



Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, Texas Department of Human Services, and USDA Food & Nutrition Services Cooperating

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Simply Good Food AVOCADOS

The first avocado was found in 1519 by Spanish explorer Hernando Cortez, when he entered the Aztec village. He wrote in his journal of fruit that had a chestnut in the center and a meat of very good taste. Today, we now use avocados from food to facials. Most of the United States' avocado crops are grown in California. The avocado fruit is harvested by hand using a pair of clippers to take it from the tree. They are then put into freezers to store until they are ready to be packaged and shipped to your grocery store.

An avocado has much nutritional value. While avocados do contain a lot of fat for a fruit, most of which is monounsaturated, they also have Vitamin E, which helps to provide the muscles with oxygen. They also contain 60% more potassium than bananas. Potassium keeps the body's water in balance along with protein.



Selection

Choose avocados with full necks and flesh that gives slightly to pressure. Dark skinned varieties should be very dark. Light skinned varieties should have a soft, dull looking skin with a velvety touch.



Storage

If used within a few days, ripe avocados will keep at room temperature. When stored in the refrigerator they can be kept for up to a week. To store partially used avocados, rub the cut surface with lemon juice, cover tightly with plastic wrap, and refrigerate.

Preparation

Cut the avocado in half, lengthwise, around the seed. Twist the halves apart. To remove the seed, slide the tip of a spoon underneath and lift it out carefully or strike the seed with a sharp knife, embedding the knife in the seed. Rotate the knife to lift out the seed. To slice or cube an avocado, hold one half, cut side up, in one hand and use a large spoon to scoop flesh out of the skin in one piece. Then place half, pit side down, on cutting surface and slice or cube. Sprinkle cut surfaces with lemon or lime juice to keep them from browning.

Ripening

Ripen avocados at warm room temperature in a dark spot. Ripening takes three to five days. To speed up the process, place avocados in a paper bag.

GUACAMOLE

- 2 large avocados
- 2 tsp. fresh lime or lemon juice
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sour cream (optional)
- 1 small clove garlic, crushed
- 1 small tomato, diced
- 1 canned jalapeno chili, seeded & finely chopped (optional)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup finely minced onion
- Few sprigs cilantro, coarsely chopped

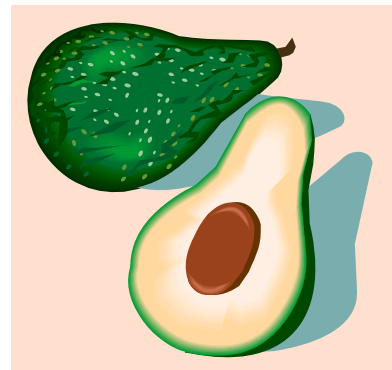
1. Halve avocados; remove pit, scoop out pulp, and mash with a fork.
2. Add lime juice, sour cream (if used), garlic, tomato, jalapeno (if used), onion and cilantro, mixing after each addition. Makes approximately 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups.

Food Processor Version: Use metal blade to process garlic and 1 small onion until finely chopped (10-15 seconds). Add avocado and process to desired consistency. Add lime or lemon juice, sour cream, jalapeno, and cilantro sprigs; process 5 seconds. Stir in tomato.

Quick Guacamole: Follow Guacamole recipe through step 1. Mix mashed pulp with $\frac{1}{3}$ cup prepared salsa. To make in a

food processor: Use metal blade to process avocados to desired consistency. Add salsa and process a few seconds to combine.

Simply Use: Mashed avocado pulp with a little seasonings, use as a spread for sandwiches, hamburgers or salmon burgers instead of salad dressing or mayo.



Source: Prepared by: "Simply Good Food" a Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Publication, Calley Runnels, County Extension Agent-FCS, Swisher County; assisted by: Ryan Maney, Swisher County 4-H member, modified by Sherri Halsell, County Extension Agent, FCS, Clay County.

If you would like to contact me please do so at my office at 210 W. Ikard, Suite B, Henrietta (next to the post office) or call 940/538-5042, 538-5052, or email swhalsell@ag.tamu.edu.

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The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact the Clay County Office of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service at 940/538-5042 or 538-5052. In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture's Policy, Better Living for Texans Food Stamp Nutrition Educational programs of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, genetic information or veteran status. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice or TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.