



MANGO TALKING POINTS

2. A slice of mango history

- **Mangoes are native to southern Asia**, particularly eastern **India**, Myanmar (formerly Burma), and the Andaman Islands. Mangoes have been loved since Ancient times and cultivated for at least 4,000 years.
- Buddhist monks likely took mangoes on voyages to Malaya and eastern Asia in the 4th and 5th Centuries B.C. It is thought that the **Persians and/or the Portuguese brought the mango to eastern Africa**. (Different references have different details.) From eastern Africa the **Portuguese brought the mango to Brazil** where it was cultivated and spread north into Central America, the Caribbean, and the southeastern US.
- The first mango was cultivated in Florida in 1833, which is the largest US producer. (India is the largest producer world-wide.)

3. How do mangos grow?

- **Mango trees** are deep-rooted, symmetrical evergreens that attain heights of 90 feet and widths of 80 feet. Mango trees have simple alternate lanceolate leaves that are 12 to 16 inches in length and yellow-green, purple, or copper in color when young.
- New leaves arise in terminal growth flushes that occur several times a year.
- Mature terminal branches bear pyramidal flower panicles that have several hundred white flowers that are about a 1/4 inch wide when open. **Most of the flowers function as males by providing pollen, but some are both male and female and will set fruit. Pollination is by flies, wasps, and bees.**
- The fruit matures three to five months after flowering and weighs about 1/4 pound to 3 pounds. Fruit may be round, ovate, or obovate depending on the variety. The immature fruit has green skin that gradually turns yellow, orange, purple, red, or combinations of these colors as the fruit matures.
- Mature fruit has a characteristic fragrance and a smooth, thin, tough skin. The flesh of ripe mangos is pale yellow to orange. The flesh is juicy, sweet, and sometimes fibrous. Some undesirable seedlings or varieties are described as possessing a turpentine-like off-taste.
- The fruit has one seed that is flattened and sticks to the flesh. The seed contains one or more embryos depending on the variety or type.
- Mango trees may remain in production for 40 years or more.

4. When do we do pick mangos?

- Mangos require warm weather and **cannot grow in South Dakota**.
- Mangos have been grown in the U.S. for a little more than a century, but commercial, large-scale production here is limited. **Because mangos need a tropical climate to flourish, only in Florida, California, and Hawaii in the US.**

5. Why should we eat mangos?

- One cup of mangos is just 100 calories, so it's a sweet treat that won't weigh you down.
- Each serving of mango is fat free, sodium free and cholesterol free.

- Mangos contain over 20 different vitamins and minerals, helping to make them a superfood, known in India as the King of Fruit.
- 1 cup mango provides **100% of your daily vitamin C** requirements.
- 1 cup mango provides **35% of your daily vitamin A** requirements.
- 1 cup mango provides **20% of your daily folate** requirement.
- 1 cup mango provides **12% of your daily fiber** requirement.

6. How do you pick a good mango?

- Fruits are usually picked after they develop some red, orange, or yellow color. Mangos will ripen and may be picked when the flesh inside has turned yellow, regardless of exterior color.
- Mangos should be picked before they are fully ripe, at which time they soften and fall. The fruit bruises easily and must be handled carefully to avoid damage. They are ripened at room temperature and then refrigerated.
- The **best way to tell if a mango is ripe is to squeeze it gently**. If it gives a little, then it is ripe.

How to eat mango

- The simplest way to eat mango is to cut a slice and score it, as you would an avocado. Then those pieces can be scooped out with a spoon and enjoyed!

Serving ideas

- Mango fruit is relished for their succulence, exotic flavor and sweet taste. Mostly eaten fresh, they are also sold in canned or dried forms and have found their way into an enormous range of processed foods and drinks.
- Mango can be eaten as a dessert fruit or processed to various products. Ripe fruits can be sliced and canned or processed to juice, jams, jellies, nectars and preserves. Eastern and Asian cultures use unripe mangos for pickles, chutney and relishes.

Fun Facts

- The timber is used for boats, flooring, furniture and other applications.
- In India, flour is made from mango seeds. Seeds are also eaten during periods of food shortages.

Resources

<http://www.mangomaven.com/where-do-mangoes-come-from/>
<http://mango-trees.blogspot.com/2009/10/history-and-origin-of-mango.html>
http://www.kew.org/plant-cultures/plants/mango_food.html
<http://www.mango.org/varieties-and-availability>
<http://www.mango.org/mango-nutrition>
<http://nutritiondata.self.com/facts/fruits-and-fruit-juices/1952/2>
http://www.extento.hawaii.edu/kbase/crop/crops/i_mango.htm