

The Garden State On My Plate!

Fruits And Vegetables
Grown In New Jersey

*A presentation by
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New Jersey is the Garden State. That nickname became official in 1954, but it is still a good description of our state.

New Jersey is the fourth smallest state in the USA, but it is the most densely populated. That means that our state is more crowded with people than any other state in the country.

But even though a lot of people live here, farming is still New Jersey's third largest industry.



A Quick Look At New Jersey Farms

Today, there are about 10,000 farms in New Jersey, where more than 100 varieties of fruits and vegetables are grown.

The average size of a farm in New Jersey is 71 acres – that's about equal to 71 football fields.

The value of agricultural crops sold in New Jersey each year is more than \$1 billion.

Here is a look at New Jersey's top 10 biggest crops.



#1: Blueberries



Blueberries are New Jersey's biggest crop. They like to grow in the sandy, acidic soil of the Pine Barrens of Atlantic and Burlington counties.

New Jersey ranks fifth in the nation for blueberry production.

Blueberries are native to New Jersey. The Native Americans who lived here picked them in the wild.

#2: Tomatoes

Tomatoes are New Jersey's second biggest crop. Farm stands all over the state sell Jersey tomatoes in the summer. New Jersey ranks ninth in the country for the production of tomatoes.

Most of the state's tomato crop is sold fresh all over the eastern United States, but some of it is sent to processing plants to make products like canned tomatoes, ketchup, tomato sauce and tomato soup.



#3: Bell Peppers

Bell peppers are New Jersey's third biggest crop and the state also ranks third in the nation for bell pepper production.

Although bell peppers are grown all over the state, the majority of New Jersey's peppers come from Gloucester, Cumberland, Salem, and Atlantic counties in the south.

Most bell peppers sold are either green or red, but they can also be orange, yellow, white and purple.



#4: Peaches

Peaches are New Jersey's fourth largest crop and the state also ranks fourth in the nation for peach production. New Jersey's 92 peach orchards grow about 60 million pounds of the fruit each a year.

The southern part of the state is the major peach growing area. Gloucester County has the most peach trees.

New Jersey peaches are picked by hand and sold fresh all over the eastern part of the United States and Canada.



#5: Cranberries

Cranberries are the fifth biggest crop in New Jersey. The state ranks third in the country behind Massachusetts and Wisconsin for cranberry sales.

The Thanksgiving fruit likes the sandy soil of bogs in New Jersey's southern counties. Cranberries will float, so the bogs are flooded to make the harvest easier.



#6: Sweet Corn

Sweet corn is New Jersey's sixth largest crop. This is the white or yellow corn that you buy on the cob from farm markets in the summer. Field corn is a different type of corn fed to animals.



#7: Cucumbers

New Jersey's seventh largest crop is cucumbers. Because cucumbers have male (pollen producing) and female (fruit producing) flowers, bees are necessary to grow cucumbers.



#8: Squash

Squash is New Jersey's eighth largest crop and the state ranks sixth in the U.S. for squash production. Two types of squash are grown: summer squash like zucchini and winter squash like butternut squash.



#9 Cabbage

Cabbage ranks number nine among New Jersey's crops. Cabbage is a cool-season vegetable, which means it does not grow in summer heat. Cabbage can be planted in March and April and then again in late August and early September.



#10: Spinach

Spinach is New Jersey's tenth largest crop, but the state ranks second nationally for the most spinach production. Spinach is also a cool season crop, grown in the spring and fall.



New Jersey's Fruits And Veggies Are Great To Eat!

The top 10 are only a few of the fruits and vegetables grown in New Jersey. Apples, melons, cherries, beans, broccoli, and carrots are just some of the other produce grown here.

So why should kids eat New Jersey's fruits and vegetables?

They're delicious!

And eating fruits and vegetables help kids grow healthy and strong in so many ways. Here are the most important ways fruits and vegetables are good for you.



Top Reasons To Eat Fruits and Vegetables

1. Fruits and vegetables are naturally low in calories and fat. They'll help keep you slim and trim, rather than overweight.

2. Fruits and vegetables are jam-packed with vitamins and minerals that will help keep you healthy and full of energy.

3. A diet full of fruits and vegetables will help reduce the risk of many diseases, including heart disease, high blood pressure, cancer, and diabetes.



More Reasons To Eat Fruits And Vegetables

4. Fruits and vegetables are high in fiber that fills you up and help keeps your digestive system happy.



5. Fruits and vegetables are rich in antioxidants that keep your brain healthy and help you learn better in school.

Learn To Love Your Fruits And Vegetables

There are so many different fruits and vegetables that there is always something new for you to try. You are sure to find some you love to eat!



You should fill half your plate with fruits and vegetables at every meal to prevent sickness and to keep growing healthy and strong!

Don't Forget: Put The Garden State On Your Plate!

New Jersey has so many home-grown varieties of fruits and vegetables just waiting for you to try. You can find them at your local farmer's market.

