

CALIFORNIA WALNUTS

# RETAIL RD TOOLKIT



# WHY PROMOTE CALIFORNIA WALNUTS?



## 1. **Grounded in Research**

For more than 30 years, the California Walnut Commission has supported scientific research on consumption of walnuts and a variety of positive health outcomes.

## 2. **Good Fats**

Unique among nuts, walnuts contain the highest amount of the essential plant-based omega-3 alpha-linolenic acid (ALA), with 2.5g per ounce.

## 3. **Grown in the U.S.A.**

More than 99% of the walnuts in the United States of America are grown in the fertile soils of California's Central Valley.

## 4. **Goodness in a Nutshell**

One ounce of walnuts is a powerhouse of important nutrients for optimum health, including 4g of protein, 2g of fiber and a good source of magnesium (45mg).

## 5. **Heart-Healthy**

Walnuts are certified heart-healthy\* by the American Heart Association with the Heart-Check mark.

## 6. **Plant-Forward Eating**

Did you know? Walnuts are produce too! Walnuts provide accessible plant-based nutrition while also being extremely versatile. Walnuts can enhance the flavor and texture of just about any recipe while leaving you full and satisfied.

## 7. **Sustainably Grown**

California walnuts have a 150-year history of productive harvests, and many farms have a long, multi-generational heritage. Our longevity has been achieved through a dedication on the part of walnut growers and handlers to sustainable practices.

## 8. **Cooking**

Walnuts are a versatile nut with a flavor profile that pairs with a variety of seasonal foods; they can be included in meals any time of year.

## 9. **Simple Swaps**

As a nutrient-dense food, walnuts can be eaten in place of less healthy choices to improve overall diet quality.

## 10. **Wellness**

Walnuts are a whole food contributing many beneficial nutrients that support overall wellness from head to toe including the heart, brain and gut.

\*California walnuts are certified by the American Heart Association. Heart-Check certification does not apply to recipes, research or information unless expressly stated. Supportive but not conclusive research shows that eating 1.5 ounces of walnuts per day, as part of a low saturated fat and low cholesterol diet, and not resulting in increased caloric intake, may reduce the risk of coronary heart disease.

## Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 oz. (28g/about ¼ cup)

Amount Per Serving

**Calories 190**

% Daily Value\*

<b>Total Fat</b> 18g	<b>23%</b>
Saturated Fat 1.5g	<b>8%</b>
Trans Fat 0g	
Polyunsaturated Fat 13g	
Monounsaturated Fat 2.5g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 0mg	<b>0%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 0mg	<b>0%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 4g	<b>1%</b>
Dietary Fiber 2g	<b>7%</b>
Total Sugars 1g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	<b>0%</b>
<b>Protein</b> 4g	
Vitamin D 0mcg	<b>0%</b>
Calcium 30mg	<b>2%</b>
Iron 0.8mg	<b>4%</b>
Potassium 130mg	<b>2%</b>

\* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.



# HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

As a retail dietitian, you are the trusted health and nutrition resource to shoppers and have the unique opportunity to influence dietary habits and purchasing decisions. California Walnuts recognizes the importance of your role and is interested in partnering throughout the year. While the health benefits of walnuts fit into many monthly nutrition topics, ranging from New Year's food trends to seasonal recipes for holiday entertaining, we understand each retailer has its set calendar, so inside you'll find priority topics for California walnuts. Each topic includes relevant information that is intended to support all aspects of your work – from in-store demos and seasonal promotions, to social media, TV interviews and community events. Make the most of your toolkit by using these resources with your shoppers!

## ✓ SHOPPER AND MEDIA MESSAGES

Looking for information to share with your shoppers during store tours, media interviews, or in blog posts and circulars? This section provides interesting facts, research findings and key takeaways on each topic.

## ✓ SHAREABLE RESOURCES

California Walnuts has a wide variety of educational resources available for use. Each topic area spotlights a resource that can be downloaded or clicked on and shared with your shoppers or used as a reference.

## ✓ SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

Share the social media posts included within each topic or use as inspiration. Posts have links to recipes and resources that will keep your shoppers engaged and thinking differently about walnuts.

## ✓ SHOPPER-FRIENDLY RECIPES FOR RETAIL DIETITIANS

California Walnuts has an array of recipes that include simple ingredients and require only a few steps. Look at the shopper-friendly recipe collection on [walnuts.org](http://walnuts.org).

## ✓ RESEARCH IN A NUTSHELL

Staying current on research findings is time consuming. Allow us to translate the nutritional science for you. Explore the breadth of research on [walnuts.org](http://walnuts.org) and gain access to published research abstracts.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1</b>	Plant-Forward Eating .....	6
<b>2</b>	American Heart Month .....	10
<b>3</b>	Simple Snacking .....	16
<b>4</b>	Produce Pairings .....	20
<b>5</b>	Walnut Information and Fun Facts .....	24

## Connect With Us



If interested in partnering with California Walnuts, please email [retail@walnuts.org](mailto:retail@walnuts.org). For additional resources like recipes, images, downloadable materials, health research, videos and content for social media, please visit [walnuts.org](http://walnuts.org).



# 1 PLANT-FORWARD EATING


Plant-forward eating is one of the most popular eating styles, for both health and environmental benefits. Compared to a typical American diet, a plant-forward philosophy is higher in unsaturated fats and fiber, both of which support better health. It can be more nutrient-dense, and contain more vitamins, minerals and phytonutrients, all of which help to reduce risk for chronic disease. So, whether your shopper is going full vegan or just stocking up on kale, eating more plants certainly has its benefits.

## SHOPPER AND MEDIA MESSAGES


When you have the right ingredients on hand, making delicious plant-forward meals can be a fresh and fun adventure. Remember, plant-forward eating is not “all or nothing.” You don’t have to go meat-free to be more plant-forward. Here are a couple of key foods to keep on your shopping list that will help you make plant-forward meals:

**Walnuts:** Walnuts are the only nut that provides an excellent source of the plant-forward omega-3 ALA (2.5g/oz). It’s no wonder research has demonstrated the potential benefits that eating walnuts may have on a variety of health outcomes. Promising new studies have investigated the impact that adding walnuts to the diet may have on cognitive function, heart health, cancer, diabetes, weight, gut health and reproductive health.

**Quinoa, Brown Rice, Oatmeal:** Whole grains including quinoa, brown rice and oatmeal are a base for success – literally, for any meal from breakfast to dinner. They offer a variety of beneficial nutrients like fiber, protein and vitamins to balance your plate and help keep you satisfied. Plan ahead and cook grains on Sunday to use them throughout the week or buy precooked frozen packages for an even simpler option.

**Lentils:** Get satisfying protein (9g per ½ cup) and fiber (8g per ½ cup) to promote a healthy digestive system. **Tip:**  Pair lentils with other plant-based proteins like whole grains and walnuts.

**In-Season Fruits & Veggies:** The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends filling half your plate with fruits and vegetables. Choosing produce by season offers variety in color, flavor and texture, encouraging you to try new foods, all while packing a nutritious punch at each meal (plus, it’s often the cheaper way to go).

**Prep once, use all week:** Walnuts can be used to create a flavorful plant-based meat alternative, from meatballs to savory pies, that can be frozen and repurposed for meals to come. **Tip:**  Make California Walnut Meatless Meatballs, a plant-based twist on a classic Italian favorite.

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## SOCIAL MEDIA INSPIRATION



Think plant-forward eating is difficult? Think again! Start your meal with a soup or a simple salad. It ensures veggies will be featured and provides a good way of slowing down the meal pace, too. [#plantforward](#) [#walnuts](#) [#DoMoreWithWalnuts](#)



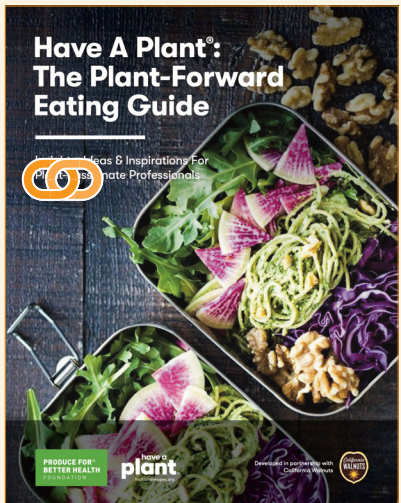
Heard all the buzz about plant-forward eating but don't know where to start? Start simple. Substitute or add chopped walnuts for meat in numerous dishes. The texture and savory taste make walnuts a satisfying meat substitute. [#plantforward](#) [#walnuts](#) [#DoMoreWithWalnuts](#)



Walnuts are a simple but powerful ingredient that can enhance any meal or snack. Boost up your smoothie and shakes by blending in walnuts for a creamy, rich flavor. [#plantforward](#) [#walnuts](#) [#DoMoreWithWalnuts](#)



## DOWNLOADABLE RESOURCE



Simple Ideas for Plant-Forward Eating

## SHOPPER-FRIENDLY RECIPE

Surprise your shoppers with this delicious No-Bake Walnut, Cocoa, Cherry Bar. Made with six simple ingredients and easy to assemble!



No-Bake Walnut, Cocoa, Cherry Bars

## RESEARCH IN A NUTSHELL

As plant-forward patterns grow in popularity, so does the evidence supporting their role in optimizing health. Research has shown that swapping out saturated fats (animal fats like butter, cream and fat on meats) with unsaturated fats, especially polyunsaturated fats, has a positive impact on heart health.<sup>1,2</sup> In fact, the Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends reducing saturated fat intake and, in particular, shifting food choices from those high in saturated fats to those high in polyunsaturated fats.<sup>3</sup> Unsaturated fats are found in foods such as walnuts, seeds, plant oils, avocados, and fatty fish like salmon, mackerel, herring and sardines. In just a one-ounce handful, walnuts provide polyunsaturated fat (13g), offering an excellent source of alpha-linolenic acid (ALA), the plant-based form of omega-3 fatty acids (2.5g). Science continues to uncover the benefits of ALA.

A new modeling study in *Nutrients* found that adding one ounce of walnuts (or one handful) to the diet of children and adults who do not normally eat nuts improved the overall diet quality and intake of under-consumed nutrients of public health importance like fiber, potassium and magnesium.<sup>4</sup>

Researchers used advanced statistical modeling techniques to see what would happen when one ounce of walnuts was added to the typical daily diet of nearly 8,000 Americans who do not currently eat nuts. Participant health and dietary information was obtained from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES), which is a nationally representative, cross-sectional survey of people living in the United States. Information was analyzed by age group (4–8 years, 9–13 years, 14–18 years, 19–50 years, 51–70 years, 71 years and older) and gender.

Researchers then evaluated diet quality with and without the added one ounce of walnuts using the 2015 Healthy Eating Index (HEI-2015).

This is one of the few studies looking at the typical diet of both children and adults and simulating how the simple addition of walnuts to the diet could help people achieve better nutrition.

While this study presents meaningful findings for people of any age, all the diet information was self-reported, and sometimes, people are not the best at remembering what they ate when this method is used to collect information.

It's also important to say that the people in this study who did not eat nuts tended to be younger, Hispanic or Black and have an annual household income of less than \$20,000. This study was not an intervention or feeding trial either, which means the results need to be confirmed in other studies.

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3 U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025. 9th Edition. December 2020. Available at [DietaryGuidelines.gov](https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov).

4 Spence LA, et al. Adding walnuts to the usual diet can improve diet quality in the United States: Diet modeling study based on NHANES 2015–2018. *Nutrients*. 2023;15(2):258.

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## California Walnut Meatless Meatballs





## 2 AMERICAN HEART MONTH

Good news, many of the risk factors associated with heart disease can be controlled with dietary and lifestyle changes. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends eating an overall healthy dietary pattern that emphasizes a variety of fruits and vegetables; whole grains; low-fat dairy products; a variety of protein foods, including seafood, lean meats and poultry; eggs; legumes and nuts; seeds and soy products; and oils.<sup>1</sup> To make changes in your diet, start by eating fruits and vegetables at every meal, choose snacks and recipes with heart-healthy ingredients such as walnuts,<sup>2</sup> learn to read food labels, and prepare more meals at home rather than eating out.



This February, join California Walnuts in celebrating American Heart Month by encouraging your shoppers to make simple changes to benefit their heart health for a lifetime.

### SHOPPER AND MEDIA MESSAGES

You can take an active role in your health to prevent heart disease. While many factors contribute to heart disease, making sure you don't smoke, eating a healthy diet and getting regular physical activity all promote good health habits to reduce your risk of heart disease. Be sure to take care of yourself by making changes that prevent heart disease. Here are a couple of tips:

**Know Your Risk Factors and Be Screened:** There are various risk factors that may increase one's chances of getting heart disease. While certain risk factors such as age and family history can't be controlled, others can be managed. These include high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes and smoking.

**Be Active:** Regular physical activity lowers your risk of heart disease. Choose activities you like to do and aim for 30 minutes of daily exercise.

**Follow a Heart-Healthy Diet:** Look for food items with the American Heart Association Heart-Check mark on them. Nearly 1,000 products carry the Heart-Check mark – it's almost in every aisle!

▶ AHA has certified walnuts as a heart-healthy food through its Heart-Check mark program.

▶ More than 30 years of research supports  walnuts for heart health, including helping to maintain healthy cholesterol levels and decrease blood pressure, two of the major risk factors for heart disease.<sup>3,4</sup>

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## SOCIAL MEDIA INSPIRATION



Celebrate #AmericanHeartMonth by making this heart-healthy recipe with walnuts! Walnuts are a key staple in a heart-healthy diet. #heartmonth #haveaplant #DoMoreWithWalnuts



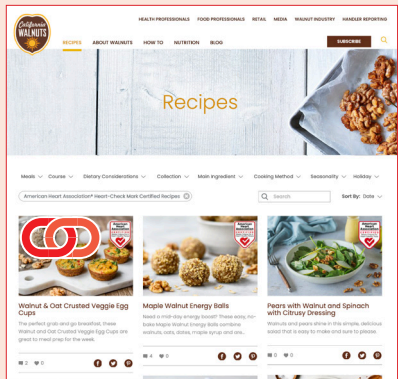
Don't know which foods are heart-healthy? Look for the American Heart Association Heart-Check mark on certain foods found in every aisle! Here are a couple of my favorite heart-healthy foods: walnuts and pears. #heartmonth #DoMoreWithWalnuts



DYK? Walnuts are the only nut with an excellent source of the plant-based omega-3 ALA (2.5g/oz), an essential fatty acid that may play a role in heart health. #heartmonth #walnuts #DoMoreWithWalnuts



## RECIPE RESOURCE



Heart-Healthy Walnut Recipe Collection

## SHOPPER-FRIENDLY RECIPE

We are celebrating American Heart Month! These Herbed Cheese and Walnut Stuffed Mini Peppers are an easy make-ahead snack to keep your shoppers fueled all day.



Herbed Cheese & Walnut Stuffed Mini Peppers

## RESEARCH IN A NUTSHELL

Since 1993, published research has been exploring how eating walnuts affects various factors related to heart health such as cholesterol, blood pressure, inflammation and blood vessel function. Eating walnuts as part of a heart-healthy diet may decrease your risk of heart disease, the leading cause of death globally.<sup>2</sup>

In a recent study published in *Nutrition, Metabolism, & Cardiovascular Diseases*,<sup>5</sup> researchers looked at 20 years of diet history and 30 years of physical and clinical measurements. They found that compared to other or no nut consumers, participants who self-reported eating walnuts early on in life showed a greater likelihood for being more physically active, having a higher quality diet and experiencing a better heart disease risk profile as they aged into middle adulthood. People who ate walnuts also reported they had higher daily dietary intakes of several under-consumed nutrients and food groups of public health importance as outlined in the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans.<sup>1</sup>

In this observational, longitudinal study, diet and health information was collected and analyzed from 3,023 otherwise healthy Black and white men and women aged 18-30 when the Coronary Artery Risk Development in Young Adults (CARDIA) study began in 1985-86.<sup>6</sup> Self-reported diet history was taken at three different times throughout the study – baseline, year 7 and year 20 – and physical and clinical measurements were taken at multiple exams spanning 30 years. The average intake of walnuts during the study was about ¾ oz/day, and intake of nuts among other nut consumers was about 1 ½ oz/day.

While randomized controlled clinical trials should be done in other populations and settings to confirm the observations in the current study and observational studies

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cannot support cause and effect conclusions, this is one of the longest to suggest that adding about a handful of walnuts to the diet every day and early on in life could be linked with benefits to overall diet quality as a heart-healthy<sup>2</sup> “carrier food” that fits into any eating occasion.

A clinical trial revealed there may be a connection between heart and gut health aided by consumption of walnuts.<sup>7</sup> Findings showed that consuming walnuts enriched certain gut bacteria associated with improvements in blood pressure and cholesterol. Overweight and obese adults at risk for heart disease (42 in total) followed a diet that replaced some saturated fat with either walnuts, a vegetable oil with the same fatty acids as walnuts (including omega-3 ALA, a type of polyunsaturated fat) or a vegetable oil higher in monounsaturated fat. Individuals who consumed walnuts and the vegetable oil with the same fatty acid profile as walnuts had favorable shifts in gut bacteria, suggesting a positive impact of omega-3 ALA. Those who followed the walnut diet had a unique enrichment of a particular species of bacteria – one that plays an important role in metabolizing ellagitannins, a bioactive component of walnuts that may be associated with cardiovascular benefits.

The types of fatty acids in walnuts and vegetable oil may impact gut health, but this study also suggests there may be benefits to consuming whole walnuts. It should be noted that the amount of walnuts consumed in this study might be difficult to maintain in a non-research setting. Larger and longer-term studies, as well as studies in more diverse populations, are needed to clarify population-wide effects, especially in gut health studies since the microbiome can be highly variable among individuals.

A systematic review and meta-analysis from the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health examined 25 years of evidence for the role of walnut consumption on cardiovascular risk factors, including cholesterol, triglycerides, blood pressure and weight.<sup>8</sup> A meta-analysis was done on 26 randomized controlled trials representing 1,059 individuals (ages 22-75), including those with a variety of conditions such as high cholesterol, type 2 diabetes, metabolic syndrome, overweight or obesity, as well as those that were healthy. A diet supplemented with walnuts in amounts varying from 5-24% of total calories per day (equivalent to 0.5-3.9 ounces per day) showed a significantly greater reduction in total cholesterol on average with the walnut-enriched diets – specifically, this difference represents a 3.25% greater decrease in total cholesterol concentration in walnut-enriched diets compared with control diets. Greater reductions were also observed for LDL cholesterol (3.73%), triglycerides (5.52%) and apolipoprotein B (4.19%) when compared to the control diets, including low-fat, Mediterranean, American or Japanese. In addition, incorporating walnuts into the diet had no adverse effects on body weight or blood pressure, according to the studies included in the meta-analysis. A meta-analysis offers a comprehensive look at findings among patients of various backgrounds; however, it can be limited by the methods, reported outcomes and quality of the individual studies involved.

In a separate epidemiological study by researchers from the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, they found higher walnut consumption – both in terms of the amount and frequency – may be associated with lower risk of death and an increase in life expectancy among older adults in the U.S., compared to those who do not consume walnuts.<sup>9</sup> Study participants included over 67,000 women of the Nurses' Health Study (1999-2018) and some 26,000 men of the Health Professionals Follow-up Study (1999-2018) who had their dietary assessment taken via a self-reported food frequency questionnaire. Both groups were on average around 63 years old and free of cancer, heart disease and stroke at baseline. Researchers found that participants who reported eating five or more servings of walnuts per week (one serving = one ounce) had a 14% lower risk of death (from any cause), 25% lower risk of dying from cardiovascular diseases and a gain in about 1.3 years of life expectancy, compared to participants who reported no walnut consumption. Results from the prospective observational study do not prove cause and effect, but it does shed light on how walnuts may support an overall healthy lifestyle that promotes longevity. Future research is needed to confirm the longevity benefits of eating walnuts in more diverse groups of individuals, and these results cannot be applied to the general population.

Research from the landmark Prevención con Dieta Mediterránea (PREDIMED) study further demonstrated the potential heart health benefits of walnuts.<sup>10</sup> The study was conducted among more than 7,000 Spanish individuals (ages 55-80) at high risk for cardiovascular disease and found that a Mediterranean diet supplemented with mixed tree nuts (primarily walnuts) was associated with a lower risk of cardiovascular events, including cardiovascular death, myocardial infarction (heart attack) and stroke, when compared to a low-fat control diet. It is important to note that the amount of walnuts the participants in this study ate was relatively large and might be tough to be consistent within a real-world setting. In the PREDIMED study, it is also difficult to precisely define what part of the Mediterranean diet was associated with cardiovascular benefits. The research was part of the Walnuts and Healthy Aging (WAHA) study – the largest and longest trial to date exploring the benefits of daily walnut consumption.

Additionally, a recent study shows that, among persons at high cardiovascular risk, a Mediterranean diet supplemented with mixed tree nuts (50% walnuts, 25% almonds, 25% hazelnuts) was associated with a lower risk of cardiovascular events, including cardiovascular death, myocardial infarction (heart attack) and stroke, when compared to a low-fat control diet.<sup>8</sup> An observational study<sup>9</sup> published in the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology* found that regular consumption of foods rich in omega-3 eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA), found in marine foods like fatty fish, and alpha-linolenic acid (ALA), found in plant foods like walnuts, was associated with improved outcomes in individuals who suffered a heart attack, including decreased risk of death. More research is needed to clarify the health benefits in other populations. Additionally,

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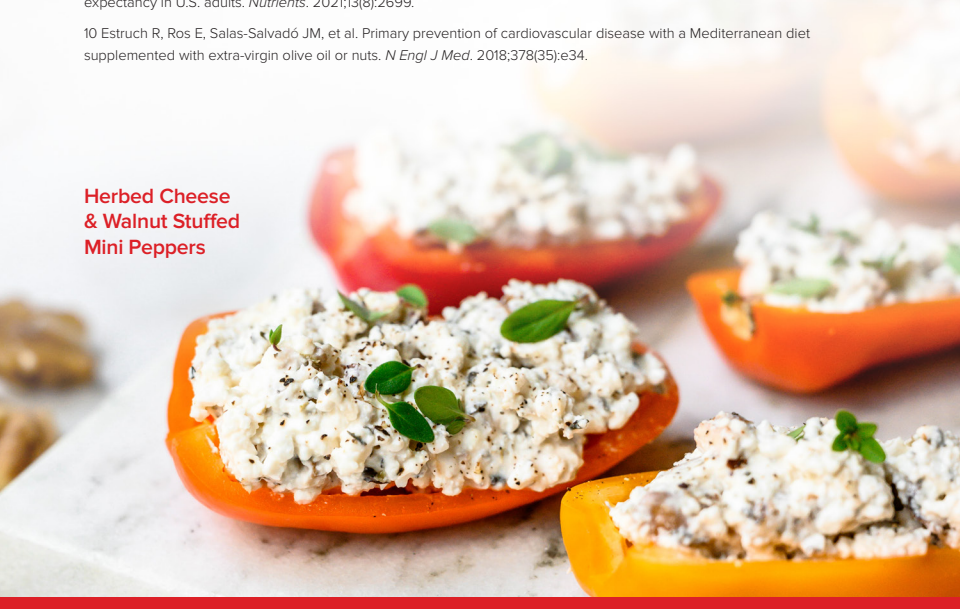


it is difficult to precisely define what part of the Mediterranean diet was associated with cardiovascular benefits.

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- 2 Supportive but not conclusive research shows that eating 1.5 ounces of walnuts per day, as part of a low saturated fat and low cholesterol diet, and not resulting in increased caloric intake, may reduce the risk of coronary heart disease. One ounce of walnuts provides 18g of total fat, 2.5g of monounsaturated fat, 13g of polyunsaturated fat, including 2.5g of alpha-linolenic acid, the plant-based omega-3.
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## Herbed Cheese & Walnut Stuffed Mini Peppers



## 3 SIMPLE SNACKING

Snacking remains important. And while habits continue to evolve, it is known that Americans will always snack, but what might shift is what the motivators are – taste, health, convenience or price. While consumers want snacks with clean labels and whole-food ingredients, they aren't willing to give up convenience or portability.

Snacking is the top way walnuts are consumed. This is despite the fact that walnuts aren't prevalent in the snack section! With no signs of slowing in the snack category, and walnuts beginning to get distribution in the snack aisle, we can expect the number of consumers snacking on walnuts to grow in coming years.


### SHOPPER AND MEDIA MESSAGES

Snacking will always be popular. But is that a good thing or bad thing when it comes to health? The truth is it depends on how you do it.


It is important to plan ahead so your snacks are well balanced, nutritious and creative! Walnuts are perfect for all your snacking needs. They are a versatile nut and nutritious. In just a one-ounce serving, walnuts provide 4g of plant protein and 2g of fiber as well as being the only nut rich with an excellent source of the omega-3 alpha-linolenic acid, or ALA (2.5g/oz). Encourage shoppers to do more with walnuts! Whether you're enjoying a handful of raw walnuts or making one of the following simple recipes, you can feel good about what you're snacking on.

Use the following tips to enjoy snacks that leave you feeling energized and ready to conquer the day.

**Protein on the Go:** The best way to keep energy levels up is to fill up on protein and fiber. This combination will keep you nourished for hours. Try:

- ▶ **Homemade trail mix**  with whole-grain cereal, walnuts, white chocolate chips and dried fruit. This trail mix satisfies both salty and sweet cravings.
- ▶ Hard-boiled eggs
- ▶ Cheese cubes

**Keep It Fresh:** Fruits and veggies are ideal choices for snacks. Make them more exciting by pairing with nutrient-dense foods.

- ▶ **Try: Simple plant-based protein box.**  Toasted walnuts, hummus and roasted chickpeas offer filling protein and good fats, while fresh carrot chips, bell pepper strips and sliced cucumbers are perfect for dipping.

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## SOCIAL MEDIA INSPIRATION



Walnuts are an ideal snack because of their portability, versatility and health benefits.  
[#nutritiousnacks](#) [#snackideas](#)  
[#DoMoreWithWalnuts](#)



Looking for a gluten-free bar that is perfect before a workout, for breakfast or as a good-for-you snack? Check out these walnut energy bars! [#easyrecipe](#) [#snackidea](#)  
[#DoMoreWithWalnuts](#)



Are you Team Sweet or Team Savory? Spice or sweeten your walnuts to make the perfect snack to cater to your preference.  
[#sweetorsavory](#) [#CAwalnuts](#) [#snacking](#)  
[#easyrecipe](#) [#DoMoreWithWalnuts](#)



## DOWNLOADABLE RESOURCE



### Snacking Recipe Booklet

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## SHOPPER-FRIENDLY RECIPE

Fuel your day with these easy, no-bake energy balls – made with six simple ingredients and perfect for on-the-go snacking! Bonus: they are easy to assemble in 20 minutes!



Maple Walnut Energy Balls



Ranch Walnuts

## RESEARCH IN A NUTSHELL

Most Americans fall short on fruit, vegetable, dairy, good fats, seafood and whole grain servings, and few meet the recommendation to eat five ounces of nuts per week.<sup>1</sup> Snacks are a great way to fill the gap. So it's not about cutting back, but rather choosing healthier options. Walnuts can be eaten as part of a healthy diet that won't contribute to weight gain or hinder weight-loss goals. There are specific hormones and areas of the brain that tell the body if it's hungry or full, which play a role in body weight. Research investigating appetite hormones and using novel brain imaging technology to explore neurological responses to food cues shows promise for walnuts' potential role in appetite control.<sup>2,3</sup> Research published in *Nutrition* showed that healthy, young adults (millennials ages 18-35) who regularly consume foods that contain polyunsaturated fats (PUFA), like walnuts, may experience favorable changes in appetite hormones associated with hunger and satiety. Participants who consumed a PUFA-rich diet had a significant decrease in fasting ghrelin, a hormone that increases hunger, and a significant increase in peptide YY (PYY), a hormone that increases fullness or satiety. These hormone changes could help with better appetite control.<sup>2</sup> Larger and longer-term studies are needed to understand population-wide effects, and it is difficult to know if the hormone changes in this study were due to a specific type of PUFA, food or a combination of overall dietary factors. Information on diet intake may have been limited because participants were free-living and data was self-reported.

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## 4 PRODUCE PAIRINGS

Walnuts are produce too! Walnuts provide affordable plant-based nutrition and are extremely versatile. They can enhance the flavor and texture of just about any recipe while helping your shopper feel fuller for longer. Showcasing walnuts paired with other nutrient-rich produce shows shoppers new ways to mix and match food items and is a proven tactic to help drive sales. It is also a way to educate shoppers about food synergies as well as promote seasonal produce. This activation can be customized to meet your retailer's needs and can happen year-round.

### SHOPPER AND MEDIA MESSAGES

When following the Healthy US-Style Food Pattern (2,000 cal/day), did you know the USDA recommends to eat five ounces of nuts each week?<sup>1</sup> That's right. Nuts offer good fats, protein, fiber and other essential nutrients. They're a great way to add flavor, crunch and nutritious goodness to all kinds of meals and snacks. They are also perfect for pairing with other foods that most Americans fail to get enough of, such as vegetables, fruit, seafood and low-fat dairy. Try some of these power pairings with walnuts:


**Walnuts + Vegetables:** Add walnuts to salads in place of croutons and mix with roasted vegetables for added crunch.

**Walnuts + Fruit + Whole Grains:** Combine walnuts, puffed whole-grain cereal and dried fruit for a trail mix or top oatmeal with walnuts and fresh berries.

**Walnuts + Low-Fat Dairy:** From yogurt parfaits to power bowls to smoothies and beyond—the possibilities are endless for this duo.

**Walnuts + Seafood:** Coating fish with walnuts and baking it is an easy, foolproof way to cook it elegantly. Give it a try!

Peanut butter and jelly, tomato and basil, wine and cheese – some foods were simply made for each other. But did you know that pairing certain fruits, vegetables and produce together can actually make your meal more nutritious? With the right powerful combo, you won't just enjoy your meal more, you'll take in more vitamins and minerals too!

▶ Black beans and rice are oh, so nice. When certain foods like beans and rice or walnuts and whole grains are paired together at a meal (or even eaten separately but over the course of the day), they supply what's called a complete protein. Try this winning combo: [Walnut Taco Bowl](#) 

▶ Spinach and strawberries – and add walnuts and goat cheese to enjoy as a salad. When you pair vitamin C-rich foods like strawberries with foods that contain iron like spinach, the body can absorb more iron.<sup>2,3</sup>

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## SOCIAL MEDIA INSPIRATION



Walnuts are a versatile nut that pairs beautifully with seasonal foods. Jump into fall with this harvest salad. Spinach + pomegranate seeds + pears + candied California walnuts. [#SeasonalProduce](#) [#ProducePairings](#) [#CAwalnuts](#) [#haveaplant](#) [#DoMoreWithWalnuts](#)



Looking for the perfect summer dessert? Look no further – these grilled peaches are perfect to enjoy after a sun-filled day. The grill naturally caramelizes the peaches, and the toasted walnuts offer a welcome crunch. [#ProducePairing](#) [#PowerPairing](#) [#SeasonalProduce](#) [#haveaplant](#) [#CAwalnuts](#) [#DoMoreWithWalnuts](#)



Some foods were simply made for each other. What is your go-to walnut pairing? [#PowerPairing](#) [#CAwalnuts](#) [#DoMoreWithWalnuts](#)



## DOWNLOADABLE RESOURCE

### Have A Plant® Hacks With Walnuts

Plant-forward eating has become increasingly popular, encouraging people to add more produce to their carts. While you shop for flavorful fruits and vibrant veggies, don't forget nuts, like walnuts. Walnuts are produce too! [#haveaplant](#)



**HACK #1:** Purchase Once, Use All Week



**ACTION:** Stock up on produce items like nuts, berries and leafy greens that make snack meaning that they can be used in multiple meals and snacks throughout the week.

**HABIT:** Add walnuts to your cart and prep in the morning. Put walnuts, pears and candied walnuts, or pair them with fruit, cheese and crackers for a simple and delicious snack.

Choose a favorite berry and a leafy green each week to use in snacks such as smoothies or in meals or side dishes. And don't forget that frozen berries are also a great option.

**MAKE IT HAPPEN:** This [Strawberry Walnut Date Smoothie](#) is bursting with fresh flavors and nutrients.

**HACK #2:** Take A Pause With Produce



**ACTION:** Everyone needs a break from a busy day of work, errands, commuting and more. Take a pause by grabbing a snack that includes produce.

**HABIT:** Transform your snack time to produce time by keeping easy produce readily available – from nut veggies, to pre-washed fruit, or a handful of frozen walnuts. These ready-to-go options give you the nutrient snack break you need during your busy day.

**MAKE IT HAPPEN:** This [Blueberry-Cranberry Walnut Roll](#) includes blueberries and coconut for an on-the-go snack. Add walnuts for an extra crunch!

**HACK #3:** Prep It, Use It



**ACTION:** Walnuts can be used to create a flavorful plant-based meat alternative. From meatballs to veggie pies that can be frozen and repurposed for meals to come.

**HABIT:** These ways to use walnuts mean:

1. Add to salad for a flavorful taco bowl.
2. Slicer with tomato sauce and chopped pepper for Stinky jeans.
3. Include in nutrient bowls.

**MAKE IT HAPPEN:** [Crabapple Walnut Meatballs](#) or a [chicken-tofu bowl](#).

**Pro-Tip:** Look for walnuts in the produce section! Not just in the baking aisle!

have a plant



Have a Plant® Hacks With Walnuts

## SHOPPER-FRIENDLY RECIPE

Pair walnuts with other plant-forward items, like carrots and cucumbers, and protein sources, like hummus and hard-boiled eggs, for a simple and nutritious snack that will leave shoppers satisfied.



Walnut Snack Boxes

## RESEARCH IN A NUTSHELL

There are various forms of plant-forward eating patterns. One that is significantly researched is the Mediterranean diet, which emphasizes more fruits and vegetables, nuts and seeds (including walnuts), grains, olive oil, moderate amounts of fish, poultry, eggs and wine, and limits the amounts of red meat, processed meat, dairy and sweets.<sup>4</sup> The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends a Mediterranean-style eating pattern as one example of a healthy diet plan.<sup>1</sup> Research from the landmark Prevención con Dieta Mediterránea (PREDIMED) study further demonstrated the potential heart health benefits of walnuts. In this parallel-group, multi-center, randomized trial of more than 7,000 Spanish adults (55-80 years old) at high risk for cardiovascular disease, a Mediterranean diet including tree nuts, primarily walnuts, was associated with a 30% lower risk of cardiovascular events, and specifically a 46% lower risk of stroke, when compared to a low-fat diet.<sup>5</sup>

Additional research published in *JAMA* found that a lifestyle intervention during pregnancy based on a Mediterranean diet with foods like walnuts significantly improved child neurodevelopmental outcomes at age two. This study was a prespecified analysis of the parallel-group Improving Mothers for a Better Prenatal Care Trial Barcelona (IMPACT BCN) randomized clinical trial, which was conducted at a university hospital in Barcelona, Spain, from February 2017 to March 2020. The clinical study randomly assigned 1,221 pregnant women (19 to 23 weeks' gestation) with a high risk of delivering newborns who were small for gestational age into three groups: a Mediterranean diet group that included 450 grams of walnuts and two liters of extra virgin olive oil every month, a mindfulness-based stress reduction group, or usual care.

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Among the 626 children born, development scores at two years old were significantly higher in cognitive and social-emotional domains in the Mediterranean diet group receiving walnuts and extra virgin olive oil. This study adds to the more than 300 additional publications that have explored the role of a Mediterranean diet including tree nuts, primarily walnuts (PREDIMED study), on health outcomes such as cognitive function, blood pressure, total cholesterol and fasting blood sugar. <sup>6</sup>

More research is needed to clarify the reported health benefits from this study in other settings and populations. Overall, research supports the nutritional benefits of consuming walnuts as part of a healthy dietary pattern.

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Spinach, Walnut  
& Strawberry Salad

## 5

# WALNUT INFORMATION & FUN FACTS

Walnuts are a versatile nut. With a flavor profile that pairs beautifully with a variety of seasonal foods, both sweet and savory, they can be eaten alone or included in meals any time of the year. In addition, walnuts have been researched for their potential role in a variety of health outcomes, including cognitive function, heart health, cancer, weight, diabetes, gut health and reproductive health.

For these reasons, walnuts deserve attention all year. If the highlighted topics do not align with your retailer, and you still would like to promote the goodness of walnuts – here are a couple of fun facts.

## SHOPPER AND MEDIA MESSAGES - DID YOU KNOW?

National Walnut Day is **May 17**



More than **99% of walnuts** grown in the United States come from California's 385,000 bearing acres of walnut orchards



**Walnut shells** are used in soaps, scrubs, jewelry polishers and more



One ounce of walnuts offers **four grams** of protein and **two grams** of fiber, and is a good source of magnesium (10% DV)

**A daily serving of walnuts is:**

- ▶ 1 ounce
- ▶ ¼ cup
- ▶ 12-14 halves
- ▶ 1 handful



Walnuts are recognized as the oldest tree food known to man, about 7000 B.C.



Walnuts grow on trees in a brown shell covered by a green hull



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## SOCIAL MEDIA INSPIRATION



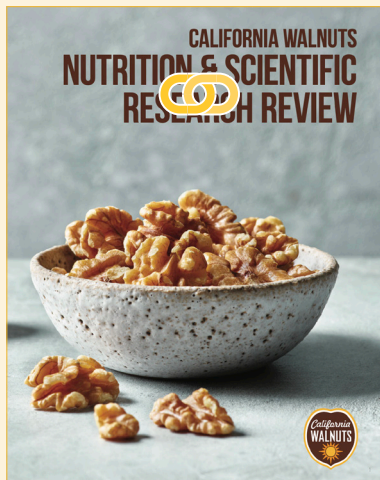
Celebrate #NationalWalnutDay on May 17! What is your favorite way to enjoy these delicious nuts? For some tasty and nutritious recipes, visit (your website or walnuts.org). #CAwalnuts #DoMoreWithWalnuts



DYK? The best way to store walnuts is in the refrigerator if you're planning to use them right away. If you don't plan to use them for a month or longer, put them in an airtight container in the freezer. #newfact #learnsomethingnew #CAwalnuts #DoMoreWithWalnuts



## DOWNLOADABLE RESOURCE



Nutrition & Scientific Research Review

## SHOPPER-FRIENDLY RECIPE

Cheers! It is #NationalWalnutDay! Offer this refreshing smoothie to your shoppers on May 17!



Mixed Berry Walnut Chia Smoothie

## RESEARCH IN A NUTSHELL

### **Cancer**

Preliminary research has been investigating the potential benefit walnuts may have on a variety of cancers including breast, prostate and colorectal.

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### **Cognitive Function**

Scientific evidence suggests that including walnuts as part of a healthy diet may play a role in helping to maintain and improve physical and cognitive health as people age.

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### **Diabetes**

Research continues to explore how walnut consumption may play a role in a healthy diet and manage complications associated with diabetes and metabolic syndromes.

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### **Gut Health**

Emerging research suggests walnuts may contribute to gut health due to their prebiotic potential and possible role in a variety of associated health benefits.

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### **Heart Health**

Since 1993, published research has been investigating how eating walnuts affects various heart health biomarkers and risk markers.

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### **Reproductive Health**

Research has been exploring the potential role of walnuts in male reproductive health.

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### **Weight**

A growing body of research highlights how plant-based foods such as walnuts may help reduce the risk of chronic disease and be beneficial for overall health, without contributing to weight gain.

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Roasted Red Pepper and  
Walnut Hummus





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