

# Buying and Storing Pecans

*No matter how you pronounce it , pecans are great.*

**P**ecans are everyone's favorite nut meat. The packaging and treatment of pecans affect the time they remain high in quality. Generally nuts in the shell keep better than shelled nuts.

## **A good rule of thumb...**

It takes roughly two pounds of pecans in the shell to get one pound of nut meat. One pound of shelled nuts measures about four cups, but the size and condition of the nuts can make a difference in the yield. Whole nut meats give more cups per pound than halves, pieces or chopped nuts.

## **How to buy.**

Buy nuts that are clean and free from scars, cracks and holes. Shake nuts to see if the kernels rattle. A kernel that rattles means that the pecan is probably not well-

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filled. When buying shelled nuts, choose plump, meaty nuts with a crisp, brittle texture. If they are to be used for garnish, try to get pecans that are uniform in size and color.

## **Storage for pecans...**

To preserve the freshness of shelled nuts, keep them in the refrigerator in a tightly covered container. Unshelled pecans keep well at room temperature for four to eight months, but will keep in the refrigerator for 18 to 36 months. Shelled pecans may last as long as two

months at room temperature, but they will keep as long as two years at 40 degrees Fahrenheit if stored in freezer bags or other tightly sealed containers. Nuts are one of the few foods that may be refrozen with safety and with no noticeable deterioration.

*For more information on buying and storing pecans, contact your local county Extension office.*