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SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR USING BLACKBERRY FRUIT¹

BLACKSBURG, VIRGINIA

Compiled by Herbert D. Stiles and Jo Anne Barton*

Blackberries are used and enjoyed by many home gardeners and rural families. Most people are, however, unacquainted with this fruit because of its unavailability in urban grocery stores and supermarkets. Changes in the variety picture and increased popularity of direct sales to the consumer have made this fruit attractive to pick-your-own producers. Consumers have responded favorably, but many are aware of only one or two of the numerous ways in which blackberries may be used. Producers are, therefore, likely to increase sales volume by educating consumers through distribution of product samples and recipes. The following compilation is intended for use as a nucleus around which growers may develop listings of blackberry recipes for their customers.

Fruit characteristics differ among available blackberry varieties as taste preferences vary among people. Adaptation of recipes (especially the amount of added sugar) is suggested in order to accommodate these variables.

Blackberry jellies and jams are favorite ways of using blackberries. There are recipes for making blackberry jelly without added pectin and with both liquid and powdered pectins. There is also a blackberry jam recipe plus three cake recipes which have blackberry jam as an ingredient. There are also recipes for both no-cook jelly and jam.

There are a number of recipes for blackberry desserts. Most of these recipes call for fresh blackberries but could be prepared from frozen or canned blackberries as well. The amount of sugar needed would be less if sweetened frozen or canned berries are used. The amount of flour, cornstarch, or tapioca may need to be increased to thicken canned berries or those frozen in a sirup.

Fresh blackberries are delicious alone or mixed with other fruits and served over ice cream and/or cake. They should first be gently rinsed and drained. Stirring with sugar at the rate of about 3/4 cup per quart of berries will make them sweeter and draw out enough of the juice to produce a syrup.

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Freezing Blackberries - Frozen berries packed in dry sugar or unsweetened are best for most cooking purposes. Berries packed in a sirup are good for use as is.

Wash berries and drain.

Sugar pack. To 1 quart berries, add 3/4 cup sugar. Turn berries in sugar until most of the sugar is dissolved. Fill containers leaving headspace. Label and freeze. Store at 0° F. or below.

Sirup pack. Pack berries into containers and cover with cold 40- or 50-percent sirup. (A 40% sirup is made by dissolving 3 cups of sugar in 4 cups of water; a 50% sirup has 4 3/4 cups of sugar per 4 cups of water.) Leave headspace. Label and freeze. Store at 0° F. or below.

Unsweetened pack. Pack berries into containers leaving headspace. Label and freeze. Store at 0° F. or below.

Canning Blackberries

Fill jars to ½ inch of top. For a full pack, shake berries down while filling jars. Cover with boiling sirup, leaving ½-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles by running spatula or knife between jar and food. Adjust jar lids.

Process in boiling water bath canner. Pint jars 10 minutes
Quart jars 15 minutes

Blackberry Jelly with powdered pectin

3½ cups blackberry juice (about 3 quarts of berries)
1 package powdered pectin
4½ cups sugar

To prepare juice. Sort and wash fully ripe berries; remove any stems or caps. Crush berries and extract juice.

To make jelly. Measure juice into kettle. Add pectin and stir well. Place on high heat and, stirring constantly, bring quickly to a full rolling boil that cannot be stirred down.

Add sugar, continue stirring, and heat again to a full rolling boil. Boil hard for 1 minute.

Remove from heat; skim off foam quickly. Pour jelly immediately into hot containers and seal.

Makes 5 or 6 eight-ounce glasses.

Blackberry Jelly
with liquid pectin

4 cups blackberry juice (about 3 quarts of berries)
7½ cups sugar
6 oz. liquid pectin

To prepare juice. Sort and wash fully ripe berries; remove any stems or caps. Crush berries and extract juice.

To make jelly. Measure juice into a kettle. Stir in sugar. Place on high heat and, stirring constantly, bring quickly to a full rolling boil that cannot be stirred down.

Add pectin and heat again to a full rolling boil. Boil hard for 1 minute.

Remove from heat; skim off foam quickly. Pour jelly immediately into hot containers and seal.

Makes 8 or 9 eight-ounce glasses.

Blackberry Jelly
without added pectin

8 cups blackberry juice (about 5 quarts of berries and 1½ cups water)
6 cups sugar

To prepare juice. Select about one-fourth underripe and three-fourths ripe berries. Sort and wash; remove any stems or caps. Crush berries, add water, cover and bring to boil on high heat. Reduce heat and simmer for 5 minutes. Extract juice.

To make jelly. Measure juice into a kettle. Add sugar and stir well. Boil over high heat to 8° F. above the boiling point of water, or until jelly mixture sheets from a spoon.

Remove from heat; skim off foam quickly. Pour jelly immediately into hot containers and seal.

Makes 7 or 8 eight-ounce glasses.

Blackberry Jam
with powdered pectin

6 cups crushed blackberries (about 3 quarts of berries)
1 package powdered pectin
8½ cups sugar

To prepare fruit. Sort and wash fully ripe berries; remove any stems or caps. Crush berries. If they are very seedy, put part or all of them through a sieve or food mill.

To make jam. Measure crushed berries into a kettle. Add pectin and stir well. Place on high heat and, stirring constantly, bring quickly to a full boil with bubbles over the entire surface.

Add sugar, continue stirring, and heat again to a full bubbling boil. Boil hard for 1 minute, stirring constantly. Remove from heat; skim.

Fill and seal containers.

Process 5 minutes in boiling water bath.

Makes 11 or 12 half-pint jars.

No Cook Jelly

2½ cups juice (about 1 3/4 quart fully ripe blackberries)
5 cups (2¼ lb.) sugar
2 tablespoons strained lemon juice (1 lemon)
3 ounce pouch liquid pectin

Prepare juice by thoroughly crushing about 1 3/4 quart fully ripe blackberries, one layer at a time. Place in jelly cloth or bag and squeeze out juice. Measure 2½ cups juice into large bowl or pan.

Add sugar, mix well and let stand 10 minutes. Mix lemon juice and liquid pectin in a small bowl; stir into fruit juice. Continue stirring 3 minutes. (A few sugar crystals will remain). Pour quickly into prepared containers. Cover at once with tight lids. Let stand at room temperature to set up (takes up to 24 hours). Store in the refrigerator if it will be used within the month or in the freezer for longer storage.
Yield: 4½ cups jelly.

No Cook Jam

2 cups crushed fruit (about 1 quart fully ripe berries)
4 cups (1 3/4 lb.) sugar
2 tablespoons lemon juice (1 lemon)
3 ounce pouch liquid pectin

Thoroughly crush about 1 quart of fully ripe berries one layer at a time. If desired, sieve half of pulp to remove some of the seeds. Measure 2 cups of crushed fruit into large bowl or pan.

Add sugar, mix well and let stand 10 minutes. Mix lemon juice and liquid pectin in a small bowl; stir into fruit-sugar mixture. Continue stirring for 3 minutes. (A few sugar crystals will remain.) Pour quickly into prepared containers. Cover at once with tight lids. Let stand at room temperature to set up (takes up to 24 hours). Store in the refrigerator or freezer. Yield: 4 3/4 cups jam.

Blackberry Pie

1¼ cups sugar	1/8 teaspoon salt
¼ cup all-purpose flour or	4 cups blackberries
2 tablespoons cornstarch	Pastry for 2-crust pie

Combine sugar, flour or cornstarch, and salt; toss with blackberries. Line pie plate with pastry. Add blackberry mixture. Adjust top crust; cut slits to allow steam to escape. Bake in 400 degree oven 40-45 minutes.

Blackberry Cobbler

2½ cups blackberries	¼ teaspoon cinnamon
2 tablespoons tapioca	Dash of nutmeg
½ cup sugar	1 tablespoon butter
¼ teaspoon salt	Baking powder biscuit dough

Wash fruit and measure into a shallow baking dish. Combine the tapioca, sugar, salt and spices. Stir into blackberries and let stand for 10 minutes. Dot top with butter.

Roll biscuit dough to a thickness of ¼ inch. Prick and arrange over the top of the fruit mixture. Bake in a hot oven (400° F.) about 30 minutes, or until well browned. Makes 6 to 8 servings.

Deep Dish Berry Pie

4 cups fresh blackberries	Grated rind of ½ lemon
¾ cup sugar	1 tablespoon lemon juice
1½ teaspoons tapioca or flour	1 tablespoon butter or margarine
1/8 teaspoon salt	Pastry for 1-crust pie

Combine fruit, sugar, tapioca or flour, salt, lemon rind and juice. Turn mixture into an oblong baking dish. Dot with butter or margarine. Roll pastry into a rectangle 1/8 inch thick and about 1½ inches larger than dish. Arrange pastry lightly over berries and trim edges, leaving ½ inch overhang. Moisten rim of dish, turn overhanging edge of pastry under and press it onto rim. Flute or crimp edge with tines of a fork. Cut slits in pastry for steam to escape. Bake at 400° F. for 30-45 minutes, or until browned.

Blackberry Roll

2 quarts blackberries	¼ teaspoon salt
2 cups sugar	2 tablespoons butter or margarine
2 cups flour	Ice water

Wash berries. Stir in sugar. Mix flour and salt; cut in butter or margarine. Add ice water to make a stiff dough. Roll dough into an oblong sheet as thin as possible. Spread with berries. Roll up, pinch edges and ends together. Place in a greased baking dish. Brush with melted butter. Bake in a 350° F. oven for 35 to 45 minutes. Baste frequently with a mixture of 1 tablespoon melted butter and ½ cup sugar. Makes 8 servings.

Blackberry Apple Pie

3 cups fresh blackberries	1 cup sugar
1 cup thin slices of green apple, peeled	$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon cinnamon
$2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 tablespoons quick-cooking tapioca	2 tablespoons butter or margarine
	Pastry for 2-crust pie

Wash berries in cold water, then lift out and drain. Combine berries, apple slices, tapioca, sugar, and cinnamon. Mix well.

Place filling in a pastry-lined, 9" pie pan. Dot with butter or margarine and adjust top crust and flute edges; cut vents. Bake in hot oven (425° F.) until crust is golden brown and juices start to bubble up in vents, 40 to 50 minutes.

Note: For a change, use cheese pastry.

Blackberry Cream Pie

Pastry for 1-crust pie
4 cups fresh blackberries or 16 ounces of thawed berries
1 cup sugar, if needed
1 cup dairy sour cream
3 tablespoons flour
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt

Spread berries in a 9-inch unbaked pastry shell. Combine remaining ingredients and spread over berries. Sugar may be reduced or omitted if berries were sweetened before freezing.

Prepare a topping by combining 1 tablespoon of melted butter or margarine, 2 tablespoons sugar, and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup fine dry bread crumbs. Sprinkle over the top of the pie. Bake at 375° F. for 40 to 45 minutes.

Blackberry Bread

4 cups blackberries	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup butter, softened
1 cup sugar	8 slices white bread

Stew blackberries until soft and juicy; add sugar. Spread butter on bread. Alternate layers of bread and berries in loaf pan, ending with berries. Place in refrigerator until thoroughly chilled. Slice and serve with cream. Makes 4 to 6 servings.

Blackberry Pudding

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup shortening	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup milk
$\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar	2 egg whites, beaten
1 cup sifted flour	1 teaspoon vanilla
$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt	3 cups blackberries
1 teaspoon baking powder	

Cream the shortening and stir in $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar gradually. Sift the dry ingredients together and add alternately with the milk to first mixture. Fold in the stiffly beaten egg whites. Add vanilla. Mix blackberries with the remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sugar. Place in bottom of greased baking dish. Pour batter over them and cover. Bake at moderate heat (350° F.) for $1\frac{1}{4}$ hours.

Blackberry Mousse

2 cups fruit puree
2 cups whipping cream
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup confectioners' sugar
 $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon vanilla

Heat blackberries to boiling point; then rub through a sieve to make puree.

Whip cream, sugar, and salt together until stiff. Fold in vanilla and fruit puree. Pour into mold or tray and freeze. Makes 6-8 servings.

Blackberry Cake

$1\frac{1}{2}$ cups sugar	1 teaspoon allspice
$\frac{1}{2}$ cup shortening	1 teaspoon cinnamon
3 eggs	1 cup blackberry jam
1 teaspoon baking soda	1 cup sour milk or buttermilk
1 teaspoon ground cloves	2 cups flour

Cream shortening and sugar. Beat in eggs, one at a time. Beat in soda, spices and jam. Stir in milk. Add flour slowly. Beat until all ingredients are well blended. Pour into 3 greased and floured 8 inch cake pans. Bake at 350° F. for 35 to 45 minutes or until done.

Blackberry Jam Cake

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup butter or margarine	2 cups flour
1 cup sugar	1 teaspoon baking soda
2 eggs, beaten	Cinnamon and nutmeg to taste
1 cup blackberry jam	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup sour milk

Cream butter or margarine and sugar. Add eggs and jam. Sift flour with soda and spices; add alternately with milk. Pour into 3 greased and floured 8 inch cake pans. Bake at 350° F. for 25-30 minutes. Frost with Seven-Minute-Frosting.

Blackberry Jam Cake with Raisins and Nuts

1 cup raisins	$2\frac{1}{2}$ cup sifted flour
1 ($8\frac{1}{2}$ oz.) can crushed pineapple	1 teaspoon baking soda
1 cup butter or margarine	1 teaspoon cinnamon
1 cup sugar	1 teaspoon nutmeg
5 eggs	$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground cloves
1 cup blackberry jam	$\frac{2}{3}$ cup buttermilk
	1 cup chopped pecans

Soak raisins for several hours or overnight in pineapple and juice. Cream butter or margarine and sugar until light and fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating after each one. Stir in jam.

Sift together dry ingredients. Add alternately to creamed mixture with buttermilk. Stir in pineapple, raisins, and pecans. Pour batter into paper-lined (13" x 9" x 2") pan. Bake in moderate oven (350° F.) 50 to 55 minutes.

Dust with sifted confectioners' sugar to serve.

Recipe Sources

The recipes included in this publication have been compiled from a variety of sources. No effort has been made to test each recipe. However, the recipes are not unlike those from other sources.

The recipe sources included USDA publications, a General Foods Corporation publication CERTO Fruit Pectin Recipes, Favorite Recipes of Episcopal Churchwomen of Montgomery, Alabama, for Desserts Including Party Beverages, Better Homes and Gardens Treasury of Country Cooking, The Southern Cook Book of Fine Old Recipes, Farm Journal's Complete Pie Cookbook, The American Family Cookbook, and Creative Cooking Made Easy from the Proctor and Gamble Co., Inc.

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