



## FACTOID 7: FRUIT AS DESSERT

Healthy Meetings Checklist Items: *Are fruits and vegetables offered?*  
*Are locally produced options offered?*

A healthy eating plan is one that emphasizes fruits, vegetables, whole grain, and fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products. For fruits, this translates to at least 2 cups every day. We need a variety of fruits and can choose from fresh, frozen, canned, or dried. Go easy on the fruit juices.

### Start a Fad: Eat Fruit as Dessert

Fruits have traditionally made good snacks and interesting salad. Many of us drink our fruits as juices and can increase our fruit consumption even more by eating fruit as dessert.

Cravings for sweets after meals can be met with fruits. Whole fruits are easy to carry and ideal as dessert for lunches on the run. Chilled cut fruit make good dessert additions to daily lunches and dinners.

Fruits can be creatively transformed into fancy beautiful special desserts. Try multicolored fruit medleys, lightly glazed fruit compotes, creative mixtures of fruits and nuts, lots of fruit on small pieces of cake or cookies, mashed ripe fruit frozen into shapes, and variations of traditional ethnic desserts. Fancy dishes and creative arrangements can add to the appeal of fruits as desserts.

Easy fruit sauces can add to the allure of fruits as dessert. Consider these light, refreshing combinations: Lemon or lime juice, a bit of honey, grated lemon or lime zest and minced mint leaves, or vanilla yogurt, frozen juice concentrate and coconut extract.

Cookie, sweet cereal, cake crumbs or cinnamon-sugar lightly sprinkled on a bowl of fruit can combine sweets while managing fat intake. Next time, try crumbled oatmeal cookies on a fresh fruit cocktail; crushed frosted flakes on tart berries; chocolate cake crumbs on a banana, orange and apple fruit cocktail; or cinnamon-sugar sprinkled on apple wedges.

Ethnic traditions are also a good starting point for fruit as dessert. There are many variations of Scandinavian "fruit soups." Chinese "almond floats" can be made with a large proportion of fruits. Pacific Islander "taro puddings" can be made with coconut extract flavoring instead of coconut milk with added chunks of fruit. Asian "sticky rice" desserts can be adapted by using the rice as a base, adding a layer of sweet bean mash, and topped with lots of fruits. As an alternative, start with a base of sticky rice, add a layer of a mixed fruit and sweet potatoes, and top with syrup made of fruit juice, coconut extract to taste and lemon or lime



Visit our Nutrition Education for Wellness (NEW) website at [www.ctahr.hawaii.edu/NEW](http://www.ctahr.hawaii.edu/NEW)