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**CONTACT:**

Erin Henry, (202) 973-3632

## **Cranberries' Antioxidant Level Tops List in USDA Report**

*Fruit of the bog outshines 19 commonly eaten fruits for the antioxidant advantage*

(Wareham, Mass., January 25) – The latest Agricultural Research Service Report from USDA, containing the results of the most comprehensive analysis of antioxidants in foods, shows cranberries score among the highest of all common fruits on the antioxidant scale

([www.ars.usda.gov/Services/docs.htm?docid=15866](http://www.ars.usda.gov/Services/docs.htm?docid=15866)).

The report includes antioxidant values for a wide variety of foods, which are measured by their Oxygen Radical Absorbance Capacity, or ORAC value. With 9584 ORAC units per 100 grams of fresh fruit, cranberries have the highest antioxidant capacity when compared to 19 common fruits.

Often identified in food by their deep-colored pigments – such as the deep red color of cranberries – antioxidants are important components in plants that are showing potential to protect the body from harmful oxidants known as “free radicals,” which are caused by daily stresses like cigarette smoke, pollutants, unhealthy foods and environmental toxins.<sup>1</sup> The cell damage caused by free radicals weakens the immune system and is linked to several diseases. Antioxidants reduce the effect of these free radical oxidants by binding with them and decreasing their destructive power and repairing damage. While more research is needed on the effects of antioxidants on health, preliminary studies suggest they may work by helping to maintain healthy cells, tissues and arteries.

There are different types of antioxidants. Known for their antioxidant activity, flavonoids make up the largest subgroup of phytonutrients, which are beneficial compounds found in plant-based foods, including cranberries. Specifically, cranberries contain a subclass of flavonoids called anthocyanins, which are known for their role as antioxidants. Additionally, cranberries contain a subclass called proanthocyanidins, known for helping to inhibit E.coli – the bacteria responsible for 80-90 percent of urinary tract infections – and helping to maintain a healthy urinary tract.<sup>2-6</sup> Ongoing research continues to reveal more about the unique flavonoid contributions of cranberries and flavonoids' potential effects on health.

Oxygen Radical Absorbance Capacity  
(ORAC) of Selected Foods – 2007 U.S.  
Department of Agriculture

FRUIT	ORAC USDA 2007
Cranberry	9584
Blueberry	6552
Plum	6259
Blackberry	5347
Raspberry	4882
Strawberry	3577
Cherry	3365
Apple	3082
Pear	2941
Avocado	1933
Orange, navel	1819
Peach	1814
Tangerine	1620
Grape, red	1260
Grapefruit	1238
Kiwifruit	1210
Grape, green	1118
Apricot	1115
Mango	1002
Banana	879
Nectarine	750
Pineapple	562
Honeydew	241
Watermelon	142

The chart above shows cranberries score the highest of all common fruits on the antioxidant scale at 9584 ORAC units per 100 g as reported in the recently updated USDA ORAC report.

This is exciting news for those who want great taste and healthy rewards from their food choices. With so many reasons to love cranberries, it's just a matter of choosing which of their bright red forms to enjoy; choose from sweetened or unsweetened cranberry juice, sweetened dried cranberries, cranberry sauce and frozen berries. Try starting your day with cranberry juice, a cran-smoothie, oatmeal topped with dried cranberries or a cranberry oatmeal muffin. Later in the day, enjoy sweetened dried cranberries as a snack, as a topper on salads, in trail mix, or mixed in rice.

For more information on cranberries, please visit [www.uscranberries.com](http://www.uscranberries.com).

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#### Sources:

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