



Fruit Box

Mrs. Beauregarde: I can't have a blueberry as a daughter. How is she supposed to compete?

Veruca Salt: You could put her in a county fair.

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory

Box Contents

To be eaten first

Red Flame Seedless
Grapes
Bluecrop Blueberries
Tommy Atkins Mango

May need ripening...

Hass Avocado
Grand Sweet Nectarines
Sugar Grant White Peaches
Saturn Donut Peaches



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.

Ripening and Storage Techniques

Red Flame Seedless Grapes are grown by Anthony Vineyards. These particular grapes are harvested from vineyards near Bakersfield, CA (earlier in the season, they pick from vineyards in the high desert near Coachella, CA.) Red Flame grapes are mild and sweet with a tart flavor. When they are ripe, the grapes darken flame to rust red color. Before storing, remove any spoiled grapes with broken skins or browning from the bunch and keep refrigerated; they should keep a week to ten days.

Bluecrop Blueberries are from John Nelson, an Indiana grower located near Granger. Bluecrop is the leading mid-season variety. Once home, remove berries from their container and pick out any rotten or unformed berries as well as the tiny stems. Blot the rest of the fruit and place on a shallow plate covered with plastic wrap and put in cold storage. Blueberries will last up to 10 days when stored this way.

Tommy Atkins Mangoes are grown by Salvador Parra Ahumada in Mexico. Tommy Atkins is the brightest mango, distinguished by its red, hard skin. Most mangoes are required by the USDA to be 'heat treated' to destroy the potential of importing the larvae or eggs of a certain fly species. Salvador grows in a region free of this pest, so his fruit does not have to be treated. "Hot Water Treatment", in essence, involves boiling the green fruit. Uncooked mangoes are a rare treat in the US! Ideally, mangoes should be stored at 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 when left on a counter-top. The Tommy Atkins variety may take up to five or six days. Once ripe, mangoes can be stored in the refrigerator, but should be eaten within a few days. The mangoes in your box appear to be already on the verge of ripe--if they yield to pressure, eat them soon.

Hass Avocados are grown by Eco Farm in CA. Haas is a dark-skinned summer fruit that is ripe when the skin yields to gentle finger pressure. Store at room temperature until ripe. These avocados are at the end of the growing season for this region and will likely ripen more quickly.

Grand Sweet Nectarines are grown by Ferrari Farms in the San Joaquin Valley of California. Ripe nectarines should yield to gentle pressure along the "seam" and produce a sweet aroma. Ideally ripen at room temperature (not exceeding 78° F). Move to cold storage and eat within 1-3 days. Longer storage will diminish their juicy flavor.

Saturn Halo Donut Peaches are grown in CA under the California Tree fruit label. New varieties of donut peaches such as the white-fleshed "Saturn" and "Jupiter" have made quite a splash on the US market since the 1990's. The oldest known flat peach variety, the "Peen-to" was introduced to the US from China in 1869, but never became very popular. Today's donut peaches are super-sweet, with creamy, juicy flesh that may be either white or yellow. See Sugar Grant peaches for ripening and storage information.

Sugar Grant White Peaches are also grown by Ferrari Farms in San Joaquin Valley, CA. Handle them gently, their skin is delicate. Their 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.

4th Delivery

1

Late July

Grower Profile

This grower profile is from Ferrai Farm's website you can read more about the farm and their growing practices at: <http://www.ferrarifarms.com>

Ferrari Farms

We are a 300-acre, family owned and operated farm, specializing in simply the finest, certified organically grown fruits and nuts.

We are located in the heart of California in the San Joaquin Valley with rich, deep class I soils, where warm days are cooled by evening delta breezes.

Our commitment to organic farming runs deep. We have been growing crops organically for over 25 years now, and we have been certified by CCOF (California Certified Organic Farmers) for over 18 years. We were one of the early pioneers in the organic industry, growing produce organically long before it became fashionable.

Wayne and his father, George (Grandpa), started farming together back in 1963, and it's been a family operation ever since (although we did let Grandma retire from active duty



Wayne & Jeff at San Francisco Farmers Market, 1993

at the packing shed when she hit 78!). Today, Wayne and his wife, Irene, continue to farm with their two sons, Jeff and Greg. Greg recently graduated with a degree in Plant Science from Fresno State and a double Masters from UC Davis. Jeff went to Davis and got a law degree (no one quite knows why.)

As a family operation, we take great pride in what we grow. We want each peach, nectarine, apple, apricot, plum, pluot, cherry, and walnut to be the best one you've ever tasted. After all, it's our name on the box. We're still small enough to allow for a hands on approach to farming. It's our farm. We do things our way. We're continually trying to produce better fruit with fresher flavor, and we take great pride in making timely deliveries.

We're self-contained from one end of the scale to the other. We have our own year-round labor so that we can get things done our way. We do all our own pruning, picking, packing and processing. We have our own on-site cooling facilities to get the fruit in from the field and cooled down as quickly as possible. Also, we process our own walnuts from harvesting, hulling and cracking, sorting, freezing and packing to help ensure the finest possible product.



4th Delivery

2

Late-July

Fruit News and Facts

Contributing Factors to Rising Fruit Costs

Based on our first few fruit boxes, we've sensed that the organic fruit is more expensive this year. Here are some contributing factors: The increase in fuel costs has played a role (as many of you have likely noticed in other areas of your lives). Fuel not only drives up the cost of transportation, but also raise overall production expenses. We asked Rick Christianson, our fruit buyer, what other things might be contributing to the increased prices for organic fruit. He said, "Supply has been a really huge issue. Product has been in short supply because of an 'off' year in California production." California received heavy rains when the fruit was in blossom. This really set back growth and has also resulted in some of the storage and flavor issues we have been seeing with soft fruit this year. A biodynamic wine grower who visited our farm from Redwood Valley, CA told us they received over 9 inches of rain in April. To her knowledge, farmers in the area have not ever seen that much rainfall in April and were very uneasy what new challenges they may face as the season progresses. In addition to the rain, many orchards are reporting that the trees have shut down in response to the record high temperatures that they are experiencing. Rick says that he has been hearing similar "heat horror" stories from the northwest.

Rick mentioned that there is also an increasing interest in organic fruit from the "straight" grocery store chains. That means there are more buyers saturating the market this season and less fruit to go around. He comments further that "despite Wal-Mart's desire to drive the prices down, if they increase the demand, I'm not sure their might will be successful in counteracting the very ingrained, and very powerful supply/demand metric. They can try to overcome this by contracting, but I don't expect that to work for very long if farmers are getting the short end of the stick vs. available market prices. Some of you may have noticed that conventional markets on many products are up this year too. Organics tends to follow suit" (likely for some of the same issues discussed above).