

WORDS THAT DESCRIBE **ASIAN PEARS**

FLAVOR • COLOR • TEXTURE

floral

aromatic

speckled

mild

**smooth-
skinned**

succulent

golden

clean



firm

sandy

crisp

sweet

crunchy

apple-like

butterscotch

juicy

deep green



Looking Back

History

Asian pears are a branch of the pear family, which themselves are part of the rose family. Smaller versions of the fruit originated in China, Japan and Korea, and likely were cultivated as early as 300 BC. By the time of the Han dynasty, 2,000 years ago, there were large orchards of Asian pears along the Huai and Yellow rivers.



What's in a Name?

Pyrus pyrifolia or ussuriensis, aka...

**Pyrus is derived from the Latin pirus,
meaning pear tree. Asian pears might also be
called apple pear, crunch pear, salad pear,
or sand pear.**



From There to Here

Asian pears were planted by Chinese miners and railroad workers along the foothills of the Sierra Nevada during the California Gold Rush between 1848 to 1852. Later, they were planted by Chinese and Japanese immigrants to the West coast. Horticulturalist William Prince of Flushing, NY, imported and planted the "sand pear" variety in 1820 on the East Coast.



The Spoken Word
Google Translates
Words for
Asian Pears

Latin: Pirum Asiaticum

Arabic: یرثم كل ةيوي سآل

Cantonese: 亞洲梨

French: Poire Asiatique

Haitian Creole: Pwa Azyatik

Hindi: एशियाई नाशपाती

Italian: Pera Asiatica

German: Asiatische Birne

Japanese: アジアンナシ

Persian: اه هدا لق

Spanish: Pera Asiática

Swahili: Pea ya Asia

Ukrainian: Азійська груша



Heart & Soul

Art & Literature

"Zhongli," translated as "The Wonderful Pear Tree," is a short story collected or written by Pu Songling (1640-1715), first published in "Strange Tales from a Chinese Studio," in 1740. Set in ancient China, the story revolves around a miserly pear seller and a priest who seemingly makes a pear tree grow from a seed in minutes, then serves the ripe pears to the assembled crowd. The story teaches respect for elders and the value of sharing.



Botany

Asian pears, *Pyrus pyrifolia*, are true pears. *Pyrus* is a group of deciduous trees and shrubs in the Rosaceae family, which includes apples, cherries, peaches, plums, raspberries, roses – and about 30 species of pear trees.

It is thought that Asian pears were cultivated by selecting larger fruits from rose-hip-like ancestors as early as 300 BC. The fruit's fragrance carries notes of its floral ancestry.

Japanese varieties are mostly derived from the "sand pear," which refers to the stone cells in the fruit that give it a gritty texture, and usually resemble the apple. Chinese varieties are more cold hardy and with a shape closer to the European pear.



Ripe for the Picking

Season's Best

Asian pears ripen between mid-August and early September. They are ready to pick as soon as they look ripe on the tree. Ripe pears on rough-skinned russet varieties will change from green to light brown or orange; smooth-skinned pears will turn from green to greenish-yellow. Asian pears bruise easily, but carefully stored in the refrigerator will keep for months.



Soil & Sun & Water

In the Garden

Asian pear trees grow well in USDA zones 5-9. They need well-draining soil and full sunlight. Plant them with at least 15 feet between trees for best airflow and productivity. Trees reach 15-30 feet in height. Expect aromatic flowers from late February through mid-April.

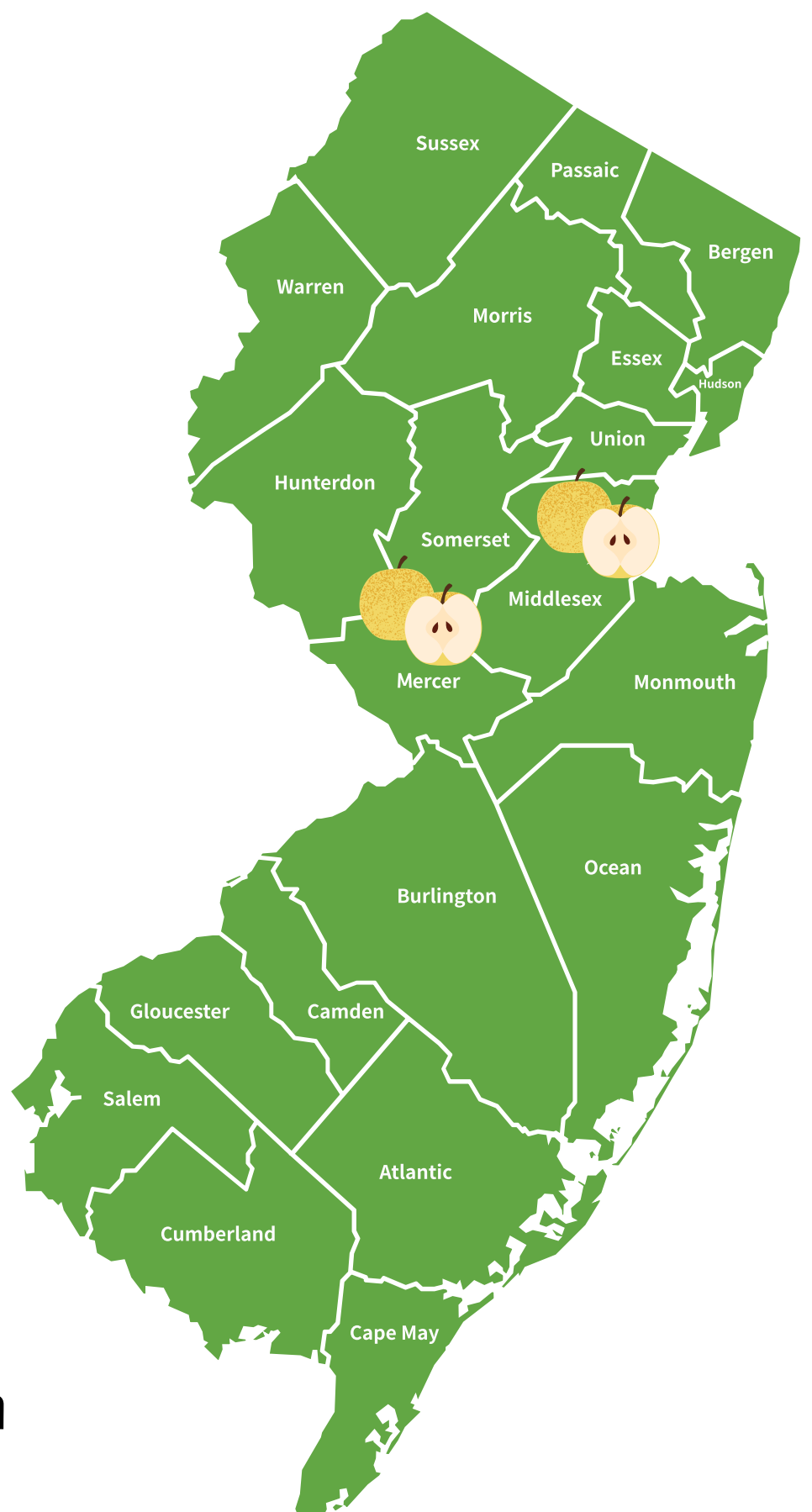
Companion plants: borage, chives, marigolds, nasturtiums, and garlic



By The Numbers

Math & Money

In New Jersey, Asian pears are a growing, high-value niche crop, driven by high demand from the state's diverse population. To compare, New Jersey grows about 3,918 acres of peaches and about 2,336 acres of apples – and about 150-200 acres of Asian pears. Peak picking season is from late August through October. Top locations for picking include Lee Orchard Garden in Cranbury and Evergreen Orchard Farm in Hamilton Township.



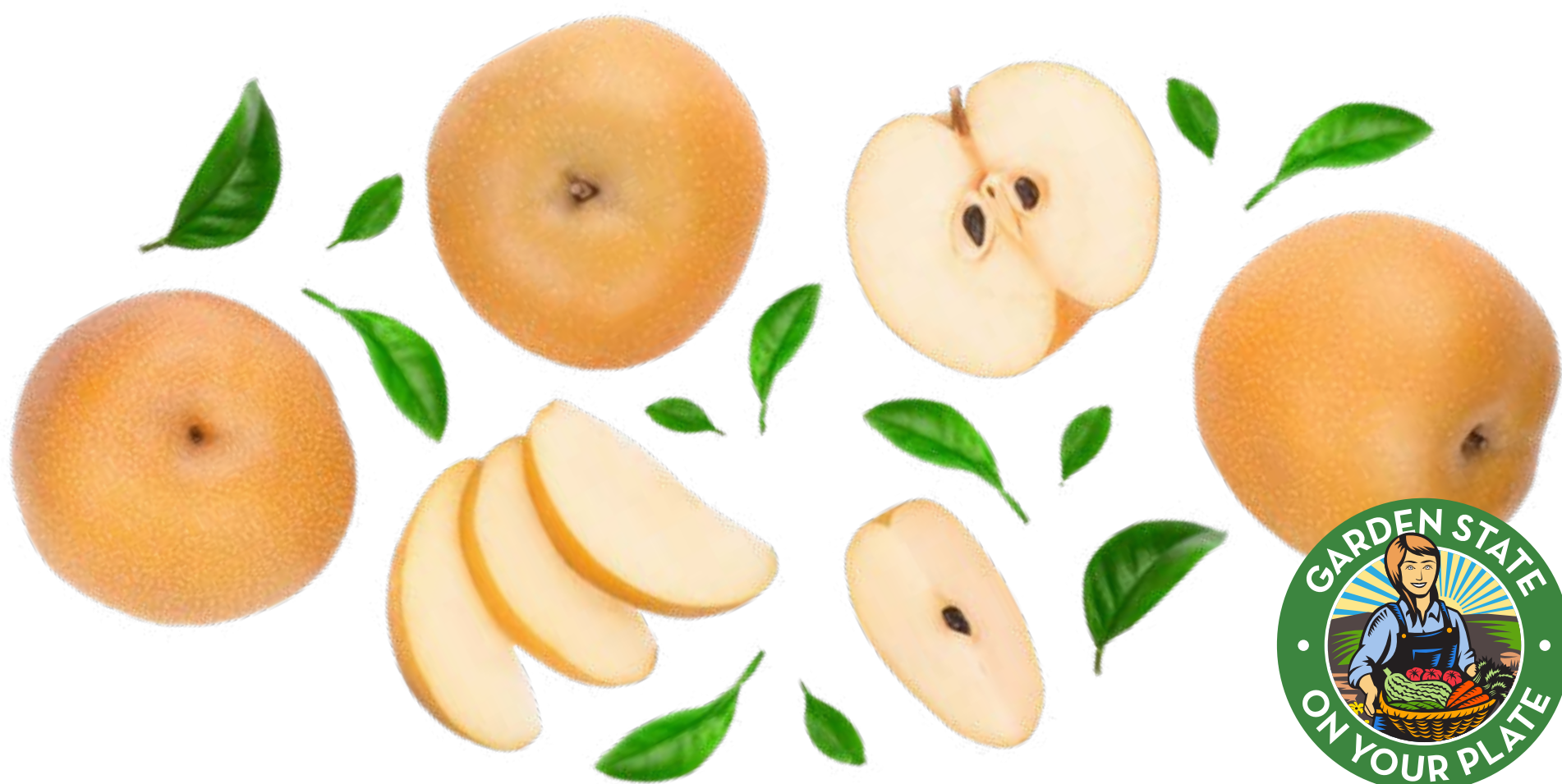
Asian Pears &...

Ingredient Pairings

For a quick dessert, sauté thinly sliced Asian pears in butter, then sprinkle with salt and a splash of balsamic vinegar – with or without vanilla ice cream or plain Greek yogurt. Grill Asian pear halves and serve with caramelized onions and toasted walnuts. Roast a sheet-pan dinner with gnocchi, leeks, and wedges of Asian pear tossed in vinaigrette and garnished with curls of parmesan.

FLAVORINGS THAT GO WELL WITH ASIAN PEARS

almonds • arugula • bacon • blue cheese • borage
cardamom • celery • cinnamon • cloves • dill • fennel
ginger • gorgonzola • hazelnuts • honey • lime • mint
nutmeg • oats • parmesan • rosemary • scallions
sweet potato • vanilla • vinaigrette • walnuts



Senses & Physiology

In the Kitchen

Asian pears are delicious out of hand, diced into a salad with peppery greens (arugula, watercress, purple cabbage) and as a fresh and juicy switch from almost any apple or pear recipe. Juiced or pureed, they work as a meat tenderizer and marinade (add grated onion, soy sauce, sesame oil, black pepper, pressed garlic, and chopped ginger). Refrigerate for 2-3 hours before cooking as desired.



Nutrition for Body & Mind

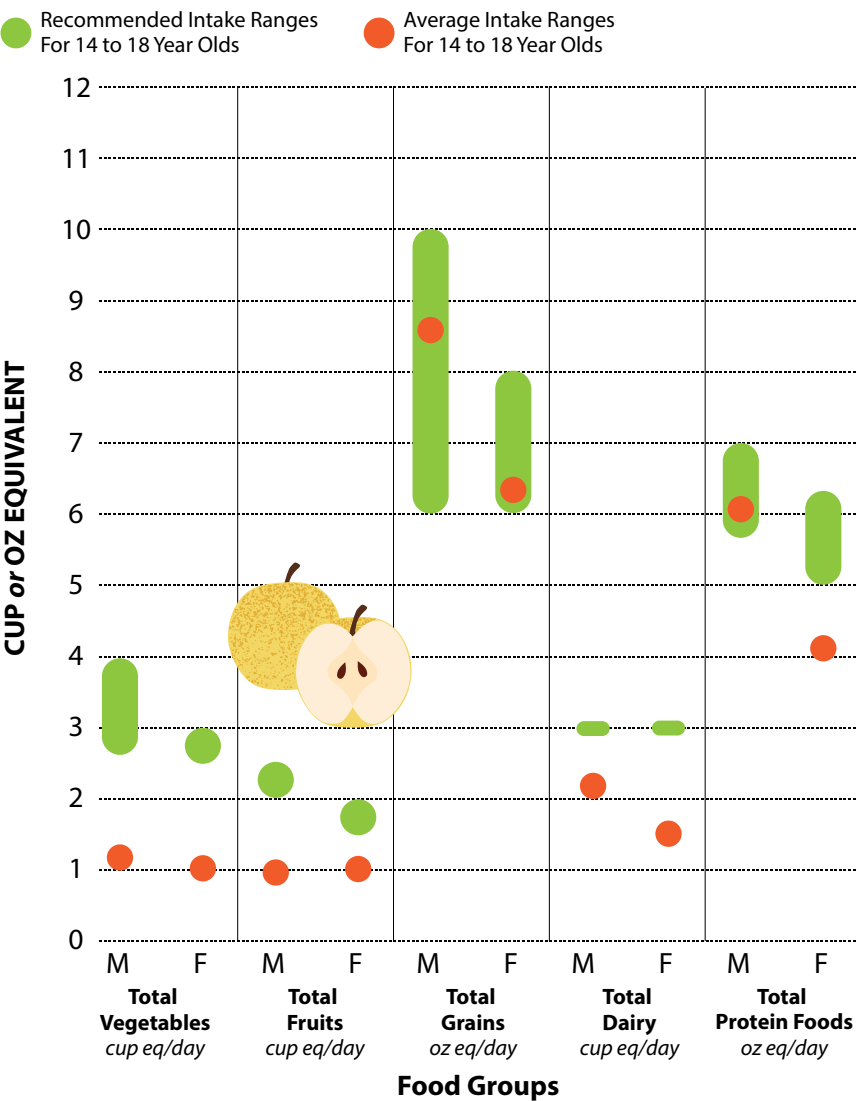
Fuel for Learning
& Powerful Play

Current Intakes: Ages 5 Through 8

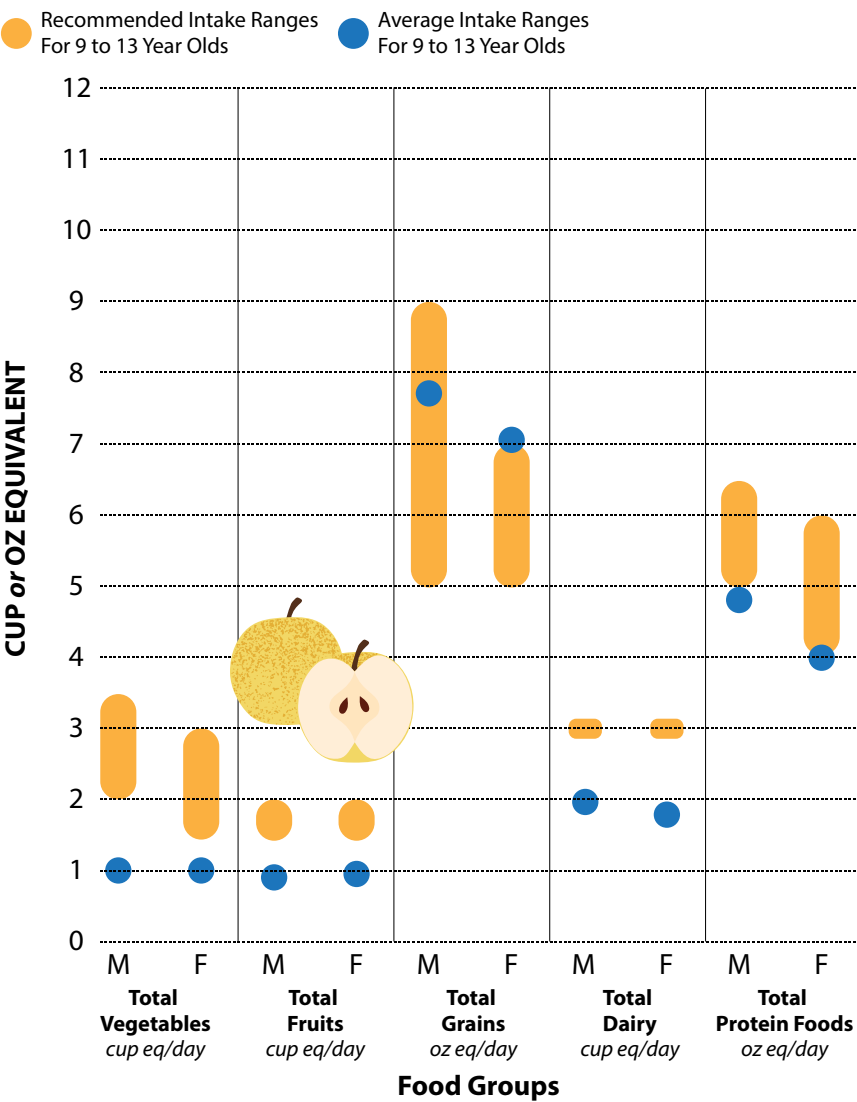


Asian pears are a solid source of fiber, Vitamin C, K, potassium, copper, folate and magnesium.

Current Intakes: Ages 14 Through 18



Current Intakes: Ages 9 Through 13



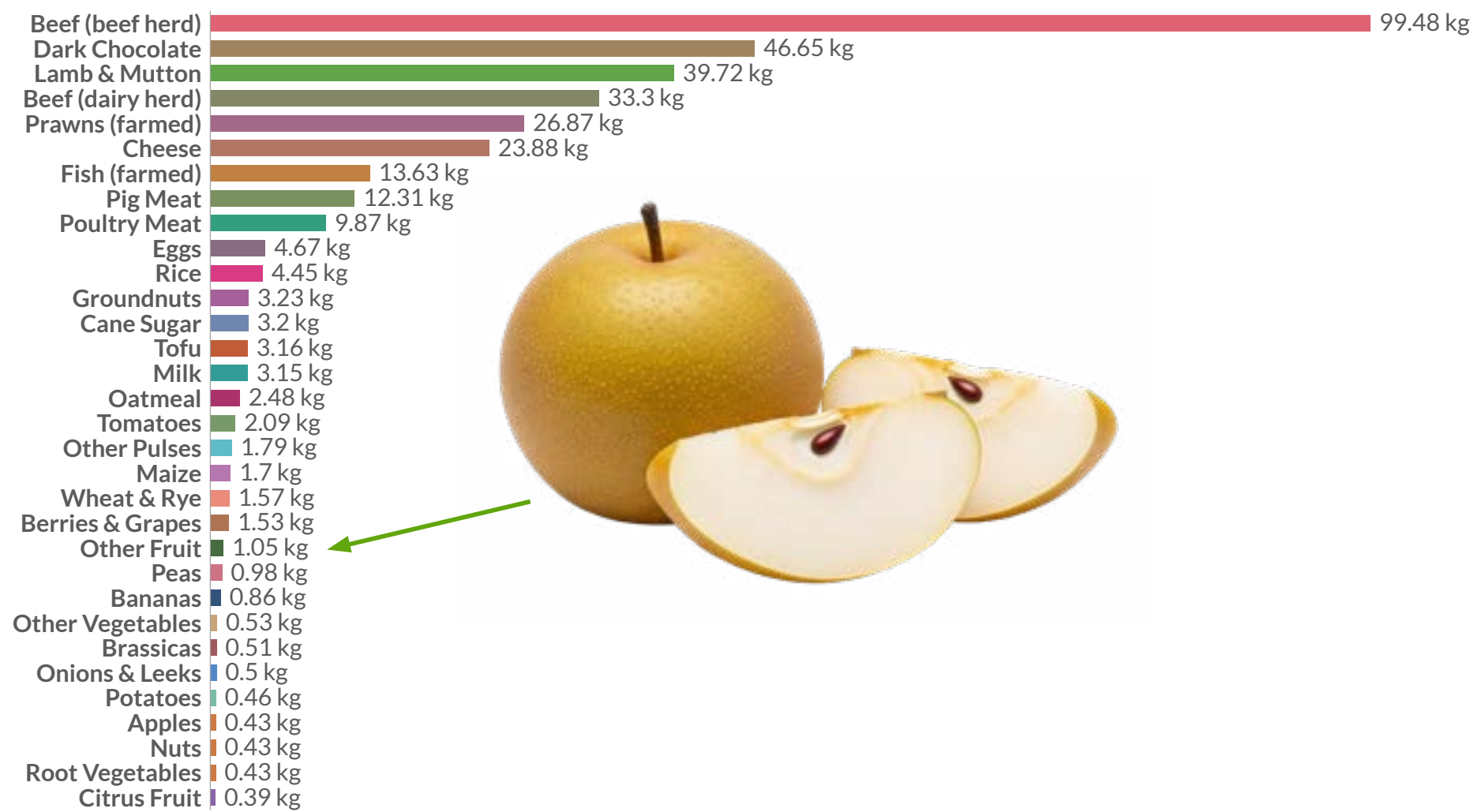
CLIMATE IMPACT OF ASIAN PEARS

ONLY THOSE GROWN LOCALLY AND SEASONALLY

Greenhouse gas emissions per kilogram of food product

Our World
in Data

Greenhouse gas emissions¹ are measured in kilograms of carbon dioxide-equivalents². This means non-CO₂ gases are weighted by the amount of warming they cause over a 100-year timescale.



Data source: Poore and Nemecek (2018)

OurWorldinData.org/environmental-impacts-of-food | CC BY

Since life-cycle emissions for Asian pears are higher with additional transport, choose locally grown fruits when possible. Other emissions come from high synthetic fertilizer use, mechanized orchard operations, and intensive packaging required to protect the delicate fruit from bruising.

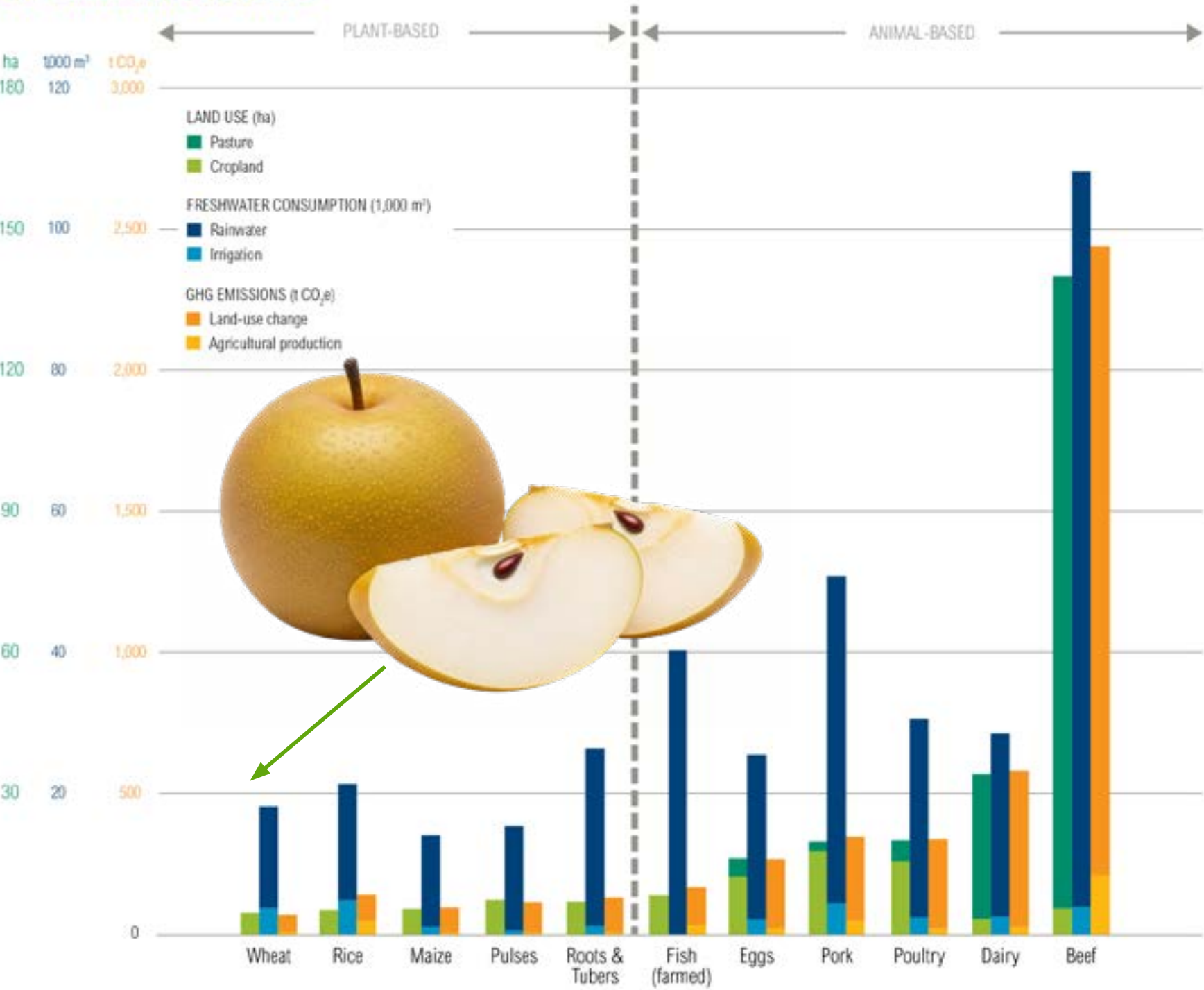


RESOURCE INTENSITY OF ASIAN PEARS

ONLY THOSE GROWN LOCALLY AND SEASONALLY

Animal-Based Foods Are More Resource-Intensive than Plant-Based Foods

PER TON PROTEIN CONSUMED



wri.org/shiftingdiets

WORLD RESOURCES INSTITUTE

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Garden State on Your Plate

Asian Pear

Tasting

Begin with wedges or thinly sliced unseasoned raw/roasted Asian pears. Then season with a pinch of salt. After observing how seasoning changes the flavor, taste with a drizzle of vinaigrette. If available, compare and contrast different methods of cooking beyond roasting: steamed, sauteed, and with relevant flavorings.

This seasoning mix can be used to bathe vegetables before roasting, as a seasoning for braising or simmering, and for dressing salads of fresh greens.

Use a $\frac{1}{3}$ to $\frac{2}{3}$ ratio, lemon juice (or vinegar) to oil.

Vinaigrette

$\frac{1}{3}$ cup lemon juice

$\frac{2}{3}$ cup olive oil

1-2 garlic cloves, crushed

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon dijon mustard

Salt

Freshly ground black pepper

Place ingredients in a jar with a tight-fitting lid.

Shake to combine.

Store in refrigerator.



Credits

"Uncommon Fruits for Every Garden," by Lee Reich (Timber, 2004)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asian_pear

<https://www.melissas.com/products/asian-pear>

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<https://fruitguys.com/blog/asian-and-european-pears-share-ancestry/>

<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC8409479/>

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Pears, Washington State University Extension

How To Plant and Grow Asian Pear Trees, Gardener's Path

Growing Asian Pears, Raintree Nursery

Choosing Pear Rootstock for the Pacific Northwest, Oregon State Extension

<https://www.wri.org/data/animal-based-foods-are-more-resource-intensive-plant-based-foods>

<https://ourworldindata.org/environmental-impacts-of-food>

<https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov/>

https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov/sites/default/files/2020-12/Dietary_Guidelines_for_Americans_2020-2025.pdf

Garden State on Your Plate is a K12 program that uses local produce, school cafeterias, campus lands, and student demographics to illustrate and amplify curriculum. The program, designed to elevate the everyday quality of school foods and to increase participation in the National School Lunch Program, was created in 2010 by the Princeton School Gardens Cooperative in partnership with Princeton Public Schools, and with funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.



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