

# Tips For Delicious Desserts From Your Garden

It's time to start thinking about gardening, which means it's time to start thinking about zucchini, which means it's time to start thinking about...cake. Cake? Yes, cake.

April 11-17 is National Garden Week, and The American Garden Association reports that 41 percent (39 million) of United States households have flower gardens, and 31 percent (29 million) boast vegetable gardens.

Come June, there will be a lot of choice produce nobody wants to waste.

The recipes below focus on ingredients consumers have on hand.

Their home economists offer inventive ideas for using fresh fruits and vegetables—and even flowers—to create delicious, warm-weather desserts that put summer produce bounty to good use.

## Vegetables

Commonly grown vegetables, like carrots and zucchini, add texture and flavor to a cake and fiber to the diet. Zucchini Cake appeals to all ages and can be an innovative way to persuade finicky children that vegetables can taste good. It makes a great counter-top snack, picnic treat or dining room dessert, and is an easy way to show off gardener-turned baker expertise.



## Fruits

Fresh fruits abound in the summer months. There are plenty of locally grown fruits available from outdoor markets, roadside farm stands and specialty stores. There

are also farms where people can "pick it" themselves, an afternoon excursion children can learn from and enjoy at the same time.

At home, the whole family can help turn the afternoon's pickings

into a mouth-watering Double Berry Layer Cake.

## Flowers

Garnish baked goods with flowers for a vibrant twist on traditional frosting decoration. Experiment with flowers whose meanings befit the occasion. Here are some suggestions:

- Red roses are for "love," ideal for decorating an anniversary cake.
- Yellow roses represent "friendship." Place their petals atop frosted cupcakes to recognize a friend's birthday, promotion or a favor rendered.
- Pansy means "thought," derived from the French word *pensée*. Let someone know you're thinking about them by trimming a cake or a tray of Golden Sugar Cookies with pansies.

(Note: Use only non-toxic flowers. Rinse fresh flowers with cool water and dry with paper towels. Placing a small piece of plastic wrap between the flowers and the cake.)

## ZUCCHINI CAKE

(makes 12 to 16 servings)

- 1 package moist-type yellow cake mix
  - Deluxe Butter Recipe Golden Cake Mix
  - 3 eggs
  - 1/2 cup butter or margarine, softened
  - 1/2 cup water
  - 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
  - 2 cups grated zucchini
  - 1/2 cup chopped walnuts
  - Confectioner's sugar (optional)
- Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Grease 13x9x2-inch pan.

Combine cake mix, eggs, butter, water and cinnamon in large bowl. Beat at low speed with electric mixer until moistened. Beat at medium speed for 4 minutes. Stir in zucchini.

Pour into pan; sprinkle with walnuts. Bake at 375 degrees F for 30 to 35 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean.

Dust with confectioners sugar or drizzle with glaze, if desired.

## DOUBLE BERRY LAYER CAKE

(makes 12 servings)

- 1 package strawberry cake mix
  - 2/3 cup strawberry jam, divided
  - Two 1/2 cups fresh blueberries, rinsed, drained and divided
  - One container (8 ounces) frozen whipped topping thawed and divided
  - Fresh strawberries, for garnish
- Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Grease and flour two 9-inch round cake pans. Prepare, bake and cool cake following package directions.

Place one cake layer on serving plate. Spread with 1/3 cup strawberry jam. Arrange one cup blueberries on jam. Spread half the whipped topping to within 1/2 inch of cake edge. Place second cake layer on top.

Repeat using remaining strawberry jam, one cup blueberries and remaining whipped topping.

Garnish with strawberries and remaining blueberries. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

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