

Carrots

HARVEST OF THE MONTH

EAT MORE ALASKA GROWN CARROTS

Carrots are grown both on a commercial and home-garden scale. Many gardeners love to grow carrots because they are sweet, and store very well through the winter. Alaska grown carrots have an advantage over carrots that are shipped here because they generally have a higher sugar (sucrose) content when they reach the stores. This is why they taste so sweet!

WHY EAT MORE CARROTS?

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size: ½ cup carrots,
sliced (61g)

Calories 25 Calories from Fat 0

% Daily Value

Total Fat 0g 0%

Saturated Fat 0g 0%

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 0mg 0%

Sodium 45mg 2%

Total Carbohydrate 6g 2%

Dietary Fiber 2g 7%

Sugars 3g

Protein 1g

Vitamin A 204% Calcium 2%

Vitamin C 6% Iron 1%

A half cup of cooked carrots provides:

- An excellent source of vitamin A, providing more than 200% of the recommended Daily Value to help your immune system.
- A good source of vitamin K that plays a key role in helping blood clot to stop excessive bleeding.
- A source of vitamin C, dietary fiber, and potassium.



HOW MUCH DO WE NEED?

Carrots are a member of the Apiaceae family, which also includes celery, dill, and cilantro. They are a biennial crop, producing their taproot the first year, and, if left to grow, would flower, set seed and die the second year. Although most carrots marketed in the United States today are orange, other colors such as red, yellow, or purple can occasionally be found in various fresh, frozen, and juice products.

In Alaska, most varieties take at least four months to mature. Alaska Grown carrots tend to be much sweeter compared to other carrots shipped in that are found in the grocery store; our unique growing environment makes them sweeter. To gain the benefits of Alaska Grown carrots, you and your family need to eat a half cup of carrots daily.

HOW TO CHOOSE, STORE AND PREPARE CARROTS

Choose: When choosing carrots, select firm, bright carrots without cracks. Large carrots with the greens still attached will have the sweetest flavor.

Store: Remove the greens from carrots and store tightly sealed in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for up to two weeks.

Prepare: The peel of the carrot is edible; gently scrub and rinse carrots prior to eating. Enjoy carrots raw or cooked by microwaving, steaming, sautéing, roasting or baking. Also, did you know that most baby-cut carrots are made from large carrots that have been peeled and trimmed. The trimmings are used in salad mixes, juices, and other carrot products.

Plant and Grow Carrots

Carrots develop best in warm, loose, well-drained deep silt or sandy loam. Compact, cold, poorly drained soils cause crooked, forked roots and heavy tops. Seeds should be placed on the garden bed/soil/container and covered with no more than 1/2 an inch of soil. They need warm soil to germinate and the cooler the soil, the longer the germination time. Once growing, thin to one plant every 2 inches.

Roasted Carrots with Ginger Recipe

- Preheat oven to 425 degrees fahrenheit.
- Toss 2 lbs cut (crosswise) carrots, 2 tbsp. olive oil, 1 tsp. finely minced ginger, and salt and pepper in a large bowl.
- Place carrots on a parchment lined sheet pan.
- Roast for 30-35 minutes or until caramelized and tender.
- Stir half-way through the cooking time.
- Serve for a side dish or snack.

Choose Locally Grown

Carrots are challenging to grow in some soil types here in Alaska. They do very well in sandy to sandy loam soils found throughout the state. There are multiple varieties that do well in Alaska, including:

- Long, Gold King or Gold Pak
- Medium, Nantes Coreless
- Shorter, thicker Royal Chantenay
- Very short French Forcing

Learning Activity

Alaska Grown carrots are so much sweeter than carrots not grown in Alaska. This activity has the students investigate whether they can taste the sweetness difference and also find out why our carrots are so much sweeter!

- Gather Alaska Grown carrots and other carrots from outside - have students do a blind taste test. Analyze results.
- Have the students research the sweet vegetable question and see what they find!



For more information, visit the Alaska Farm to School website at:

<https://www.farmtoschoolalaska.org/harvestofthemonth/>