Many thanks go out to Melissa Chlupach, Regional Healthcare Dietitian with NANA Management Services, for all her help with all the information she has provided me for each Wednesday this month celebrating Indigenous Foods We Eat! All information I have listed below is based on the materials she has passed along. Thank you, Melissa!!

**SALMONBERRY/CLOUDBERRY**

Let’s learn about salmonberries and cloudberrties today!!

Why take a whole day to look at these two berries? Well, whether you are in Southcentral, the Kenai, or the Southeast Alaska and pick high bush salmonberries or live in Northern or Western Alaska and pick low bush salmonberries (cloudbberries), you know how healthy and delicious these little berries can be!!

**The Roots of Salmonberry/Cloudberry History**

- Both of these berries are members of the rose (Rosaceae) family and one or the other is found all around Alaska.
- Even though the some of the colors and shape of these berries are similar and they are in the same family, these two berries grow and taste very different.
- All Alaska wild berries, have high levels of antioxidants. Antioxidants are a group of physiologically active compounds that work to neutralize free radicals (molecules with unpaired electrons).
- Historical references document early use of cloudberrties to prevent and treat scurvy as well as the medicinal use of the roots and leaves of the plant.
- Both berries are considered an important food of the Alaska Native people as sources rich in vitamins A and C.

**Let’s Move into the Science of Salmonberries and Cloudberrties**

Pronunciation: ˈsæmanˌberi and klaʊdˌberi

Yup’ik name: atsalugpiaq

Iñupiaq name: aqpiq

Sugt’stun name: alagnaq

Unangam Tunuu name: alagnan

Tlingit name: was’x’aan tléigu

Family: Rosaceae (both)

Genus: Rubus (both)
Species: *R. spectabilis* (Salmonberry)
*R. chamaemorus* (Low-bush Salmonberry or Cloudberry)

The salmonberry plant is related to the raspberry, nagoonberry, wild strawberry, thimbleberry and cloudberry. Do not confuse salmonberries with cloudberrries, sometimes referred to as lowbush salmonberries.

Salmonberries can be found in moist, coastal regions of Southeast, Southcentral and Southwest Alaska. The berries grow on woody shrubs up to seven feet high; the tall, thorny stalks grow on stream banks and alpine slopes, in moist coastal meadows and in avalanche chutes. The leaves are made up of three-toothed leaflets up to five inches long. The rosy-purple flowers have five petals and are solitary on the stalk. Each flower produces a salmonyellow or red fruit similar in appearance to large raspberries; yellow, orange and red berries may all be seen on a single plant.

The small, rosy peach-colored Rubus chamaemorus L. is known in Alaska by several common names — lowbush salmonberry, aqpik, baked apple berry and cloudberry. However, cloudberry is the name most often used throughout North America and in international botanical references. This berry grows almost exclusively in circumpolar regions and is prized in cultures and cuisines in Scandinavia, Russia, Canada and throughout Alaska.

Though related botanically to red raspberry (*Rubus idaeus* L.) and salmonberry (*Rubus spectabilis*), the cloudberry plant most closely resembles another highly sought arctic berry, nagoonberry (*Rubus arcticus* L.). In contrast to the prickly, tall canes of raspberries and salmonberries, cloudberrries grow on very slender stems not more than two to eight inches high in boggy, open tundra and forest. Each stem has two to three circular leaves with rounded lobes and toothed edges and a single white, five-petaled flower. The berry is composed of six to eight drupelets, forming a small roundish berry. Unripe cloudberrries are hard, sour and red; as the berries ripen, they soften, sweeten and lighten to a rosy peach or amber hue.

Where Do Salmonberries and Cloudberrries Live?
Salmonberries are found in moist forests and stream margins, especially in the coastal forests. They range from Southcentral to the Kenai Peninsula and Southeast Alaska.

Cloudberrries inhabit bogs, tundra, and open forests in Northern and Western Alaska.

Reasons to Eat Salmonberries and Cloudberrries
1 cup of raw berries provides:
- A source of fiber.
- An excellent source of vitamin A (Salmonberry) as well as vitamin C (Cloudberry).
- A heart friendly food low in fat.

Some Great Salmonberry and Cloudberry Facts
- Fresh salmonberry shoots, flowers and leaves, and berries are all edible.
  - The shoots can be eaten raw or added to dishes and stir fried.
The flowers can be added to salads or used to make teas. – The flowers should be used fresh or completely dried. When partially dried they can be mildly toxic.

- The most common theory about how salmonberries got their name is based on their resemblance to the color of salmon eggs, but one Chinook legend tells how Coyote had to put salmonberries in the mouth of each salmon he caught in order to have continued luck with fishing.
- Cloudberry are called by many different names depending on where you are:
  - In Newfoundland and Labrador, it is cloudberry or bakeapple.
  - In England, it is knotberry or knoutberry.
  - In Alaska, it is low-bush salmonberry or all the native language names.
  - In Scotland, it is averin or evron.
- When a few hard (unripe) salmonberries (cloudberry) are mixed with ripe berries, the ones picked too early will turn black and be no good. Stories warning of picking salmonberries too early were often told to teach children, newcomers, and greedy people when to pick salmonberries. This would ensure that some berries were left behind for late pickers, or to be given back to the earth for the next season.

Let’s eat . . .

Salmonberry Topping

Makes 1 cup

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ingredients</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tr>
<td>Salmonberries</td>
<td>2 cups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lemon juice</td>
<td>1 teaspoon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honey</td>
<td>2 Tablespoons</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sugar, granulated</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
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<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>2 Tablespoons</td>
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1. In a medium saucepot, combine all ingredients. Place over medium heat on the stove and bring to a boil. Once it reaches a boil, lower heat to low and simmer for 5 to 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Take off heat and let cool. You can smash them to make them a jam consistency, mash through a wire strainer to make it a syrup, or leave them whole with the sweet juice.

2. To serve, place on items, such as pancakes, ice cream, yogurt, or whipped cream.

Yummy Goodness and Tasty Tips!!

- Mid summer through early falltime is the time to harvest depending on location and elevation.
- Harvesting should be done by hand due to the soft nature of the berries.
- Salmonberries may be red or orange when ripe and the fruit has a sweet tart flavor and is related to the raspberry – the taste is very different than cloudberry.
- Salmonberries are a good source of pro-vitamin A and a good source of vitamin C.
- Because they are fragile, salmonberries should be handled as little as possible. Unless they are exceptionally dusty, do not wash. Pick through the berries to remove any leaves or debris. For best flavor, eat the raw berries the same day they are picked.
- Salmonberries may be stored in the refrigerator for a brief period of time. They will not keep well more than two to three days. Store cleaned berries in a shallow container to prevent crushing. Place the covered container in the refrigerator.
- The berries are great for jams, pies, syrups, Eskimo ice cream, or just eaten by themselves.
- Cloudberry plants bear a single berry.
- When ripe, cloudberrries have a beautiful golden color.
- Cloudberrries can be prepared in pies, jellies, and syrups. Traditionally, they are eaten with sugar and seal oil after a meal. They are best stored frozen, or preserved with other foods, such as blackberries, nagoonberries, or sour dock leaves.
- Cloudberrries are an excellent source of vitamin C, containing more than twice the amount per serving than a glass of orange juice and more than any other Alaska berry.
- With their naturally high benzoic acid content, cloudberrries may keep without spoiling or fermenting for longer than expected. However, for best flavor and keeping quality, pick cloudberrries at their peak ripeness and either eat or preserve the same day that they are picked.
- Handle the soft cloudberrries gently and as little as possible. Unless they are exceptionally dusty, do not wash. Pick through the berries to remove any leaves or debris. Refrigerate cleaned berries in a shallow container.
- Spread berries in a single layer on a cookie sheet and place in the freezer. When frozen, transfer berries to freezer bags or containers. Properly frozen berries will last up to two years.