Dried Persimmons

Harvest of the Month dried fuyu persimmons come from Chiechi family farm in Live Oak, CA. Richard and Cindy Chiechi have been growing organic kiwis and fuyu persimmons since 1982. Now their grandchildren (pictured above) come to the farm to pick their delicious fruit. Cindy says, “We noticed almost immediately that the sugar in the kiwi and persimmons was better without chemical fertilizers. We are completely organic, even our family garden. It’s a good feeling to be encouraging healthy eating habits for our entire family.” Chiechi farm organic dried persimmons can be found in the bulk section of Briar Patch Co-op. Enjoy the bulk sale April 15-22 and find ingredients to make your own trail mix.

7500 students in Western Nevada County will taste dried Persimmons this month through Sierra Harvest’s Farm to School Program!

Make your own Trail mix

Choose your favorite dried fruits, nuts and seeds to make your own delicious and nutrient-packed trail mix. Try different combinations! Aim for equal parts fruit and nuts/seeds.

1 c. dried persimmon slices, chopped
1 c. dried fruit of your choice: cranberries, raisins, blueberries, cherries, plums, mulberries, etc.

Mix with 2 c. total of any nuts/seeds:
almonds, roasted, salted or raw
pumpkin seeds
sunflower seeds
cashews, roasted or raw
pecans
shelled pistachios
large flake toasted coconut

Healthy Serving Tips:
- Pack in school lunches
- Use chopped dried persimmons in place of raisins or dried cranberries:
- In salads
- add to oatmeal or granola
- add to muffins or scones

If your student is eligible for free/reduced school meals, you likely qualify for CalFresh, which can help you afford healthy and nutritious food: C4Yourself.com
Persimmon Fun Facts

For all ages:

- There are two main types of commercially-grown Asian persimmons - hachiya and fuyu persimmons. Hachiyas are more heart-shaped and have to be very soft like jelly to be ripe, while fuyus look like a squat orange tomato with a flat bottom. Fuyus are firm when ripe. Hachiyas are very astringent when unripe.
- Persimmons grow on trees that can reach up to 60 feet tall, but most are shorter for ease of picking.
- In Japan, unripe persimmons are used to brew sake and preserve wood.
- Persimmon leaves can be used to make tea.
- In Korean folklore, dried persimmons have a reputation for scaring away tigers.
- China is the world's largest persimmon producer.
- Dried whole persimmons are a popular treat in many East Asian countries.

For older students:

History:

- Persimmons are native to China, where there are over 2,000 different varieties!
- More than 1,000 years ago this tree was introduced to Japan, where it is the national fruit.
- Asian persimmon seeds were brought to the United States from Japan in 1856.
- During the Civil War, some Southern families boiled, roasted, and ground persimmon seeds to produce a drink similar to coffee

Science:

- The Asian persimmon's scientific name is Diospyros kaki. “Diospyros” comes from ancient Greek and means “fruit of the gods”. It is part of the Ebenaceae family.
- Persimmon trees belong to the same genus as ebony, a prized hardwood, though persimmon wood cracks more easily.
- Persimmon fruit is scientifically categorized as a berry.

Nutrition:

- Persimmons are a good source of vitamin C, fiber, iron and pro-vitamin A beta carotene.
- Persimmons have a high natural fruit sugar content, so should be eaten in moderation.