



Fruit Box

Happy Thanksgiving

Thanks for joining us for fruit for the '06 season, we hope that you will participate in a Fruit Share again next year!

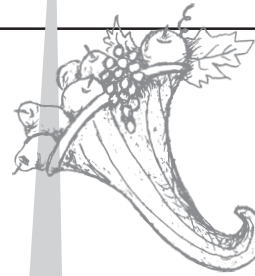
Box Contents

To be eaten first

Connell Red Apples
Braeburn Apples
Black Seedless Grapes
Medjool Dates
Cranberries
Chestnuts

May need ripening...

Fuyu Persimmons
Comice Pears



Thanksgiving comes to us out of the prehistoric dimness, universal to all ages and all faiths. At whatever straws we must grasp, there is always a time for gratitude and new beginnings.
~J. Robert Moskin

Ethylene Table (see 6th delivery NL for details)

EP: Ethylene Producer
ES: Ethylene Sensitive
EN: Ethylene Neutral

Ripening and Storage Techniques

Connell Red Apples (Local, EP) are grown by Schaeffer Orchards in WI. Connels are a sweet, juicy, very large-with a rich, high quality sweet flavor. Connell Red is a chance mutation of another popular variety, Fireside. It's a large, red crunchy treat, good for eating out of hand and for baking. They keep very well in storage and are available late in the season when most other apples are gone. It is best to keep apples as cold as possible, so store them in the back of your refrigerator. Apples can last up to six weeks in the refrigerator.

Braeburn Apples (EP) are grown by Jerzy Boyz in WA. Braeburn, a New Zealand import, is a red and green-gold color that is sweet, aromatic, and juicy. See Connell Red Apples for ripening and storage techniques.

Black Seedless Grapes (EN) Black Emerald is a variety known for it's sweet translucent flesh and thick black skin that has a waxy bloom. Your grapes are from Wolf Pack in California. This little farm has been certified for 20 years now, and the only things more exciting than its name, are its grapes! 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. During storage, continue to remove any and all spoiled fruit. *Editors note: these grapes are delicious! They are some of the best this season.*

Medjool Dates (EN) grown by Rancho Delux in CA. Medjool was originally imported from Morocco but is now grown in the United States. In fact, because of the batud disease in Morocco, U.S. growers have been sending Medjool trees to Morocco. The Medjool has become a more important variety in California in recent years and is the largest variety grown. It is very soft with a rich, sweet flavor. Dates at full maturity store remarkably well compared to other fruits, owing to their low water content. If packaged in an airtight container, fresh dates will last from one to eight months without refrigeration, three to twelve months if refrigerated, and up to several years if frozen. Store dates in the back of your refrigerator where temperatures are usually around 30°F to 40°F. It is also important to store dates away from strong smelling foods because they absorb odors easily

Cranberries (Local, EN) are grown by Ruesch Century Farm in WI. The name cranberry was given to this plant because the Pilgrims believed the plant looked like the head of a sandhill crane and was originally named craneberry. Over time, the "e" was dropped. Store fresh cranberries for up to two months in a tightly-sealed plastic bag in the refrigerator. As with all berries, if one starts getting soft and decaying, it will quickly spread to the rest.

Chestnuts (Local, ES) are grown by John and Betty Whittrig in Winfield, IA. Chestnuts are very perishable. It is very important to put them in a double layered paper bag in the coldest part of the refrigerator until you are ready to use. This allows the nuts to breathe and prevents sweating that may encourage mold to grow. See page 2 for more information and ideas on how to use them. Let us know your chestnut experience and if you would like us to include them in future fruit boxes.

Fuyu Persimmons (ES) are grown biodynamically at Benzler Farm in CA. Fuyus are squatter and rounder than the Hachiya. The color is a yellow-orange and not as brilliant as the Hachiya. It almost looks like a mini pumpkin or perhaps a slightly flattened tomato, but unlike the Hachiya, the Fuyu can be consumed immediately. It is crisp, lightly sweet and crunchy, like a Fuji apple. If you are wondering why you don't see more Fuyus in your local markets, it's because they are primarily funneled into ethnic markets where the demand is high.

Comice Pears (EP) are grown by The Stewart Family Farm in Hood River, OR. Comice pears are a French variety discovered in about 1849. It has a stubby, almost round shape with green skin and often a significant red blush on one cheek. Considered the king of the pears because of its extreme juiciness and sweetness, the Comice is the variety most often found in holiday gift boxes. With its delicate nature it is not recommended for cooking, however. Instead, Comice pears are excellent eaten raw, or served paired with cheese as a dessert. Once ripe, a pear will not last much more than a couple of days, even in the refrigerator.

12th Delivery

1

mid November

Chestnuts



Chestnuts:

"The nut of this tree is hung high aloft, wrapped in a silk wrapper, which is enclosed in a case of sole leather, which is again packed in a mass of shock absorbing, vermin proof pulp, sealed up in a waterproof, ironwood case, and finally cased in a vegetable porcupine of spines, almost impregnable. There is no nut so protected; there is no nut in our woods to compare with it as food."
~Julia Rogers

According to the *Chestnut Cookbook* by Annie Bhagwandin, "chestnuts have been part of human nutrition for at least 6000 years. They have kept whole nations from starvation in times of war and have titillated the palettes of nobility over the ages." The native American chestnut population has declined to near extinction due to fungal blight, introduced from Asia in the early 1900's.

Chestnuts are perishable and special care should be taken in their storage. Fresh ones need to be kept refrigerated, best if in double paper bags, in the coldest part of the refrigerator. This will keep them fresh and from drying out (which is very important) for at least a couple of months. They may also be frozen or dried [peel them and cook them like beans].

Chestnuts are different than any other nut, they are more like potatoes or grains than most nuts. Folk names like "bread of the mountains", "nut grain", and "corn tree" get at some of the differences between chestnuts and other nuts. They have very little oil; and have a very high quality, complete protein (better than eggs and with no cholesterol).

Chestnuts are popular in a wide variety of dishes throughout the temperate zones of the world. Besides roasted, there are dozens of recipes for soups, sauces, and dishes with vegetables, fruits, and meats. Chestnut stuffing was a pioneer staple for Thanksgiving.

They also are commonly used as flour in breads and pastas and in desserts (like chestnut pie and chestnut ice cream). Chestnuts are a complete protein and make a great back pack snack or camping treat.

John and Betty Whittrig's Favorite Chestnut Recipes

Roasted: To roast chestnuts it is necessary to cut an X through the shell before putting them in the oven, in a closed pan, over an open fire, or in the microwave. Uncut, they will **EXPLODE**. It helps to put a touch of water in to roast with them. Roast them 15 to 20 minutes at 400°F in the oven (turning occasionally) or 1^{1/2} minutes in the microwave. After roasting, eat them "out of hand" or add them to your favorite dishes.

Chestnuts in a Stir-Fry: Basically, though sweet chestnuts are very different and much more nutritious than water chestnuts, sweet chestnuts may be added to a stir-fry. Roast and peel the chestnuts as described above. Chop them and add them into the stir-fry mix during the last 3-5 minutes of cooking.

Traditional Chestnut Stuffing: Roast and peel about 2 lbs. of fresh chestnuts. Melt 4 tablespoons of butter and pour over chestnuts. Mash and season with salt and pepper. Stuff into the cavity of your turkey and bake as usual. (This is also an excellent way (without butter) to mash chestnuts for use in breads, biscuits, desserts, and pancakes.)

Chestnuts with Brussels Sprouts: In England this is a traditional holiday side dish. Roast and peel 1 lb. of fresh chestnuts. Cover in a bowl and set aside. Wash and trim Brussels Sprouts and cut an X in the bottoms of their stems and steam for about 10 minutes or until they are bright green and cooked through. Combine them with the chestnuts and add 2 tablespoons of butter. Toss and season with salt and pepper.

Boiled: We've learned from our customers that chestnuts are also delicious boiled whole for 10 to 17 minutes. No need to cut them. Start them in cold water. After they are done cooking eat them "like peanuts". They will open up with your teeth. This way you have an organic, low-fat hors d'oeuvre or a snack you can carry in your pocket. They are delicious this way, as good or better than roasted.

*You may also want to check out **The Chestnut Cookbook** by Annie Bhagwandin or order additional local organic chestnuts (available in limited supplies on a first come first serve basis). These are available through J&B Chestnut Farm at 307 N. Locust, Winfield, IA 52659. Their phone number is 319-257-3377.*

The goal of your fruit box is to bring special, fresh, high quality, tree (or vine or bush) ripened, organic fruit together from orchards, groves, and farms across the land. Your fruit box is the result of a partnership between Co-op Partners in Minnesota, the Harmony Valley Farm CSA in Wisconsin, and the Angelic Organics CSA in Illinois.