



# Peppers

## Harvest of the Season

### Eat More Arizona Grown Peppers

Vegetables and fruits come in different colors and flavors, but their real beauty is found inside. Eating a variety of vegetables and fruits gives you lots of vitamins and minerals you need. Fill half your plate with vegetables and fruits and help keep your heart, teeth, gums, eyes and skin healthy.

Buy fresh vegetables, like peppers, in season when flavor is best and the price is low!

Arizona grows both sweet bell and chili (hot) peppers. Most recently, Arizona harvested over nine acres of sweet bell peppers, and 1,944 acres of chili peppers.

### Why Eat More Peppers?

Peppers are full of nutrients. Here's how the nutrients in peppers keep you and your family healthy:

Nutrients Found in Peppers	
<b>Vitamin C</b>	Helps your teeth and gums stay healthy
<b>Vitamin A</b>	Helps your eyes and skin stay healthy
<b>Fiber</b>	Helps keep your heart healthy and improve digestion
<b>Potassium</b>	Helps you maintain a healthy blood pressure

### What Are the Different Types of Peppers?

Try different types of peppers, both sweet and hot, to find your family's favorite. These are a few types of peppers grown in Arizona:

- Red Bell (Sweet) Pepper
- Red Chili (Hot) Pepper
- Green Bell (Sweet) Pepper
- Green Chili (Hot) Pepper

## How Much Do We Need?

In general, your family should eat:

Age	Vegetables	Fruits
Children 2 - 3	1 cup	1 cup
Children 4 - 8	1 1/2 cups	1 to 1 ½ cups
Older children and teens	2 to 3 cups	1 ½ to 2 cups
Adults	2 1/2 to 3 cups	2 cups

You are a positive influence in your children's lives. Help them develop healthy eating habits for life. Offer them vegetables and fruits at meals and snacks.

Make half your plate vegetables and fruits. Visit [choosemyplate.gov](https://www.choosemyplate.gov) for more information.

## How to Choose, Store and Prepare Peppers

### Choose:

- Look for a glossy coat with no shriveling, cracks or soft spots.
- Choose peppers that are heavy for their size and have firm walls.
- For hot peppers, reds are typically spicier than the green version. Also, shape is a better indicator of heat than color. The smaller they are, the hotter they will be!

### Store:

- Store sweet peppers in a plastic bag in your refrigerator's crisper drawer. Green peppers stay firmer longer than the colored varieties.
- Store fresh hot peppers in a perforated paper bag in the fridge.

### Prepare:

Peppers are delicious raw or cooked. Try one or all of these methods for roasting your peppers, which can intensify the flavor for use in salsas or sauces. Be sure to roast evenly on each side by rotating throughout the cooking time.

1. Flame Roasting: Grill peppers with a little oil skin-side down until slightly charred (15-20 minutes)
2. Stovetop Roasting: Wrap in foil and roast on a gas stove (20 minutes)
3. Oven Roasting: Roast on a baking sheet under the broiler in your oven (20-25 minutes)

After roasting the peppers, remember to steam the charred skin off and take the seeds out before adding to your dish. To steam, place a large glass bowl or plastic wrap over the peppers on a cutting board so that no air can escape. Remove the skin that comes off naturally. Remove the seeds and stem.

Tip: Green, yellow and orange peppers are less mature versions of the red pepper. Be sure to try all colors (at varying stages of ripeness) to find your favorite!

To learn more, visit [fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org](https://fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org).



## Plant and Grow Peppers

- Arizona is a perfect climate for growing all types of peppers, both sweet and hot. Peppers enjoy full sun.
- Start seeds inside six to eight weeks before planting outdoors.
- Wait to plant seeds or young plants (transplants) until the ground is warm enough and free from frost.

Visit [extension.arizona.edu](http://extension.arizona.edu) for harvest and planting information.

## Mexican Stuffed Peppers

### Ingredients:

- 4 red bell peppers
- 1 teaspoon vegetable oil
- 1 cup chopped onions
- 3 cloves garlic, peeled and chopped
- 1 chopped jalapeno or chipotle chile (remove seeds if you like it mild)
- 1 Tablespoon chili powder
- ½ teaspoon cumin
- 1 (15 ¼ ounce) can diced tomatoes in juice
- 1 cup cooked white rice
- 1 cup fresh, frozen, or canned corn
- 1 cup cooked or canned pinto beans

### Directions:

1. Wash hands with soap and warm water. Wash fresh vegetables before preparing.
2. Preheat oven to 350° F.
3. Cut the tops off the peppers, remove seeds and white membrane, and set aside.
4. Heat oil in a skillet and cook the onion until it starts to wilt, about 2 minutes.
5. Add the garlic, jalapeno, chili powder, and cumin.
6. Cook for 2 more minutes.
7. Stir in the tomatoes, rice, corn, and beans.
8. Cook until the liquid disappears and the stuffing holds together.
9. Spoon into the prepared peppers and set into a baking dish.
10. Bake for 1 hour or until the peppers are tender.



**Makes 4 servings  
One Pepper each**

### Nutrition Facts

per serving	
calories.....	237
carbohydrates ..	47 gm
protein.....	9 gm
total fat.....	3 gm
saturated fat.....	0 gm
trans fat .....	0 gm
cholesterol .....	0 mg
fiber .....	9 gm
total sugars.....	12 gm
sodium.....	352 gm
calcium.....	110 gm
folate.....	176 mcg
iron.....	3 mg
calories from fat...	11%

For more free recipes, visit [EatWellBeWell.org](http://EatWellBeWell.org).

## Choose Locally Grown Vegetables and Fruits

- Arizona grown vegetables and fruits taste best and cost less when purchased in season.
- Vegetables and fruits grown in Arizona spend less time in the back of a truck. This causes less damage to the vegetables and fruits.
- When farmers sell directly to consumers, they cut out the middleman and receive full value for their product. This allows farmers to continue to farm and provide service to the community.
- Let your kids be produce pickers. Help them pick vegetables at a grocery store, your local farmers' markets, or at a u-pick farm near you! Go to [arizonagrown.org](http://arizonagrown.org) for more information.

Visit the School Food Programs section of the Arizona Department of Education Health and Nutrition Services website at [www.azed.gov](http://www.azed.gov) for more information.



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