

## Growing & Harvesting

**Grow.** Growing apricots requires planting more than one variety for pollination. Purchase one-year-old trees, plant in early spring and soak roots for 2-4 hours before planting. In a full sun location, dig a hole large enough to accommodate the root system. Set plant in soil at the same depth as it was in the container and replace soil firmly against the roots. Water immediately and mulch to a depth of four inches. For more growing information look for the Extension MontGuide, *Growing Minor Stone Fruit in Montana*, at [www.msueextension.org](http://www.msueextension.org) or call your Extension office.

**Harvest.** The best way to determine ripeness is to taste the fruit. The flesh should yield to gentle pressure, and ripening skin will change from green to yellow, red, orange or a combination thereof. To avoid damaging the fruit buds for the next year's crop, twist the fruit slightly while pulling.

## Selection

Select firm, ripe fruit with a bright yellow or orange color.

## Storage

Store apricots at room temperature until ripe, then in the refrigerator in a plastic bag for 3-5 days.

## 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. Apricots are high in Vitamin A and C with 40 calories per half-cup serving.

## Uses

**Broil.** Set broiler to high, with rack about four inches from heat. Cut apricots in half and remove pit. Place on a baking sheet with the skin side down and cut side up. Cook 2-5 minutes, or until tender.

**Grill.** Pierce the apricots (whole or halved) on skewers. Brush with honey and grill until desired tenderness, about 2-3 minutes.

**Poach.** Place apricots into simmering water or fruit juice. Remove from liquid when tender, about 6-8 minutes. Add spices such as cinnamon or cloves to enhance flavor.

**Raw.** Rinse and dry apricots to enjoy as is, or with blue cheese for added flavor. Add fresh, chopped apricots to oatmeal or cold cereal. Use apricots to create a breakfast parfait or smoothie with yogurt and granola.

**Season.** To enhance the flavor, season with cinnamon, clove and/or honey. Add apricots to cooked vegetables for a natural sweetener.

**Preserve.** For more information on preserving apricots, look for Extension MontGuides on: *Freezing Fruit; Drying Fruit; Home Canning Pressures and Processing Times; Processing Fruit, Tomatoes and Mixtures in a Pressure Canner; and Making Jams, Jellies and Syrups*. Visit [www.msueextension.org/nutrition](http://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](http://www.foodsafety.gov)

# Preparation: Step-by-Step



Wash hands. Thoroughly rinse apricots to remove any dirt.



Cut fruit following the natural line around the apricot. When ripe, fruit will easily release from the pit when opened.



Due to their small size, apricots need little further preparation. They are ready to grill, preserve, eat, or slice for salads, cereals or smoothies.



To remove skins, drop apricots in boiling water for 30-60 seconds, then immerse in cold water. The skins should slip off easily.

#### For More Information:

Montana State University Extension: [www.msuextension.org](http://www.msuextension.org)  
MSU Extension Master Gardener: [www.mtmastergardener.org](http://www.mtmastergardener.org)  
MSU Extension Food and Nutrition: [www.msuextension.org/nutrition](http://www.msuextension.org/nutrition)  
MSU Extension Nutrition Education Programs: [www.buyeatlivebetter.org](http://www.buyeatlivebetter.org)

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#### Information Courtesy of:

Foulk, D., Hoover, E. (2011). Stone fruits for Minnesota gardens. University of Minnesota Extension. <http://www.extension.umn.edu/distribution/horticulture/DG1125.html>  
Fruits & Veggies More Matters. (2012). Apricot: Nutrition, selection., storage. <http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/apricots-nutrition-selection-storage>  
Serfustini, E. (2011). Apricots: Food Sense Guide to Eating Fresh Fruits and Vegetables. [http://extension.usu.edu/files/publications/publication/FN\\_FoodSense\\_2011-01pr.pdf](http://extension.usu.edu/files/publications/publication/FN_FoodSense_2011-01pr.pdf)