



Pectin Content in Fruit

High Pectin Fruits

- All immature or barely mature fruits like sour blackberries and sour apples
- Citrus skin pith
- Crabapples
- Cranberries
- Currants
- Gooseberries
- Really tart Concords like Eastern varieties
- Non-Italian plums like Shiro (Japanese)
- Quinces

Medium-ish Pectin Fruits

- Fully ripe apples and blackberries
- Sour or choke cherries
- Orange fruit (not skin)
- Elderberries
- Most Grapes (except tart Concords)

Low or No Pectin Fruits

- Apricots, Nectarines and Peaches
- Blueberries*
- Sweet Cherries
- Pears
- Italian Plums
- Strawberries
- Guava
- Raspberries
- Rhubarb

*Blueberries are often labeled as low pectin fruits, but I've had batches of blueberry jam that gel up pretty quickly. I can't claim knowledge of the chemistry, but you may discover that your blueberry jam does the same, especially if you've picked a goodly number of under-ripe blueberries.

References:

- [“Pectin”](#) from CooksInfo.com
- [“Pectin”](#) from [PickYourOwn.org](#)

Notes:

High and Low

It's common to combine immature or barely mature fruits like sour blackberries and sour apples with their fully ripe counterparts, or with other low pectin fruits. The combination of low pectin (which usually equals high flavor) fruits with high pectin (which usually equals low flavor) fruits is a good way to use all the fruit you have to your best advantage. If you grow your own fruits or forage the locally, combining both types of fruit is a simple matter of harvesting both at the same time.

Citrus Skin

The part of the citrus skin that has the most [usable pectin is the white pith](#). Citrus skin is usually too strong a flavor for most fruit jams and jellies (with the exception of marmalades). Simply zest the skin to use in something else so the flavor doesn't overpower your jam. Citrus zest can be dehydrated for later use.

Crabapples

Crabapples can be easy to forage since many people plant them for their value as an ornamental plant. Not everyone appreciates the fact that they also fruit prolifically. Ask your neighbors if you can come harvest their crabapples to keep them from being wasted on the sidewalk. Learn to [make your own pectin](#) with them, if you'd like. Or, simply make stellar crabapple jelly.

Currants and Gooseberries

Don't overlook the value of currants and gooseberries in your garden. Most berries are expensive to purchase, but these European favorites are simple to grow yourself. Both currants and gooseberries have about the same requirements in the garden. [Learn more here](#).

Medlars

What fantastic, funky fruit! Native to Asia and Europe, [Medlar trees](#) can be found in various places around the US. If you live where the summers are hot, and the winters are frosty, consider growing these weirdo fruits that taste like custard-y apple butter. They can also be foraged in much of the US. Be sure to get a good foragers handbook so you know what you're eating.

Quinces

Quinces can be grown as trees, or there are also fruiting shrub varieties. Many people are familiar with the non-fruiting, ornamental quince that is usually the first to put off their dark, pink flowers in early spring. They make fantastic landscape plants with the added benefit of producing fruit high in pectin. Forget about buying pectin every year – [make your own](#) with quinces!

Cherries

I do NOT like growing sweet cherries because they're such a pain to keep the worms out of and they're kind of finicky trees to grow. However, sour cherries are a lot less picky to raise well and choke cherries are easy to forage in many places in the US. Do yourself a favor and invest in a cherry pitter, or simply make cherry jelly ([especially from choke cherries](#)).

Elderberries

I can't say enough good things about elderberries in the landscape. From top to bottom, the elderberry plant is useful in the [kitchen and the medicine chest](#). They get pretty big (often 6' x 6'), so be sure to leave space for them. A sacrifice of space is worth it to have a veritable pharmacy in the backyard!

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<https://homesteadlady.com> Tessa Zundel