

## SOURCES

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# FRESHLY PICKED FRUITS

# BLUEBERRIES

Blueberries are the major and most highly valued fruit crop in Mississippi.

There are over 1,200 acres of blueberries in production in Mississippi.

If you're looking to plant some blueberries, the best time to put your green thumb to work is May through July. Then, in 2 to 3 years, you'll have some blueberries of your own.

Remember that blueberries are very sensitive to cold weather, so keep them at a constant temperature when planting, growing, and harvesting.

Keep your eyes peeled, and you can find wild blueberries during the summer months.



# FRESHLY PICKED FRUITS

Mississippi is known far and wide for its specialty crop fruits. Grown with care and sold nationwide, our produce is enjoyed as snacks, desserts, and seasonal decorations. There's a lot to enjoy when it comes to our blueberries and pumpkins. With great taste and knockout specialty crops waiting, let's dive into the fruits of Mississippi!

Wondering about health benefits? Blueberries are a good source of vitamin C, potassium, folate, and fiber. Eat them for a snack, topping, or any other way.

## FUN FACTS

Mississippi's state fruit is the blueberry.

Studies have shown that blueberries help improve memory and cognitive function.

Blueberries aren't actually blue. They are technically a deep color of purple due to a natural dye called anthocyanins.

Blueberries commonly top the list of healthiest foods you can eat among nutritionists and dietitians.



## FUN FACTS

Pumpkins were not the original jack-o-lanterns. Large bulbs of leafy greens were the original carved, scary faces before pumpkins became the preferred option.

There are over 150 different varieties of pumpkins in the world today.

Mississippi's largest pumpkin ever weighed in at a massive 438 pounds!

# PUMPKINS

Believe it or not, pumpkins are actually fruits since they come from flowers and have seeds.

If you want a Halloween pumpkin, be sure to plant your seeds in early to mid-July.

Starting your pumpkin seeds in a tray or container will allow a more uniform production.

There are over 23 varieties of pumpkins suited for growing in Mississippi. They range in size from less than a pound to more than 40 pounds!

Depending on the variety of pumpkin, the average time needed from planting to harvesting is approximately 80 to 120 days.

Cinderella and peanut pumpkins are perfect for baking pies, making bread, and cooking desserts.

Pumpkins are rich in antioxidants for heart health, vitamins C and E to boost your immune system, and amino acids that help with sleep.

