, set the strainer on top of the mixing bowl.
2. Using the wooden spoon crush the berries so the juice flows into the bowl.
3. Add the salt and vinegar to your berry juice.
4. Add water if it is too thick, add more berry juice if it is too thin.
5. Pour into your container. Keep it covered when not in use.
6. Use this for stamping, or writing with quill pens!

Source: www.creative-activities-for-kids.com/berry-ink.html

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DRYING ACTIVITY

Drying is a great, easy way to preserve your fresh aronia (or other fruit) and a nice way to keep the house warm on a cool fall day. Dry the berries at 140-150°F in an oven or food dehydrator for 6-16 hours. The length of time will vary based on the size of the fruit, humidity and whether the air is circulated by using a convection oven or a food dehydrator (the faster method). Stir food every few hours to promote even drying.



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