

## **Blueberry (*Vaccinium myrtilloides*):**

Blueberries were one of the most important Metis foods in yesteryear. They were eaten fresh, cooked with sugar or in bannock or canned. Traditionally, they were cooked in lard and allowed to solidify for long-term preservation. The dried berries were often added to pemmican. The dried leaves were also boiled to make a beverage. Eating blueberries is a good cure for acne. The stems were boiled to make a drink taken to prevent pregnancy. Blueberry soup (made with cornstarch and sugar) is given as the last course at traditional feasts. This is believed to help digestion.

Blueberries are rich in anthocyanins, an antioxidant compound found in wine which is known to protect the heart. Wine made from blueberries has been shown to contain 38% more of this compound than red wine. They also contain another type of antioxidant compound that protects against colon cancer.



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