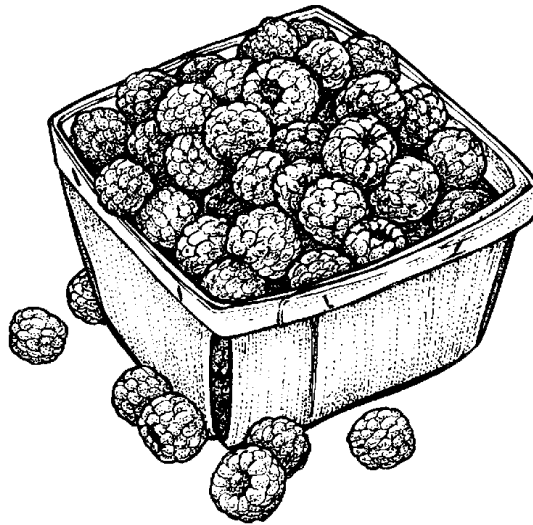


Raspberries

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Raspberries come in a variety of colors—red, black, purple and yellow. Although they are similar in flavor and texture, many people who have tried different colors have a clear flavor preference. Any color raspberry can be used in recipes and even substituted for strawberries in some recipes. The reds are more commonly available due to their disease resistance and hardiness.

When purchasing raspberries, the cost will likely seem high compared to other berries. This is partly due to the fact that raspberries are extremely fragile, bruise easily, and consequently have a very short shelf life. In addition, they are susceptible to poor weather conditions at various stages of development. With controlled atmosphere storage (known as CA), where temperature, humidity, oxygen, and carbon dioxide levels are regulated during storage and transportation, fresh raspberries are available in grocery stores year round whether grown in the United States or imported. For maximum flavor and quality, purchase locally grown raspberries in season and freeze them for later use.

Raspberries and blackberries are referred to as brambles or cane berries, with both belonging to the rose family. The two species have similar, segmented fruits. An easy way to tell them apart is by the presence or absence of the “core” in a picked berry. A ripe raspberry will separate from its white core when picked, exhibiting a hollow center—the core stays on the plant. However, the core of a ripe blackberry detaches from the stem and can be seen in the center of the berry.

Raspberries can be divided into two distinct types based on when they are harvested. Summer raspberries are only available for several weeks in early to mid-summer. Fall raspberries typically have a small crop in mid-summer followed by a higher yielding crop in late summer through fall. Cultivation practices are different for the two types.

Raspberry products have an intense flavor, and relatively small amounts of sauce, jam, jelly, or juice, can be sufficient to flavor the recipes in which they are used. For the same reason, less intensely-flavored apple, pear, or grape juices are often blended with raspberry juice resulting in a pleasing flavor at a lower cost than raspberry juice alone.