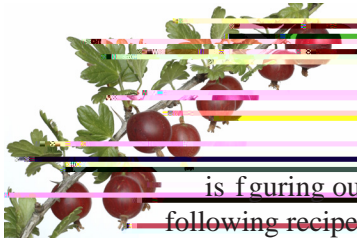


Gooseberries



is figuring out how to use the fruit. The following recipes provide a number of ideas

need to grow your own, since the fruit is seldom avail

Bushes should be planted 5 feet apart. They are not fussy about soil or pH. Use approximately 1 cup of fertilizer (8-32-16 or 10-10-10), evenly distributed, per plant, and work it into the soil in early spring. Compost can be mixed into the soil before planting, if available. To keep plants productive, prune regularly by completely removing canes older than three years. Keep only 9–12 canes per bush. Watch for imported currant worms. They can defoliate plants quickly. Harvest is typically from mid-August to mid-September. To reduce potential winter damage, make sure plants are well-watered until freeze-up.

Pick gooseberries carefully, especially the thorny varieties. The less ripe the gooseberry, the more sour its taste will be. Some varieties become quite sweet and turn pink or purple when fully ripe. Varieties that have been grown in Alaska include Pixwell, Pankiw, Oregon Champ, Hinnomaki Yellow and Hinnomaki Red.

Storage & Preservation

How to Clean and Store

To clean gooseberries, spread a clean, dry terrycloth towel over a slanted surface, such as a cutting board with one end propped up a few inches above the other. Gently roll the berries down the towel; most of the debris and leaves will cling to the towel, while the berries roll off. Rinse berries and remove blossom and stem ends. Gooseberries should be stored covered in the refrigerator and will keep up to three weeks.

How to Freeze

Gooseberries can be frozen by arranging dry fresh berries in one layer on a cookie sheet, with the sheet then

placed in the freezer. When frozen, transfer berries to freezer bags or containers. Properly frozen gooseberries

How to Dry

Gooseberries should be dipped in boiling water to “check” the skin or steamed until the skin cracks. This will allow the berries to dry thoroughly. Spread berries on an open screen in a dehydrator and follow dehydrator directions for grapes. Gooseberries are dry when leathery to the touch. Store in a closed container in a cool, dry place. Gooseberries may be used as you would raisins or soaked in water for use in baking.

How to Extract Juice

Combine 8 cups of gooseberries and 1 cup water. Crush berries. Bring just to a boil and simmer 10 minutes. Strain through jelly bag or several layers of cheesecloth in a colander. Let the juice drip into a bowl. For clear juice, do not twist or press jelly bag or cheesecloth.

How to Prepare Puree

Cooked method: Add 1 cup of water to 4 cups of gooseberries. Cook until skins have popped. Press through a food mill or strainer.

Uncooked method: Place 4 cups gooseberries in a blender and blend until the consistency of thick puree.

Gooseberry Jelly

5½ cups prepared juice (about 8 cups fully ripe gooseberries and 1 cup water)

1 package (1¾ ounces) powdered fruit pectin

Prepare the juice by thoroughly crushing, one layer at a time, or grinding about 8 cups gooseberries. Place in saucepan; add 1 cup water. Bring to a boil, cover and simmer 10 minutes. Place in jelly bag and let drip. Measure 5½ cups juice into 6- or 8-quart saucepan. Measure sugar and set aside. Mix fruit pectin into juice in saucepan. Place over high heat and stir until mixture comes to a full boil. Immediately add sugar and bring to a full

rolling boil and boil hard 1 minute, stirring constantly.
Remove from heat and skim off foam. Ladle quickly
into hot sterilized jars, filling to within ¼ inch of tops.
Wipe jar rims and cover with prepared two-piece lids