The pear is a fruit that has been cultivated for centuries. Though there are thousands of varieties of pears, only about ten are grown and sold commercially. For information on pear varieties, contact your local OSU Extension office.

Selection
- At purchase, the pear should feel firm. It gradually becomes less firm as it ripens at home.
- Select pears that are free from bruises or injury to the skin.
- The ripeness of pears is best judged by color. Check for good color for the variety you are considering buying. For example, the Bartlett pear when unripe is green; when ripe it changes to yellow. Other pears will ripen to different colors.
- Yet, some pear varieties, such as the Bosc and Concorde, do not change color. In this case, use the Check the Neck™ test, where gentle thumb pressure is applied near the stem end. The pear is ready to eat when the fruit gives slightly.

Storage
- To ripen pears, place in a loosely closed paper bag at room temperature until the flesh responds easily to a gentle pressure at the neck with your thumb. Check pears daily for ripeness. Always handle pears gently. They bruise easily, which can lead to rapid decay of the fruit.
- After pears are ripened, store them in the refrigerator.
- Rinse pears gently with cool water before eating.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ohio Pear Varieties</th>
<th>Taste</th>
<th>Color Change with Ripening</th>
<th>Culinary Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Raw</td>
<td>In Salads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Anjou</td>
<td>Mild, firm, sweet</td>
<td>Does not change color</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Anjou</td>
<td>Mild, firm, sweet</td>
<td>Does not change color</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>Crunchy, crisp</td>
<td>Becomes more yellow</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bartlett</td>
<td>Juicy, sweet</td>
<td>Green to yellow</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Bartlett</td>
<td>Sweet, juicy</td>
<td>Dark red to bright red</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bosc</td>
<td>Crunchy, tender</td>
<td>Does not change color</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concorde</td>
<td>Sweet, firm</td>
<td>Does not change color</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harrow</td>
<td>Sweet, juicy</td>
<td>Yellow to yellow with red blush</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kieffer</td>
<td>Hard</td>
<td>Yellow to golden yellow with red blush</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seckel</td>
<td>Sweet, small</td>
<td>Does not change color</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starkrimson</td>
<td>Mild, sweet</td>
<td>Deep crimson to bright crimson</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Pears will turn brown when exposed to air. You can avoid this by coating pears with an acidic juice such as lemon, orange, or pineapple juice. Cut them as close to serving time as possible.

**Nutrition**

A medium-sized pear (3½ ounce) provides about 100 calories and 6 grams of fiber in the diet. Pears also contain potassium, copper, and vitamins C and K.

**Yield**

Due to the many variables, such as moisture content, size, and variety, it is impossible to give specific recommendations as to quantities to buy. The recommendations below are approximations only.

- 1 pound = 2 cups sliced pears
- 1 pound = 2 or 3 medium-sized pears
- 1 bushel = approximately 50 pounds

**Serving Ideas**

- Pears are great eaten out-of-hand, cold from the refrigerator. The cold temperature will enhance the pear’s flavor.
- Dot pears with brown sugar and light margarine or butter and broil for a meat accompaniment.
- For a quick relish, mix 3 coarsely chopped pears with 2 tablespoons melted margarine or butter, 2 tablespoons of brown sugar, and 1 cup of chili sauce. Serve with poultry.
- Pear slices, English walnuts, and a variety of cheeses served with a ruby Port wine makes an elegant party menu.
- Breakfast is brighter with pear slices topped with blueberries and sprinkled with brown sugar and a dash of nutmeg.

For an unusual dessert with an Italian meal, squeeze fresh lemon juice over pear halves, sprinkle with oregano, and serve with cheddar cheese.

**Baked Ham with Ohio Pears**

3 fresh pears  
1 cup canned whole berry cranberry sauce  
1 teaspoon slivered or grated orange rind  
¼ cup orange juice  
2 tablespoons melted butter or margarine  
¼ cup roasted diced almonds

Baked ham

Pare, halve, and core pears; place cut sides up in baking dish. Mix together all remaining ingredients except ham; spoon into pear halves, pouring liquid over and around pears. Cover dish tightly and bake in 350 degree F oven 30 to 35 minutes. Serve warm as accompaniment for baked ham.

Makes 6 servings.

For information on preserving pears, contact your local OSU Extension office for the following publications:

- *Drying Fruits and Vegetables*, HYG-5347-09
- *Safe Handling of Fruits and Vegetables*, HYG-5353-09
- *Preserving Pie Fillings*, HYG-5355-08
- *Basics for Canning Fruit*, HYG-5343-08
- *Freezing Fruits*, HYG-5349-09
- *Jams, Jellies, and Other Fruit Spreads*, HYG-5350-09
- *Growing and Using Fruit at Home*, Bulletin 591


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