Fruit Box

CHERRY-RIPE, ripe, ripe, I cry,
Full and fair ones; come and buy.
If so be you ask me where
They do grow, I answer: There
Where my Julia's lips do smile;
There's the land, or cherry-isle,
Whose plantations fully show
All the year where cherries grow.
Robert Herrick (1591–1674)

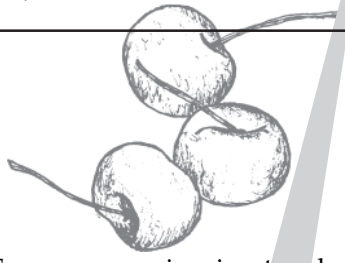
Box Contents

To be eaten first

Rainier Cherries
Star Ruby Grapefruit
Pineapple

May need ripening...

White Nectarines
Yellow Peaches
Red Raven Plums



Note: For more even ripening, try placing your fruit on the countertop, where there is good airflow around each piece of fruit, instead of arranging it in a fruit bowl.

3rd Delivery | Mid-July

Ripening and Storage Techniques

Rainier Cherries are named after Mt. Rainier in WA. They have a very sweet and mild flavor, juicy flesh, and a white heart. Store in the coldest part of the refrigerator. If you don't plan to use ripe cherries within six days it is best to freeze them. To freeze cherries, wash and drain them dry, then spread them evenly over a cookie sheet or flat tray and freeze them. When frozen solid, transfer the cherries to a plastic bag. They'll keep up to a year this way.

Star Ruby Grapefruit are grown by Eco Farm in CA. Nevertheless, when grown well, Star Ruby produces attractive red-blushed fruits with a smooth yellow rind. The flesh is very darkly-pigmented, juicy, and low-seeded or seedless. Star Ruby's season of maturity is mid to late-season, and the fruit holds well on the tree with some loss of flesh color as the season progresses. Grapefruit will last for several days if stored at room temperature. Otherwise refrigerate in a plastic bag or in the high humidity crisper section of the refrigerator where they will keep for several weeks.

Red Spanish Pineapples are grown near the village of Actuan de las Pinas, nestled in the Sierra Madre mountain range in the state of Nayarit, Mexico. They are called "Red Spanish" because of the plant's reddish tint when blooming. Unlike pineapple plantations in other parts of the world, the fields are shaded by native trees to preserve the natural habitat for the area's wildlife and ensure a sustainable environment for future generations. Pineapples do not ripen off the plant. Ripe pineapples should be covered in a plastic bag to prevent moisture loss. Store the pineapples close to the door since they are best stored at a temperature around 45 F. Pineapples stored correctly will last several days in the refrigerator.

White Nectarines are grown by Twin Girls Farm in CA. Ripe nectarines should yield to a gentle touch and have a sweet fragrant smell. Once picked, nectarines will become softer and juicer as they ripen; however, they will not become sweeter in taste. Placing nectarines in a paper bag will speed up the ripening process, especially when they are stored with apples, bananas, pears or other fruits that produce ethylene gas. Nectarines should not be stored at temperatures above 78° F since the hotter temperatures actually slow down the ripening process and will negatively impact their flavor and texture.

Vista Yellow Peaches are grown by Ferrari Farms in CA. Handle them gently, their skin is delicate and the flesh has a creamy texture with a rich and complex flavor. At home, store peaches on the counter at room temperature until ripe. To quicken the ripening process, place peaches in a paper bag until fully ripe. Adding ethylene-producing fruit like bananas and apple into the paper bag will accelerate further the ripening process.

Red Raven Plums are Scott Raven Farms, CA, in-house version of Black Splendor plums. This plum is only at its peak flavor when tree ripened. This means it needs to have both full black color and "spring" (when you squeeze the fruit will give), the interior should be beet red in color. Red Raven Farm says, "We pick these as close to full black as we can. However, you will notice red around the shoulders. This will turn black at room temperature, and that is when it will be ready to eat!" Move to cold storage when fully ripe and keep away from any ethylene-producing fruits (such as apples and bananas) that have a tendency to speed the ripening process.

Grower Profile

This Profile was provided by Valliwide

Scott Raven Farms

Scott Raven is a second-generation grower, born and raised on a family farm in Selma, CA. He is a graduate of California State University, Fresno with a B. S. in Agriculture Business.

Scott started his own company by leasing farm ground. He now runs a diversified farming and ranching operation which includes almonds, table grapes, raisins, wine grapes, row crops, a cattle operation and tree fruit.

Scott's tree fruit operation is organic and includes ten acres of the Spring Flame Peach, which is harvested in mid-May, and sixty-five acres of Plums, including the Yummy Beaut Plum, which will be harvested early-June and 30,000 trees of the Red Raven Plum, which will be harvested in mid-June.

Living and farming near the beautiful Kings River in Kingsburg, CA, Scott chose to farm organically for long term environmental sustainability. We have a responsibility to keep natural habitats such as that of the Kings River environmentally sound for our future generations.

Scott also took great care when choosing his new black plum variety. For two year Scott sampled dozens of new stone fruit varieties before deciding upon the Red Raven plum. The health benefits stated in a project led by David Byrne, professor of the department of horticultural sciences at Texas A&M, College Station, were the deciding factor for Scott. Byrne's new research put the Red Raven plum at an antioxidant level comparable with that of blueberries. An article published in *Men's Health* magazine highlighted Byrnes' research about cancer-fighting properties. It stated the natural phytochemicals found in red-flesh plums inhibited prostate tumor cell growth in laboratory tests by 80%, which is 20% more than blueberries.

plum blossoms

The health benefits are a great selling point, but the flavor of the Red Raven's juicy red-flesh and its long shelf life will keep you coming back for more.

USDA Planning to Introduce GMO Plums

By Jeffrey Smith, author of *Seeds of Deception*

The US Department of Agriculture wants to introduce a new variety of plum, genetically modified (GM) to resist the plum pox virus. Disease-resistant crops comprise less than one percent of the acreage devoted to GM varieties worldwide, but occupy a much bigger portion in biotech promotional literature. That's because engineering a crop to resist disease sounds more appealing than inserting a gene to make a crop produce its own pesticide or withstand herbicide--the two traits that make up the other 99 percent of today's GM world.

There are three commercialized virus-resistant GM varieties: zucchini, crookneck squash, and, the only commercialized GM fruit, papaya. GM papaya grows solely in Hawaii and was introduced in 1998 to protect the crop from the devastating ring-spot virus. But according to a May 2006 report by Greenpeace, the GM papaya turned out to be more devastating than the virus. Upon introduction, the selling price for the papaya crashed from $1.23 per kilo to $0.89, after traditional buyers of Hawaiian papayas, such as Japan and Canada, rejected [it]. Now, if Hawaiian papaya growers want to sell to Japan, they have to pay extra for segregating and testing their papayas to make sure they are non-GM. The Japanese market shrunk from $10.3 million in 1998 to $4.6 million in 2005. Although Canada started accepting GM papayas in 2003, the price didn't recover. In the 2004 and 2005 growing seasons, the selling price averaged less than $0.80 per kilo, at or only marginally above the production cost for many farmers. While business is booming in other papaya growing regions, Hawaiian production is at its lowest point in more than a generation.

This hasn't stopped the USDA from trying to gift the plum industry with a virus-resistant catastrophe of its own. And this is in spite of the fact that the plum pox virus is not even a current threat. According to Steve Poe, Senior Operations Officer who coordinates the USDA's program to wipe out the virus (using non-GM methods), "we're on the tail end of eradicating this thing." The incidence of the disease is down to about 1 tree per year, he says.

But there is a current threat that the USDA and other agencies have continued to disregard: The virus-resistant crops already on the market may be increasing the susceptibility of consumers to viral infections and, ironically, even putting the crops at greater risk. According to virologist Jonathan Latham of the Bioscience Resource Project, none of the important questions about the safety of viral transgenes have been answered. The effect of putting viral proteins into plants is unkown.We have no idea if they will cause the evolution of new viruses by recombination.