

PECAN



The pecan is a kind of hickory nut native to the United States. It originated in the Mississippi River Valley and was a valuable food to early settlers there. Pecans are high in polyunsaturated fat, the kind of fat which is not bad for you. They are also a good source of vitamins, calcium, phosphorus, and iron. The American Heart Association states pecans are healthy for your heart.

The name “pecan” is a Native American word of Algonquin origin which was used to describe “all nuts requiring a stone to crack.” There are over 1,000 varieties of pecans. Many are named for Native American Indian tribes, including Cheyenne, Mohawk, Sioux, Choctaw, and Shawnee.

Pecan trees grow together in clusters, or groves. They can grow from 70 to 100 feet tall, and their branches will spread from 50 to 100 feet wide. Their roots grow deep. Pecan trees are often grafted, allowing the desirable traits from two trees to be joined. Pecan trees are most significant as a nut crop, but the wood from the tree is also used in agricultural implements, baseball bats, hammer handles, furniture, wall paneling, flooring, religious carvings, and firewood.



Candied Pecans

- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 cup light brown sugar
- 1 Tablespoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 16 ounces unsalted pecan halves about 4 cups
- 1 egg white
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon water



Okmulgee holds the world record for the largest pecan pie, pecan cookie, and pecan brownie. They also have a Pecan Festival every year in June.

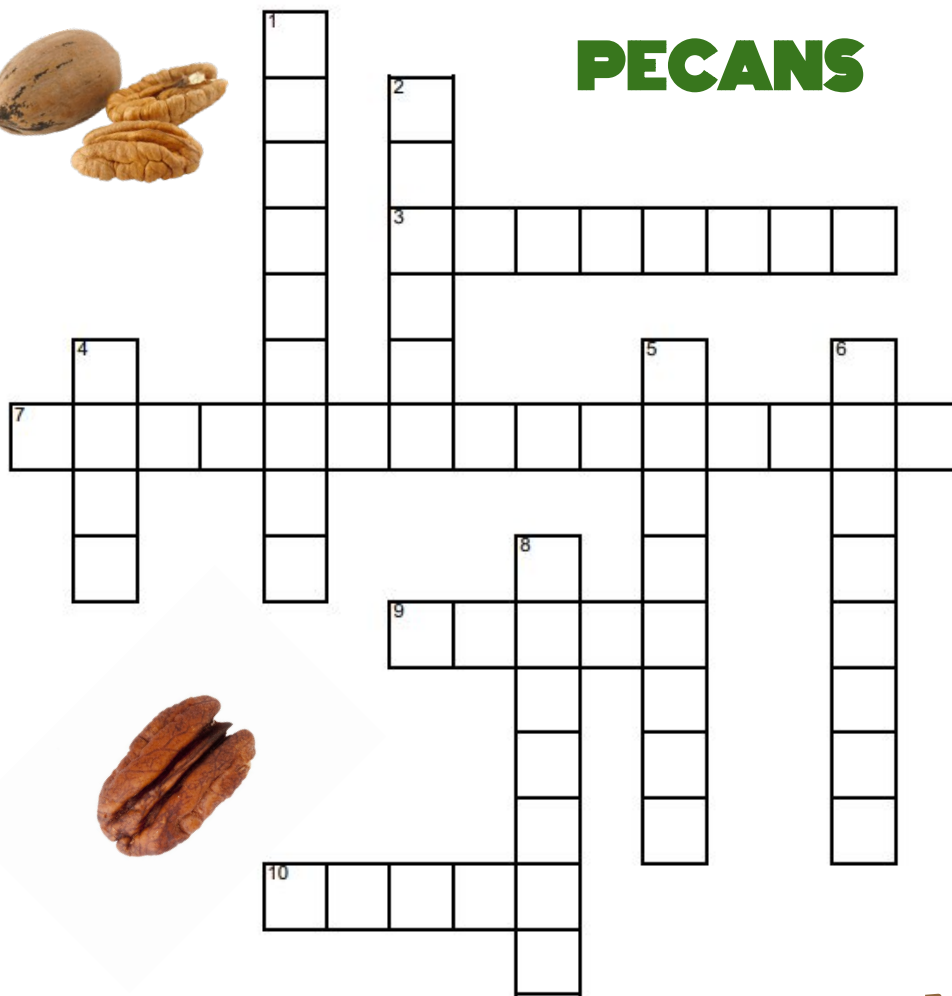


Scan the QR code to learn about grafting pecan trees!

Preheat oven to 300° F. Line a large baking sheet with a baking mat or parchment paper and set aside. In a small mixing bowl, add sugars, cinnamon, and salt. Whisk until combined. Set aside. In a large mixing bowl, whisk the egg white, vanilla, and water together until frothy. Add in the pecans and gently mix until the pecans are well coated. Add the sugar and cinnamon mixture and toss until pecans are covered. Spread the pecans out in a single layer on prepared baking sheet. Bake for about 40 minutes, stirring every 10 minutes. The sugar mixture will harden on the pecans. Remove from the oven and let the pecans cool on the baking sheet. When completely cool, store in an airtight container for up to 1 month.



PECANS



Grandma's Pecan Pie Recipe

Ingredients:

- 3 eggs, beaten
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 cup dark corn syrup
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup pecan halves
- 1 pie crust



Instructions:

Whisk together eggs, sugar, syrup, vanilla, and salt. Allow to sit while you roll out your pie dough. The granulated sugar will dissolve slightly while it sits. Cover the bottom of your unbaked crust with pecans and pour mixture over nuts. Bake large pies for up to one hour at 350° F. For mini pies, bake for 25-30 minutes or until pies are bubbly at the edges and slightly jiggly. Cool completely for about two hours before serving.

Across

3. Which Oklahoma town hosts a Pecan Festival every year?
7. Pecans are high in _____ fat.
9. The American Heart Association has labeled pecans "_____ healthy."
10. The _____ is the only major nut native to America

Down

1. The name "pecan" is a Native American word of _____ origin which was used to describe "all nuts requiring a stone to crack."
2. Pecan trees growing together are called _____.
4. What part of the pecan tree is used besides the nut?
5. _____ is the process of taking the most desired parts of different plants and joining them so they will grow as one.
6. Oklahoma's state meal includes what pecan dessert?
8. Pecan trees can use up to 150 _____ of water a day during the summer!

The Oklahoma state meal includes barbecued pork, chicken-fried steak, sausage with biscuits and gravy, fried okra, squash, grits, corn, black-eyed peas, cornbread, strawberries, and **pecan pie.**