



GRAPEFRUIT TALKING POINTS

2. A slice history about the Grapefruit

- The first citrus trees grew in Asia over 4,000 years ago.
- An accidental hybrid, the first grapefruit was produced in the West Indies (Caribbean) in the mid-1700s. It was often called the “forbidden fruit.”
- The first American grapefruit seedlings grew in Florida around 1823. For many years, it was grown as a novelty for tourists.
- The Ruby Red grapefruit was also an accidental discovery by Texas citrus growers in 1929. It was the first grapefruit variety to receive a United States patent.
- The grapefruit that people in the US consume came from Barbados, an island in the Caribbean Sea. The fruit was taken to Florida during the 1800s.
- Grapefruit came from a cross between a pummelo, a grapefruit like fruit that has green skin and red flesh it also has a lot more flavor than a grapefruit, and an orange.
- Grapefruit got its name because people thought that they looked like grape clusters growing on a tree.
- Botanists believe grapefruit was an accidental hybrid of the two primal citrus species, *Citrus maxima* (pummelo) and *Citrus sinensis* (sweet orange). Citrus is a subtropical plant and, like all citrus fruit, grapefruit grow on flowering, evergreen trees. They are distinguishable by the way in which they grow in clusters – like grapes – on trees. They are also one of the largest citrus and have an oblate shape (round with flat spheres).
- There are more than 20 varieties of grapefruit grown in the United States. They are commonly grouped into three cultivars determined by the fruit’s pulp color: white/yellow, pink, and red. The color is a result of the fruit’s genetic makeup, skin pigmentation, and ripeness. The flesh is more acidic than other sweeter citrus varieties, though the pink- and red-pulped varieties have been produced with less acidity.

3. & 4. How Does Grapefruit Grow?

- Grapefruit trees are well-suited for warm, subtropical climates. California’s climate, fertile soil, and diverse land resources allow for year-round production of many citrus varieties, including grapefruit. Grapefruit can grow on a range of soil types from clay to alkaline to acidic soils, but do best in soils that are a mixture of clay, silt, and sand.
- Grapefruit trees grow from 30 to 50 feet tall. Growers may prune trees to limit the height to 15 to 25 feet for easier harvesting. The trees produce four-petaled, white flowers. Temperature affects the length of time it takes from flower blossom to fruit maturity. For example, in the cooler areas it can take up to 13 months. In the desert area, it takes about eight months. Grapefruit are picked when fully ripe. Citrus trees never go dormant, but their root systems become inactive when ground temperatures drop below 50 F. Drought conditions can have the same impact.
- The peak time to pick grapefruit is from January through May.

5. Why should we eat Grapefruit?

- A half of a medium grapefruit is:
 - An excellent source of vitamin C.
 - A source of many other nutrients, such as potassium, folate, thiamin, vitamin A, vitamin B₆, and fiber.
 - Low in calories.
 - **What Are Calories?**
 1. Calories measure the energy found in food.
 2. The body needs energy to function, which is why food is necessary for life.
 3. Our bodies burn calories found in carbohydrates, proteins, and fats for energy. These nutrients are released from food during digestion, then absorbed into the bloodstream, and converted to glucose, or blood sugar.
 4. One pound of body fat is equivalent to 3,500 calories.
 5. The body is very efficient in storing energy. The main form of stored energy is body fat. A small amount of carbohydrates is stored in the liver and muscles in the form of glycogen. Glycogen is then converted to glucose and is used by the body for energy.

6. How do you pick a good Grapefruit?

- There are three main types of grapefruit: white/yellow, pink, and red
- Choose grapefruit that have smooth, glossy skin and feel heavy for their size.
- Avoid grapefruit with brown or soft spots.
- Store grapefruit at room temperature for up to one week. Or, store in the refrigerator for over two weeks.

Grapefruit Facts

1. The United States is the world's leading grower of grapefruit.
2. Florida is the leading producer and California is the nation's second leading producer.
3. Grapefruit was named by a Jamaican farmer who noticed the way it grows in clusters – like grapes – on a tree.
4. Grapefruit's flavor and juiciness are not determined by color, but by the lateness of the season when they are harvested, the specific variety, and how the fruit is handled.

Healthy Serving Ideas

Combine grapefruit sections, sliced banana, and raisins with lowfat yogurt.

Cut in half and serve chilled grapefruit with breakfast.

Blend grapefruit chunks with equal parts oil and vinegar to make a zesty salad dressing.

Try 100% grapefruit juice.

Toss peeled grapefruit segments into fruit or green salads.

Medicinal Uses

- Every part of the grapefruit is recognized for its many health benefits. Grapefruit seed extract, available in health food stores, is commonly used as an anti-fungal remedy.
- An infusion prepared from grapefruit flower blossoms becomes a treatment for insomnia. The beverage is also valued as a cardiac tonic.

- Grapefruit stimulates the digestive tract and aids in relieving indigestion and gas. The fruit also has diuretic properties helpful to people with water retention and liver and gall bladder conditions.
- Rubbed on the skin, grapefruit is beneficial in treating acne and oily skin.
- Grapefruit pulp, because of its acidic nature, is an effective treatment for urinary infections.
- An extract drawn from the leaves of the grapefruit tree contains antibiotic properties.
- Pectin contained in the grapefruit rind and the membranes clinging to the grapefruit sections is effective in lowering serum cholesterol.

Fun Facts ...

- In one day, a processing plant can squeeze millions of pounds of grapefruits.
- The whole grapefruit is used during the juicing process. After juicing, the grapefruit skins can be used to make essential oils and essences or can be converted to molasses for cattle feed.
- The United States produced 1.23 million tons of grapefruit in 2006.
- Florida is the world's largest grower of grapefruit and exports grapefruit all over the world.
- Harvesters use picking sacks which hold 85 pounds of grapefruit which is equal to one standard box.
- Most grapefruit grove are hand-picked, no mechanical harvesting is used.
- Groves vary in size and can be anywhere from five acres to 2,000 acres with roughly 100 trees per acre.
- One acre of a grove can produce some 400-700 boxes of grapefruit. 700 boxes of grapefruit equals almost 60,000 pounds.
- Grapefruit begins to bear fruit four to six years after planting and can produce up to 30 or 40 fruits on a single branch. A single tree, in a productive year, can generate 1,300 to 1,500 pounds of fruit.⁸
- Grapefruit trees can produce for 30-40 years.