



# Harmony Valley Farm

## Fruit Share Newsletter

July 29-31, 2010

### **Suncrest Peaches (EP) Frog Hollow Farm, CA**

The *Sun Crest Peach* is a large, freestone peach, one of the best peaches of all time and a Slow Food Ark heritage variety. The peach has a bright-red blush over its yellow skin and is fragrant and juicy. Unfortunately, not many know of the Sun Crest because of its fragility and difficulty in shipping. For this reason, many distributors and retailers are unwilling to handle the fruit. The 'Suncrest' peach brings you that old-fashioned taste of days gone by. Gently tapered, with firm but juicy yellow flesh, 'Suncrests' provide that "eat over the sink" experience!

Keep peaches out of the fridge if at all possible! The longer they are in the cold, the greater the chances that you'll experience a dry or mealy peach. Ripen at room temperature, on the counter top. Peaches are ripe and ready to eat when the flesh has a little bit of give to it; check your fruit daily for ripeness. Extremely fragile, cut away any bruised or brown bits and enjoy the rest of the fruit.

### **Gold Pineapple (EP) Kapalua Farms, HI**

Kapalua Farms is nestled on 150 acres just south of Kapalua Resort in West Maui. It is the center of Maui Land & Pineapple Company's organic agricultural research, sustainability and education programs. Kapalua Farms Division includes Maui Gold Organic (Kapalua Gold®) pineapple production, a produce and herb farm, free-range egg operation, tree nursery and compost operation.

We think you will find this pineapple to be among the best you might taste (unless you are enjoying a pineapple right there, on the island). This batch is sweet, fragrant, juicy and with premium flavor. You might be surprised, but pineapple actually pairs well with cucumbers, peppers, onions, cilantro and even tomatoes. Dice up some of these veggies with pineapple and avocado, give it a squeeze of lime and you've just made a fabulous fresh salsa for grilled fish, chicken or pork chops! Do not store whole pineapples in the fridge, although peeled, sliced or cubed pineapple can be chilled in an airtight container for up to 3 days. Ripen on the counter. A ripe pineapple will smell sweet and yield very slightly to gentle pressure.

### **Blueberries (ES) Blueberry Heritage Farms, Holland MI**

Blueberries are climacteric fruits and respond to ethylene but are generally harvested near to full ripe as flavor does not improve after harvest. Generally, climacteric fruit can be picked from the tree at full size or maturity but before it is ripe and allowed to ripen off the tree. Other climacteric fruits include bananas, persimmons, kiwi, mangoes, avocados, and peaches, to name a few. That natural shimmery silver coating you see on blueberries is desirable as it is a natural protectant. Keep blueberries refrigerated, unwashed, in a rigid container covered with clear wrap. Water on fresh blueberries hastens deterioration, so do not wash before refrigerating. Blueberries are highly perishable so do try to use them as soon as possible. If you can't use them right away, blueberries are an excellent candidate for freezing. After thawing, they are only slightly less bright and juicy as in their original harvest state. Do not wash them before freezing, as the water will cause the skins to become tough. Rinse after thawing and before eating. Blueberries are one of the only fruits native to North America, but are now

### ***Ready to Eat:***

Blueberries  
Dark Sweet Cherries

### ***May need ripening:***

Suncrest Peaches  
Gold Pineapples  
Tommy Atkins Mangoes  
Rival Apricots

found on almost every continent. Blueberries are the oldest known plants still living - they have been traced back 13,000 years! They are grown in many locations throughout North America from April through October, and in Chile, Argentina and Mexico during the winter months. Blueberries are one of the few truly blue foods on earth and have often been recognized as the fruit with the highest antioxidant activity. These tasty super foods offer twice as many disease fighting antioxidants as spinach, more than three times as many as oranges, red grapes and cherries and more than four times as many as grapefruit, white grapes, bananas and apples. Blueberries are also thought to be helpful in improving memory function and healthy aging. Once home, remove berries from their container and pick out any rotten or unformed berries as well as the tiny stems.

### **Dark Sweet Cherries (EN) Columbia Gorge, OR**

The rule of thumb with cherries, as with berries and grapes, is to wash the fruit only when you are ready to eat it. Storing unwashed helps extend the storage life of these fruits. Store cherries in the coldest part of your refrigerator, usually near the bottom back. Cherries deteriorate and decay very quickly at room temperature. Eat out of hand or cook down into a compote or sauce for ice cream, angel food cake or for savory dishes, especially duck or pork. Cull any damaged or moldy fruit from the container and store in the fridge, but eat first!

### **Tommy Atkins Mangoes (EP) Natura, MX**

The Tommy Atkins is the brightest mango, distinguished by its red, hard skin. Ideally, mangoes should be stored at a temperature between 55°F and 65°F, in a dry place. As with all tropical fruit, whole unripe mangoes should never be stored in the refrigerator. Unripe mangoes will ripen in two to five days when left on a counter-top. Rotate your mangoes to provide good airflow and check for ripening daily. The mango is ready to eat when the skin is brightly colored, the flesh is soft and the aroma is sweet. Once ripe, a mango can be stored in the fridge for a few days.

<b>EP: ETHYLENE PRODUCER</b>
<b>ES: ETHYLENE SENSITIVE</b>
<b>EN: ETHYLENE NEUTRAL</b>

Mangoes have a flat, oblong pit in the center. To cut and peel a mango, hold the mango with one hand, stand it on its end, stem side down. With a sharp knife, cut along the sides of the pit at the center of the fruit. You should end up with three pieces – two halves and a middle section that includes the pit. Take a mango half and use a knife to make lengthwise and crosswise cuts in it, but try not to cut through the peel. You may now be able to take the segments right off the peel with your fingers, or use a small paring knife to cut away the pieces from the peel. Then, stand over the sink and eat the flesh off the pit – cook's privilege!

Unripe mangoes make a wonderful chutney or can be used in salads; they will have a firmer texture and more tart flavor than fully ripe fruit. Ripe mangoes are used in salsas, smoothies and desserts.

### **Rival Apricots (EP) Gilbert Orchards, Yakima WA**

Please handle with care! Apricots are extremely delicate. If you do encounter bruising or damage, just cut that portion of the fruit away and enjoy the rest! An apricot's flesh is firm, sweet and fragrant, and contains little juice. Ripen on the counter top at room temperature (not exceeding 78°F). It is best to have airflow around each piece of fruit. A ripe apricot is very gold in color and soft to the touch; it may be refrigerated, but not for more than a day or two. Like peaches, apricots dry out fairly quickly in the refrigerator. Apricots are delicious and low in calories eaten out of hand; they're also great poached with a little sugar, turned into jam or fillings for layer cakes, fruit salads or platters, dried, or glacéed. Because an apricot's flesh is dry, they will not disintegrate during cooking, which makes them ideal for tarts and Danish pastries. The kernel of the pit (poisonous until it is cooked) is used to flavor jams, cookie and Amaretto liqueur.

### **Peach Green Tomato Dressing**

Makes about 2 cups

1 medium green tomato, rough chopped (about 1 cup)  
1 peach, rough chopped (about 1 cup)  
1 clove garlic  
1 jalapeño, rough chopped without the seeds  
½ lime, juiced  
½ tsp salt  
1 tsp honey  
1T cider vinegar  
1 T sour cream

-Add all ingredients in a blender or food processor and pulse until lightly blended.

*Use the dressing for slaws, as a topping for grilled fish or pork, or added to a sandwich. It can also be used as a refreshing salsa/dip.*

This week you will be getting 2½ pounds of cherries in your boxes. The following are a few recipes to preserve the cherries for a later use. They come from Alice Waters' *Chez Panisse Fruit* cookbook. If you are a fruit lover, this book should be in your culinary library.

### **Brandied Cherries**

Makes 1 quart

1 lb cherries  
2 cups brandy or kirsch  
½ cup sugar (if using sweet cherries) or ¾ cup sugar (if using sour cherries)

Rinse the cherries. Leave the stems and pits, if desired, or pit and remove the stems. Mix the liquor and sugar. Put the cherries in a quart jar with a tight-fitting lid. Stir the brandy mixture and pour over the fruit. Cover tightly and keep in a cool part of the kitchen or in the cellar at least 1 month before using. For the first week, turn the jar upside down daily to help dissolve the remaining sugar crystals. Refrigerate after a month. The cherries will keep for several months more.

*Use brandied cherries on top of ice cream, pancakes, or any chocolate dessert. They would also be great with roasted meats and fowl or on a cheese or a charcuterie platter.*

### **Pickled Cherries**

Makes 8 pints

2 lbs cherries  
1 ½ cups sugar  
4 ¼ cups white wine vinegar  
4 whole cloves  
6 peppercorns

Rinse, dry, and pick over the cherries, throwing out (or eating) any blemished ones and cutting the stems down to about ½ inch. Prepare eight 1-pint canning jars and self-sealing lids in boiling water, following the manufacturer's instructions. Stir together the sugar, vinegar, cloves, and peppercorns in a nonreactive saucepan, bring to a boil, and cook for 3 minutes. Pack the cherries into the canning jars. Pour the hot syrup over the cherries, cover, and seal, following the manufacturer's instructions. Let sit for 2 months in a cool, dark place before eating. After opening the jars, the cherries will keep refrigerated for a year. *This is the original recipe, but it can be reduced by ½ or ¼ if you don't want to use ALL your cherries!*

## **You Are Invited!**

Farm Party:

**September 26** Harvest Party

**October 10 & 16** Member Advisory Meeting  
TC & Madison locations TBA