

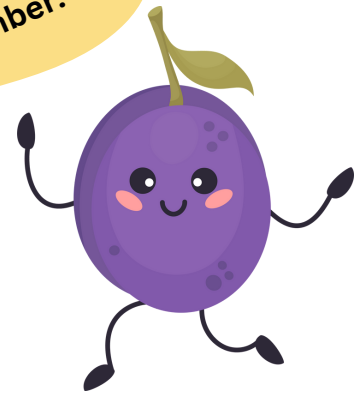
Plums

How do plums grow?

Plums grow on trees like apples or peaches, in orchards in Ontario, British Columbia and a few in Nova Scotia. Plum trees grow best in rich, well-drained soil with lots of sun. It can take up to 5 years for a new plum tree to produce fruit. Plum trees bloom or flower in early spring. A plum will grow from the flower. If the temperature drops below freezing after the tree has bloomed, the tree will not produce fruit that year. Plum trees can grow up to 12 metres or 40 feet tall. Plums are picked by hand by trained pickers in late summer to early fall. They are taken to a packing house and cooled to slow the ripening process. They are then graded, packed and put into cold storage before being shipped to grocery stores within a few days of picking.



Canadian plums are available from mid-July to late September.



Check out this 3.58 minute video on how to grow, care and harvest plum trees.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i6mniJNdQf0&t=55s>

Check out California Prunes to see an orchard go from bloom to harvest and on to drying.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iVM9MhMzOJw>

Where do plums come from?

Wild plums native to North America were gathered and eaten by Indigenous people and European settlers. Most wild plums disappeared as bigger and sweeter hybrid European (blue) and Japanese (yellow and red) varieties have been developed to withstand Ontario's cooler weather.

Did you know?

- Plums are called *stone fruits* because they have large pits or stones at their centres.
- Plums are related to cherries and are members of the rose family.
- Plums are almost 80% water.
- Although all prunes are plums, not all plums can be prunes.
- Plums come in colours ranging from yellow, orange, red, purple or blue.

Joke corner

Q: Why did the plum feel so sad inside?

A: It was the pits.

Q. When is a synapse like a tree?

A: When it is pruned.

Ontario Plum Chutney from Produce Made Simple

INGREDIENTS

- ½ small red onion, finely chopped
- 1 tsp butter or oil
- 2 cups of prepared yellow Ontario plums (wash, pit and cut into 1-inch pieces) about 12 plums.
- 1/3 cup brown sugar
- ½ to 1 tbsp apple cider vinegar (Taste, to suit your preference. If the plums are more tart, use less vinegar. When they are sweeter, add a little more vinegar.)
- 1 tsp curry powder
- ¼ tsp ground ginger
- ¼ tsp ground garlic

DIRECTIONS

- Over medium heat, cook onion in butter/oil until soft. Add chopped plums and cook until they also soften slightly.
- Add all other ingredients and reduce heat to low. Continue to cook until the plums lose most of their shape and the mixture is well blended. About 15 minutes total.
- Remove from heat and place into clean jars. Keep refrigerated.

Tip: This recipe would also work by substituting Ontario peaches or nectarines in place of the yellow plums.

