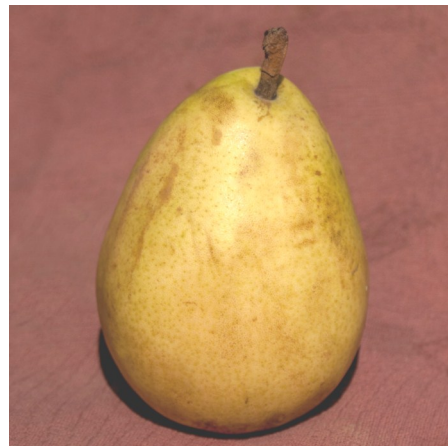


Pear

Growing & Harvesting

Grow. Select disease-resistant root stock; especially resistant to Fire Blight. Pears require cross-pollination from another variety to produce a large crop. For standard trees, allow 20-25 feet in all directions from buildings or other trees. Allow 12-15 feet for semi-dwarf trees and 8-10 feet for dwarf types. For best pollination, plant pear trees within 100 feet of each other. Plant in full sun in early spring. Set plant in soil at the same depth as it was in the container and replace soil firmly against roots. In a one-foot diameter around the trunk, water and apply fertilizer as recommended. Visit www.msueextension.org for more information or contact your Extension office.

Harvest. Do not let pears ripen on the tree. The result will be gritty and non-palatable fruit. Harvest when the skin color turns from dark green to a lighter yellow-green color. The lenticels (dots) often will change from white to brown and the skin of the fruit will become smooth and waxy. To avoid damaging the fruit buds for the next year's crop, carefully twist or cut fruit from the stems; do not pull them off.



Selection

Choose firm pears. Check the neck for ripeness daily by applying gentle pressure to the stem end of the pear with your thumb. If it gives to gentle pressure, it is ripe.

Storage

Store fresh pears in the refrigerator for up to three weeks. Store unripe pears in a paper bag at room temperature.

Nutrition Information

Most fruits are rich in fiber and phytochemicals, but provide negligible amounts of saturated fat, *trans* fat, cholesterol, and sodium and are gluten-free. Pears have only 40 calories per half-cup serving and their skin is rich in Vitamin C.

Uses

Bake. Add diced pears to muffins, cakes, crisps, oatmeal, pies and breads for additional flavor and moisture.

Poach. Heat four cups water and 1 and 1/3 cups sugar until sugar is dissolved. Once sugar is dissolved, add peeled, quartered, and cored pears and desired seasonings. Allow pears to simmer for 15 to 20 minutes until tender.

Raw. Wash and eat whole or sliced. Enjoy with low-fat cottage cheese for added protein. Add dried pears to oatmeal or cold cereal.

Salsa or Salad. Peel and dice pears for a refreshing summer salsa or add to any green salad.

Season. To enhance the flavor of pears, use cloves, cinnamon, ginger or vanilla beans.

Preserve. For information on preserving pears, look for MontGuides: *Drying Fruit*; *Freezing Fruit*; *Home Canning Pressures and Processing Time*; *Freezing Fruit*; and *Making Jams, Jellies and Syrups*. Visit www.msueextension.org/nutrition and click on the food preservation link or contact your Extension office.

Food Safety Tips

1. **Clean.** Wash hands and food contact surfaces before and after preparation.
2. **Chill.** Keep produce and food cool and chill promptly.
3. **Separate.** Keep produce and food separate from raw meats and eggs.
4. **Cook.** Cook food to a safe temperature.

Questions? Click on www.foodsafety.gov

Preparation: Step-by-Step



Wash hands. Thoroughly rinse pears to remove dirt.
Peel if desired.



Cut pear lengthwise in half with a sharp, clean knife.
Remove core with a paring knife or melon baller.



Hold pear and cut into quarters. Place pear cut side down. Slice to desired thickness.



Stack slices and cut into strips. Make perpendicular cuts to dice. To prevent browning, brush or dip with solution of half lemon juice and half water.

For More Information:

Montana State University Extension: www.msuxextension.org
MSU Extension Master Gardener: www.mtmastergardener.org
MSU Extension Food and Nutrition: www.msuxextension.org/nutrition
MSU Extension Nutrition Education Programs: www.buycatlivebetter.org

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University of Minnesota Extension. (2007). Apples and Pears in Minnesota Home Gardens. Retrieved from: <http://www.extension.umn.edu/distribution/horticulture/M1157.html>
USA Pears (2013) Retrieved from: <http://usapears.com/>