

Farm to Summer Newsletter

Featured Food: Strawberry

Strawberries are members of the rose family. This fruit is likely to have originated in Europe but has been cultivated in the United States since its arrival in the 19th century.

Strawberry plants have an average of 200 seeds on the outside skin of each berry. This seed location is much different from other fruits, which carry their seeds on the inside. California and Florida produce the most strawberries in the United States, but you can find delicious, local, strawberries in Ohio during the summer.

Strawberries are sweet and juicy fruits loaded with Vitamin C. In fact, approximately one cup of fresh strawberries contains 150 percent of an adult's recommended daily intake of Vitamin C. Vitamin C fights cell damage, helps to heal wounds and cuts, and plays an integral part in the immune system. Vitamin C also helps the body to absorb other nutrients, like Iron. For example, add strawberries to an iron-fortified cereal for a nutrient-dense breakfast.



Ohio Harvest Time

**May through
June**

Meals to Try

Strawberry Smoothie
Strawberry Overnight Oats
Spinach Strawberry Salad

Featured Recipe: Cherry Berry Sunrise

Ingredients	Quantity	
	Weight	Measure
Sweet cherries, frozen, pitted, unsweetened	8 lb 8 oz	3 qt + ½ cup
Blueberries, frozen	5 lb 4oz	2 qt + 2 cups
Strawberries, frozen, whole or sliced	5 lb 4 oz	2 qt + 1½ cups
Cornstarch	4.5 oz	1 cup
Sugar, white, granulated	11 oz	1 + 2/3 cups
Rolled oats, dry, uncooked	12 oz	1 qt + ½ cup
Brown sugar	5 oz	1 cup
Cinnamon	1 oz	¼ cup
Olive oil		¾ cup

Makes 50 servings.

Instructions:

1. In a large bowl, mix cherries, blueberries, strawberries, sugar, and cornstarch.
2. Spray hotel pans lightly with nonstick cooking spray. Evenly distribute and gently spread the berry mixture into pans.
3. Bake berry mixture:
 - a. Conventional oven: 350° F for 50 minutes.
 - b. Convection oven: 325° F for 50 minutes.
4. Critical Control Point: Heat to 135 or higher for at least 15 seconds.
 - a. Hold hot at 135° F for service.
5. Mix the rolled oats, brown sugar, cinnamon, and olive oil in a bowl.
6. Spread the oat mixture out evenly across a 2” deep hotel pain.
7. Bake oat mixture:
 - a. Conventional oven: 350° F for 35 minutes.
 - b. Convection oven: 325° F for 35 minutes.
 - i. *If using a convection oven, turn off blower fan.*

Instructions continued:

8. Stir halfway through the baking time. The topping should be a light toasted brown color.
9. Serve $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (using 4 fl. oz spoodle) of warm berry mixture.
 - a. Sprinkle with 2 Tbsp toasted oat topping.

National School Lunch Program (NSLP) Crediting Information:

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup (4 fl. oz spoodle) and 2 Tbsp oat topping provide $\frac{1}{2}$ cup fruit.

Notes:

- Cooking Process #2: Same Day Service.
- Make ahead suggestion: After spreading the berries into the pans, cover and store them in the refrigerator overnight. Reduce baking time to 35 minutes.
- If using whole frozen strawberries, increase baking time to 60 minutes.
- This recipe can be doubled to yield 100 servings. See details online by clicking the [link](#).

Featured Activities

The United States Department of Agriculture developed garden-based nutrition education for children ages 3 through 5 years old in family daycare settings. Through the activities in this curriculum, children can touch, smell, feel, and taste new fruits and vegetables. [Grow It, Try It, Like It! The Strawberry Patch](#) curriculum provides a variety of activities centered around strawberries.

Use the [Feed Our Future Berry Wordsearch](#) to keep kids entertained at summer meal sites.

[Read Up!](#) is a mini manual of enrichment activities developed for summer feeding sites by the Collaborative Summer Library Program. Check out the Fairytale Nutrition Activity for a blend of storytelling, gardening, and cooking programs for engagement.

Featured Resources

Teaching Gardens Network

The American Heart Association's Teaching Gardens Network offers grant opportunities or funding a school or community garden (cont'd on next page),

free gardening resources, and a digital standards-based curriculum. [Join the Teaching Gardens Network](#) to stay up to date on future grant opportunities.

The Ohio State University Extension Master Gardener Program (OSU MGV)

The [OSU MGV](#) program is a network of trained gardening volunteers that spans 62 of Ohio's counties. Volunteers provide educational services to their community by answering gardening questions, conducting planting clinics, garden activities with children or seniors, developing community gardens, and more. A collaboration between OSU Extension and The Ohio Department of Agriculture offer the [Ohio Victory Gardens](#) program. This program provides participants with free sample seed starter packet on a first-come first-serve basis. To see if your county extension office is participating, check [this list](#).

Featured Sponsor

Lodi Family Center

Lodi Family Center serves the village of Lodi by offering a safe place for families and their children to congregate and offers programs and services that promote health and wellness. The center offers community meals every day as part of its after-school program and a food pantry for seniors and families. While the village of Lodi is surrounded by farmland, Executive Director Rebecca Rak noticed children were not exploring gardening or farming and believed these activities would be beneficial for the children at the center.

The center initially started a 4-H club to introduce kids to activities that were not expensive. They quickly expanded their offerings to include a raised bed garden program with the help of OSU MGV, community partners, and grant funding from [GroMoreGood Grassroots Grant](#). A local farmer assisted with the construction of the raised beds and taught lessons about companion planting and nutrition (cont'd on next page).

A local cemetery donated dirt to the center. Children engage in the harvest and preparation of the produce grown. Rebeca notes an enormous shift in the dynamic of their Summer Food Service Program since starting their garden. Not only is the food served healthier, but she feels gardening has been a therapeutic outlet for many of the children with mental health conditions. With a successful garden bounty, Lodi Family Center was able to offer a fresh produce bar to the children. Rak says that lettuce and spinach are the most popular vegetables to eat, while carrots are the most popular to grow.

Today, Lodi Family Center has a total of nine raised beds, multiple containers, and hydroponic towers for gardening. Rebecca's advice for sponsors wishing to start a community garden is: "Start with container planting and stick with the basics. When you are picking produce to grow, choose sweet varieties to improve acceptance with kids, such as opting for buttercrunch over iceberg lettuce. Put kids on teams to plant, care for, and harvest produce. This teaches them responsibility and how to work together."



Children enjoy picking produce and playing in the raised bed gardens at Lodi Family Center.