



For immediate release  
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**SWEET BC BLUEBERRIES: A POWERFUL LOCAL HEALTH FOOD AS CLOSE AS THE FREEZER AISLE!**  
***Packed with important antioxidants, vitamins and heart-healthy fibre, they're hard to beat***

(Vancouver, B.C.) The beginning of a new year makes most of us take a second look at our diet, vowing to eat more healthfully, and take better care of our bodies to fight disease. It's surprisingly easy - all thanks to one little blue superfruit. There's no better way to increase your antioxidant intake, support local growers and satiate your tastebuds than with BC blueberries!

Full of essential vitamins and minerals, including vitamin C, A and E, as well as potassium, calcium and magnesium, blueberries are an exceptionally sweet and delicious way for Canadians to achieve the Canada Food Guide recommendations to eat seven to 10 servings of fruit or vegetables every day. A 250 ml (1 cup) serving of blueberries – about the size of a tennis ball, contains 3.6 grams of dietary fibre, virtually no fat, and just 80 calories.

Over the past couple of decades, antioxidants have increasingly become the focus of health research. Antioxidants help neutralize harmful by-products in the body called 'free-radicals' that may lead to cancer and other age-related and degenerative illnesses. Researchers who ranked the antioxidant potential of 40 fresh fruits and vegetables found blueberries at the top of the list, earning them the nickname, '#1 superfood'. This is due to the blueberry's high content of polyphenols, the same types of compounds that provide the health benefits found in red wine and dark chocolate. In blueberries, the polyphenol that has most excited scientists is the same one that gives the blueberry its distinctive and wholly unique blue colour, a pigment called 'anthocyanin'.<sup>1</sup>

New research has revealed additional anti-inflammatory benefits of the polyphenols that appear to greatly increase the disease-fighting power of the blueberry. Both antioxidant and the anti-inflammatory actions of polyphenols have been linked to a wide range of health benefits and improved treatment outcomes in a large number of age-related illnesses, including brain diseases such as Alzheimer's<sup>2</sup> and Parkinson's disease<sup>3</sup>, cardiovascular illnesses such as ischemic stroke<sup>4</sup>; metabolic syndrome, a frequent precursor to heart disease, stroke and diabetes<sup>5</sup>; and improved urinary tract health.<sup>6</sup>

But the best news is how easy and delicious BC blueberries are to incorporate into your family's daily diet, even in the middle of winter. So sweet that they're known as "nature's candy," you can find them in the freezer aisle of your local grocery store year-round. Creating a healthy start to the day is a breeze - add an **Apple, Pear and Blueberry Puree** to your oatmeal, enjoy breakfast-on-the-go with a slice of **Blueberry Oatmeal Breakfast Cake**, or entertain a crowd with a **Blueberry Breakfast Bake**. Recipes for all three are below.

**About the British Columbia Blueberry Council**

The British Columbia Blueberry Council represents over 700 blueberry growers, located in some of Canada's most rich and fertile farmland. Plantings of premium quality high bush blueberries top 8,100 hectares in British Columbia and produce upwards of 40 million kilograms of blueberries annually. With more than \$1 billion in sales in the past five years, Canada is the third largest producer of sweet and juicy highbush blueberries in the



world. Available fresh in BC from July through October, delicious BC blueberries are also frozen, dried, juiced, pureed and powdered, available for year round-distribution throughout Canada and around the world.

<sup>1</sup> Prior, R.L., et.al. J Agric Food Chem 1998, 46:2686-2693; Wu, X. et.al. J Agric Food Chem 2004, 52:4026-37.

<sup>2</sup> Joseph, J. A. et al. Nutr Neurosci. 2003, 6:153-62.

<sup>3</sup> McGuire, S.O., et al. Nutr. Neuroscience, 2006, 9:251-258.

<sup>4</sup> Sweeney, M.I. et al. Nutr Neurosci 2002, 5:427-31.

<sup>5</sup> Seymour, M. et al. FASEB J. 2009, 23:563.31.)

<sup>6</sup> Schmidt, B.M. et al. J Agric Food Chem. 2004, 52, 6433-42.

## BC BLUEBERRY RECIPES

### Apple Pear and Blueberry Puree

#### Ingredients:

- 1 small, sweet apple, peeled, cored and diced
- ½ ripe pear, peeled, cored and diced
- 4 oz (½ cup) fresh blueberries

#### Method

- Remove any stems from the blueberries, then place all the ingredients in a small saucepan.
- Just cover with water and simmer gently for approximately 5 mins, until all fruits are tender.
- Drain (reserving the cooking water), then transfer the ingredients to a blender and puree until smooth. Use the reserved cooking liquid to thin the puree, if necessary.

Makes: 1 ½ cups

### Blueberry Oatmeal Breakfast Cake

#### Ingredients:

- 1 ½ cups flour
- ¾ cup quick-cooking oats
- ½ cup sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- ¼ teaspoons salt
- ¾ cup milk
- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- 1 egg
- 1 cup frozen blueberries

#### Method:

- Preheat oven to 400°F. Grease an 8-inch round baking pan; set aside. In a medium mixing bowl combine flour, oats, sugar, baking powder and salt.

- In a 1-cup measure stir milk, oil and egg; pour all at once into flour mixture. Stir just until moistened (batter will be lumpy).
- Fold in frozen blueberries; spoon batter into prepared pan. Bake until cake is golden and pulls away from sides of pan 20 to 25 minutes.
- Cool on a rack, 5 to 10 minutes. Serve warm.

\* When baking, frozen blueberries should be very firm.

Makes: 8 portions

### Blueberry Brunch Bake

#### Ingredients:

- 1 loaf (450 g) sliced, firm white bread, crusts removed
- 2 cups (500 ml) frozen (not thawed) blueberries, divided
- 4 ounces (100 g) light cream cheese, cut in 1/4-inch cubes
- 4 large eggs
- 2 cups (500 ml) low-fat milk
- ¼ cup (50 ml) sugar
- ¼ teaspoon (1 mL) salt
- ¼ teaspoon (1 mL) ground cinnamon

#### Method:

- Butter an 8-inch (20 cm) square baking dish; set aside.
- Cut bread in 1/2-inch (1.25 cm) cubes.
- Layer half the bread cubes and half the blueberries in prepared baking dish; sprinkle with all the cream cheese; cover with remaining bread cubes and blueberries.
- In a bowl, combine eggs, milk, sugar, salt and cinnamon; pour over bread.
- Gently press bread down to absorb milk mixture; refrigerate, covered at least 20 minutes or overnight.
- Preheat oven to 325°F (160°C).
- Bake, uncovered, until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean, about 1 hour.
- Let stand 10 minutes before serving. Slice in 8 rectangles; serve with maple syrup, if desired.

Makes: 8 portions

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