

Growing & Harvesting

Grow. Growing apples requires planting more than one variety for pollination. Purchase one-year-old trees with multiple branches and certified to be disease resistant, especially to Fire Blight. Plant in early spring, allowing 35-45 feet of growth space for standard-size apple trees, less for dwarf varieties. Plant trees in soil at the same depth as the containers they were grown in, and replace soil firmly against the roots. In a two foot diameter around the trunk, water and apply fertilizer as recommended. Visit www.msuextension.org for more information or contact your Extension office.

Harvest. Apple harvest occurs in fall. Start picking apples from lower branches and move to the upper branches. To avoid damaging fruit buds for the next year's crop, carefully twist or cut fruit from the stem, do not pull them off.



Selection

Choose firm, shiny, smooth-skinned apples with intact stems. Apples should smell fresh, not musty.

Storage

Refrigerate apples in a plastic bag, away from strong-smelling food. Store away from other fruits, as apples produce ethylene, which may cause other fruits to prematurely ripen. Use within three weeks.

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. Apples are high in Vitamin C and Potassium and have 32 calories per half-cup serving.

Uses

Applesauce. Place peeled, cored, and sliced apples in one-quarter inch water. Steam apples in a microwave or pan until soft and add water if needed. Remove from heat, mash apples to desired consistency and add seasonings. Eat warm or allow to cool.

Bake. Select larger apples and remove core with knife, leaving half-inch of the apple core intact at the bottom. Put a small amount of seasoning in the hole. Place apples in a baking pan and add 3/4 cup water to the pan. Bake at 375°F for 30-40 minutes or until desired tenderness.

Grill. Combine 1/2 cup water and 1/4 cup lemon juice in a large bowl and put sliced apples in mixture for 30-60 minutes. Place soaked apple slices on skewers and grill about seven minutes on each side. Once grilled, remove from heat and add seasonings. For added variety and texture, add apples to a grilled meat or vegetable kabob.

Raw. Rinse and dry an apple to enjoy as is, or slice and dip in peanut butter, yogurt, or hummus. Dip apple slices in lemon juice to prevent browning.

Season. Enhance the flavor of apples with cinnamon, clove, ginger or nutmeg.

Preserve. For information on preserving apples, look for Extension MontGuides on: *Drying Fruit; Freezing Fruit; Home Canning Pressures and Processing Time; Making Jams, Jellies and Syrups*. Visit www.msuextension.org/nutrition and click on the food preservation link or contact your Extension office.

Food Safety Tips

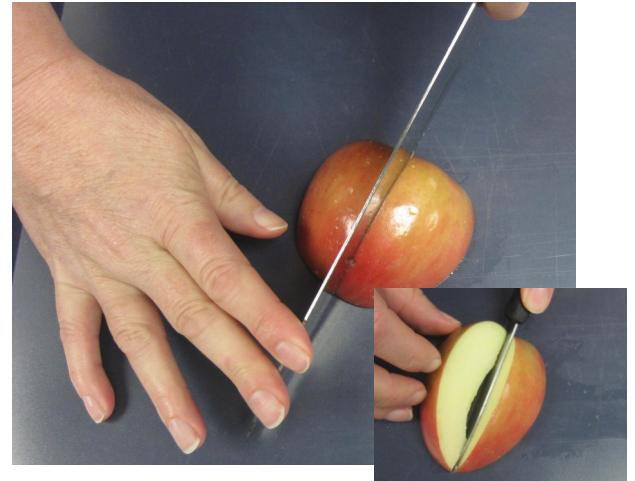
1. **Clean.** Wash hands and food contact surfaces before and after preparation.
2. **Chill.** Keep produce and food cool and chill promptly.
3. **Separate.** Keep produce and food separate from raw meats and eggs.
4. **Cook.** Cook food to a safe temperature.

Questions? Click on www.foodsafety.gov

Preparation: Step-by-Step



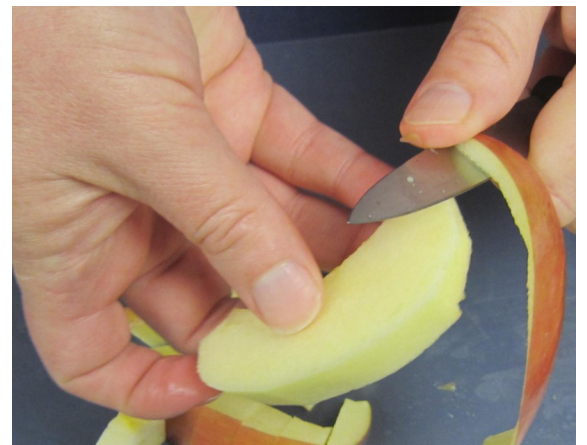
Wash hands. Thoroughly rinse apples to remove any dirt.
Cut whole apple in half with sharp knife.
Be sure to hold apple firmly on cutting board.



Place flat side of halved apple on cutting board and cut again to quarter. Remove the seeds and core.



Cut into smaller slices if desired,
such as for making applesauce or eating raw.



The peel is an edible source of fiber and nutrients,
but can be removed if desired.

For More Information:

Montana State University Extension: www.msuxextension.org
MSU Extension Master Gardener: www.mtmastergardener.org
MSU Extension Food and Nutrition: www.msuxextension.org/nutrition
MSU Extension Nutrition Education Programs: www.buyeatlivebetter.org

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Fruits & Veggies More Matters. (2012). Apple: Nutrition. selection. storage. <http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/apple-nutrition-selection-storage>
Riggs, K. (2011). Apples: Food Sense Guide to Eating Fresh Fruits and Vegetables. http://extension.usu.edu/files/publications/publication/FN_FoodSense_2011-07pr.pdf