



HealthiestWeight

Morning Announcement

December 2014

Food for Thought

Healthy Food of the Week

Carambola - Star Fruit

The **carambola** is commonly called **star fruit**, because when cut in a cross-section, the fruit slices are shaped like a star. This golden-yellow tropical fruit that originated from Southeast Asia grows on a medium-sized tree. There are only two places in the United States where the carambola is grown commercially, Hawaii and southern Florida.

The carambola tree is very pretty in the home landscape because of its attractive leaves, pink flowers and the fruit's unique shape. You can easily find star fruit in the grocery store or marketplace in Florida in the winter months when the fruit is readily available. If you already have a carambola tree in your yard or decide to grow one, the tree can be productive enough to supply the whole neighborhood with fruit. * A caution for anyone who has been diagnosed with kidney disease, because the fruit contains oxalic acid, your doctor should decide if it is okay for you to eat the carambola.

The star fruit is crisp and juicy tasting and is usually eaten fresh, but also is used in salads, desserts and sauces. The flavor can vary from very sweet to tangy depending on the variety. For the best taste, let a fruit ripen at room temperature for two to five days until the entire fruit is yellow. The fruit can be sliced lengthwise into long wedges or across to eat in the shape of a star.

The carambola is a good source of vitamin C which helps the body heal and resist infection, and vitamin A which is good for vision and healthy skin. Containing only 30 calories per fruit, the carambola also contains plenty of fiber.

A natural choice during the holiday season in Florida, the carambola is a **superstar** fruit!

Remember: Make 5-2-1-0 your goal every day.

- 5** - Fruits and vegetables a day (including the carambola)
- 2** - Only 2 hours or less of screen time a day (TV, computers, video games)
- 1** - One hour of physical activity a day
- 0** - Sugar-sweetened drinks (drink more water and non-fat milk)

References:

<https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/mg269>: Carambola Growing in the Florida Home Landscape

<http://www.freshfromflorida.com>