

**Seasonal Eating**  
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**Dried Fruits Elevate Holiday Cooking**  
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Dried fruits are a workhorse of holiday cooking. Think dates, apricots, figs, raisins, prunes, cherries and cranberries. These are used in everything from baked goods like fried pies, prune cake, fruitcake, cookies and scones to winter salads to sauces like orange fig glaze for pork and even in dressing for turkey, chicken or pork.

While dried fruits are higher in calories and sugar, the nutrients are concentrated and dried fruits offer more iron, fiber and other nutrients than the same weight in their fresh form.

Dried cherries are one of my favorite dried fruits. They are great sprinkled over a salad with feta or blue cheese and sliced almonds. I also like them added to a broccoli slaw for added sweetness. I add them to sautéed green beans with almonds for a festive side dish and use them in oatmeal cookies in place of raisins. Dried cranberries with their tarter flavor are also a good addition to many dishes. I always have a package of these in the cupboard and love them in salads, scones and added to cornbread dressing.



For a special dinner, Cranberry Roasted Pork Tenderloin, is a favorite go to dish. It combines all the holiday flavors of cranberry juice, red wine, balsamic vinegar, dried cherries (or cranberries) and rosemary into a roasted pork tenderloin with sauce.

So this month, use dried fruits to make your dishes extra special for the holiday table. For more recipes, videos and produce information, visit the Bedford County Extension website ([bedford.tennessee.edu](http://bedford.tennessee.edu)) and click on Seasonal Eating.

**Cranberry Roasted Pork Tenderloin**

- 2 pork tenderloins
- 1/2 cup dried cranberries or cherries
- 1/3 cup dry red wine
- 1/4 cup balsamic vinegar
- 3/4 cup cranberry juice (100% juice, not cocktail)
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 6 shallots, peeled and cut in half lengthwise
- 3 tablespoons fresh rosemary
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste

Rinse pork tenderloins, pat dry and place in a baking dish. Set aside. Whisk together the cranberries, wine, vinegar, cranberry juice, garlic, shallots and rosemary in a bowl. Pour this mixture over the pork, cover and refrigerate 2 to 3 hours or overnight, turning the pork several times. Heat the olive oil in a large, ovenproof skillet over medium heat. Remove the pork from the marinade (reserve marinade) and place the pork in the heated skillet. Cook the pork on all sides, 5 to 6 minutes total time, until light brown. In a saucepan, bring the reserved marinade to a boil and boil for 10 minutes. Pour the boiled marinade over the pork and place the skillet in a 375 degree oven. Roast, basting several times, 20 - 30 minutes or until a meat thermometer registers 160 degrees. Remove the pork from the baking dish and place on a grooved carving board. Cover pork loosely with foil and let it rest 5 to 10 minutes before carving. Season with salt and pepper. Slice into 1/4 inch pieces and spoon the pan juices, shallots and cranberries over the top.