

Did You Know?



Paprika, *Capsicum annuum*

- Paprika is made from grinding air dried peppers from selected varieties of the common pepper plant, *Capsicum annuum*.
- *Capsicum annuum* includes sweet bell peppers as well as spicy chili pepper varieties of all different shapes and sizes.
- Paprika can range in flavor from mild (no heat) to pungent and hot or smoked, it is made from a variety of different varieties of peppers.
- Drying the peppers over wood fires makes smoked paprika.
- The coloring agent in paprika is used to add red color to meat, sausage and other processed foods. It can also be used to dye fabric or eggs.
- This herb is a popular seasoning in many countries, including Spain, Mexico, Hungary and those in the Balkan Peninsula. Since paprika can be made from any pepper, Spanish, U.S. and Hungarian paprika all taste different. How spicy it is also depends on whether or how much of the seeds and membrane of the chili peppers are included.
- U.S. sweet paprika is generally listed at 0 on the Scoville Heat Unit Scale. Hungarian hot paprika generally ranks between 100-500 SHUs.
- Because paprika is made by finely grinding the pepper, it begins losing flavor right away. It is recommended that paprika is replaced every 6-8 months.
- Paprika is primarily a flavorless garnish on cold foods. The flavor is released with heat and it can be added at any point in the cooking process.
- Medicinal uses for paprika include using it to reduce joint pain, as a digestive aid and to assist in circulation.
- Paprika is high in vitamin C, even more than citrus fruits, high in lutein and is rich in carotenoids.

Did You Know?



- People aren't the only creatures to consume paprika. Zoos often supplement the food of flamingos with paprika to replace the carotenoid-rich mollusks in their natural diet, which helps them maintain their brightly colored feathers.
- Has been used with henna to add a reddish hue to hair.
- Home gardeners can grow peppers to make paprika under the same conditions as any other pepper. Many seed supply companies sell varieties of paprika pepper seeds.

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