

Fun FACTS

There are over 3,000 varieties of pears in the world!



Pears belong to the rose family and are related to apples!



Oriental Pears are rounded like an apple and have a rougher skin. While Occidental pears are the standard “pear shape” that we typically think of with the rounded bottom and the longer narrowed top.



There are two distinct groups of pears, the Asian (Oriental) Pears and the European (Occidental) Pears.



Pears are the state fruit of Oregon!



Pears were first brought to North America in the 1600s!



LOCAL FOODS
HEALTHY SCHOOLS
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Cornell Cooperative Extension
Schoharie and Otsego Counties



Fun FACTS

Pears are native to Western China and Southeastern Europe, where humans were enjoying them as early as 5,000 BC!



In Chinese culture, pears are a symbol of immortality and are common gifts left at family shrines!



Wood from trees is often used to make musical instruments, furniture, and cooking utensils!



Washington, Oregon, California, New York, and Michigan produce a majority of the pears in the US.

Pears have high levels of key nutrients like fiber, copper, potassium, vitamins K and C, and antioxidants. They are also low in calories making them a great healthy snack!



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World's BIGGEST



Pear: The world's largest pear was an Atago pear that was grown in Japan in 2011. It weighed **6.5 pounds!**



Pear Tree: The Manchurian Pear Tree in the ancient pear garden of Shenchuan, China is the world's oldest pear tree. It won a Guinness World Record in 2013 when it was **458 years** old!

Producer: China is the world's largest producer of pears; they produced about **18.2 million tons** in 2020! Italy and the United States are the second and third highest producers of pears.





Need To KNOW



Growing



Harvesting season is usually late August to early October, but in places like Washington, Oregon, and California they can harvest fresh pears almost year-round since they can grow more varieties!

Pears thrive in temperate, cool climates. After planting, a pear will grow for 3-10 years before bearing fruit, and they can live to be 250 or even up to 450 years old!

Unlike other fruits, pears ripen well off the tree, which allows them to be picked before they are ripe!

You can speed up the ripening of pears by putting them in a warm place. Or you can slow it down by putting them in the refrigerator!

Cooking



Pears can be cooked alone or used in pies, salads, cakes, breads, smoothies, or put in a sandwich! You can preserve pears to use later by canning, freezing, or turning them into jam and jellies!



Storage



Just like apples, pears can be pressed to squeeze out the juice, which is often called pear cider or perry!

