



HealthiestWeight

May 2016 Healthy Food of the Month: Cantaloupe



Brought to you by the Florida Department of Health in Gulf/Franklin School Health Nurses

The cantaloupe is a member of the melon family and often called a “muskmelon”. In Florida, the peak season for cantaloupe is the spring and early summer. Freshly harvested melons are being sold in farmer’s market produce stands and in the grocery store right now.

So the month of May is the perfect time to enjoy a juicy, sweet Florida-grown cantaloupe!

The cantaloupe is in the same family as squash, pumpkin and cucumber and grows on the ground as a trailing vine. The plant likes well-drained sandy soil and it must have honeybees to pollinate the flowers and develop fruit.

Cantaloupes are round or oblong shaped and are usually ripe when they have a musky, sweet smell and feel heavy for their size. When washed and cut in half the inside section contains a hollow cavity filled with small white seeds which are removed and the orange-yellow fruit is eaten.

The cantaloupe can be sliced or cubed and is great in fruit salad, eaten as a snack or served as dessert.

As a healthy food the cantaloupe is low in calories and fat and its nutritional value is impressive. The fruit is high in Vitamin A which is beneficial for eyesight and healthy skin. The cantaloupe also contains an abundance of Vitamin C, which is an antioxidant that helps strengthen the immune system to prevent illness.

Don’t miss your chance to enjoy a Florida-grown cantaloupe, a delicious refreshment and healthy food.

Remember: Make 5-2-1-0 your goal every day.

- 5** - Fruits and vegetables a day (including the cantaloupe)
- 2** - Only 2 hours or less of screen time a day (TV, computers, video games)
- 1** - One hour of physical activity a day
- 0** - Sugar-sweetened drinks (drink more water and non-fat milk)

References:

- <http://www.fruithealthbenefits.com/cantaloupe-nutrition-facts.shtml>
- <http://www.nutrition-and-you.com/cantaloupe.html>