



Promoting sustainable agriculture
since 1974

PRODUCE NOTES

October 4, 2004

WHAT'S NEW & CHANGING IN OUR MARKET

Local supply on some items remains strong while greens and broccoli gap.

True to the season, **apples** are abundant, coming in from local orchards and out of state. New this year is the **Lady** from *Campbell Orchards*, a diminutive green apple with a solid red blush; it's crisp, juicy, sweet and just a little tart. **Newtown Pippins** from Denevan Orchards start this week, and Cuyama Orchard's **Fujis** are due in early next week.

Stone fruit is winding down but there is still some flavorful offerings in the way of **Last Chance** peaches, **Artic Mist** white nectarines, and **Flavorfall** pluots. Be sure to try the **Sweet September**, a cross between a yellow and a white peach, it's sub-acid and meant to be eaten crisp, with yellow flesh and beautifully blushed skin.

The hot weather several weeks ago brought **broccoli** to flower, raising prices on existing supplies, while the same conditions caused **cauliflower** to head up faster than expected, dropping prices. It will be a few weeks before these supplies normalize. **Bunched greens** have been vulnerable to the weather too as we transition from summer to the fall growing regions. *Givens Farm* in Santa Barbara will be starting up in a few weeks with their fall greens; *Cal Organic* will be too. Until these crops come on bunched greens may be somewhat limited.

An early, cool weather end to the East coast crop has driven up demand for California **lettuce**, limiting supply. Damage to crops from hurricanes in the southeast may continue to result in higher demand for West coast lettuce, greens, and citrus. This may impact the overall market price for these items.

Speaking of citrus, where are the **lemons**? Still ripening on the trees! Some growers are size picking and gassing fruit, but prices remain high. By mid October the gap is due to end, and at that time **valencias** and **coastal** grapefruit will be done—earlier than other years. The Borrego and Coachella grapefruit will fill the gap but oranges may gap till navels start in November.

A fall crop of **strawberries** from *Pure Veg* will start up within the week—just in time, too, since Watsonville's supply is tightening up and will end with the rains or cold, whichever comes first.

Pete Wolf expects his **Thompson, Crimson, Autumn Royal** grapes will continue into early November.

Both **Asian** and **European pears** are looking and eating well. Pear devotees name **Comice** as their favorite. They come in this week from the Columbia Gorge area under Oakridge Orchard and Columbia Gorge labels. **Comice**, like other winter pears, d'Anjou and Concord, require 21-30 days of cold conditioning before shipping so that they ripen properly.

Summer squash and **tomatoes** continue in good, local supply and quality. *Phil Foster/Pinnacle* started their **heirloom tomato** crop this week and expects to have supply through October. All our other heirloom labels are done for the season.

'TIS THE SEASON

Autumn is upon us and now is the time to begin rearranging your displays. We are proud to be offering a wide variety of hard squash and decorative crops from one of our prized growers—Warren Creek. We have been working together for over ten years and we welcome this season's return of their unique produce.

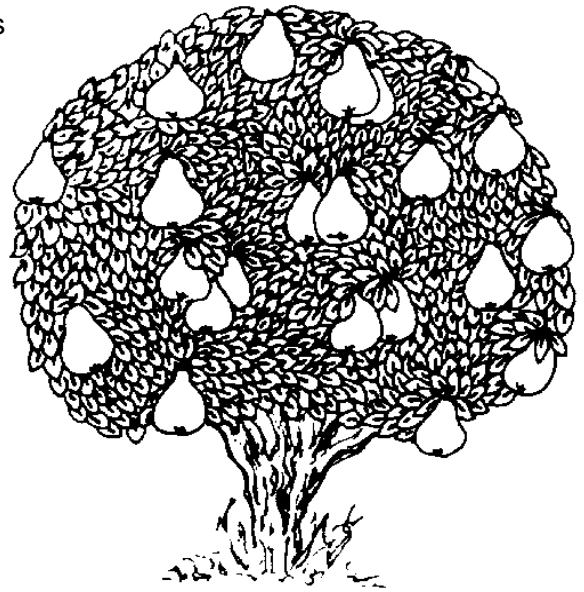
Warren Creek offers a full line of hard squash including the **standard varieties**: Acorn, Butternut, Delicata, Kabocha and Spaghetti. But they also offer some more unique varieties: **White Acorn**, Buttercup, **Sugar Loaf**, **Carnival**, Red Kuri and Turban. Warren Creek supplies us with the ever special **Jack Be Little**, **We Be Little** and **Baby Boo Mini-Pumpkins**. They are also our sole provider of **decorative gourds** and **decorative corn**.

Now is the time to spice up your departments with the beautiful colors and textures that Warren Creek's produce has to offer. There's even a **Mixed Variety Hard Squash pack**, with all the variety in one box. New this year, almost all of their squashes have PLU # stickers. Hopefully these will assist you in handling their product. -Aly Hein

PETTIGREW ORCHARD'S IPM FRENCH BUTTER PEARS

"The pear must be approached, as its feminine nature indicates, with discretion and reverence; it withholds its secrets from the merely hungry." Edward Bunyard Anatomy of Dessert

We have carried Pettigrew Orchards French Butter Pears every fall for over a decade. A delicate Bartlett-like pear, they are grown to perfection in the Sacramento Delta region, and they are the only IPM pears we offer. IPM, or Integrated Pest Management, is a pesticide reduction program –it is not an organic program: conventional, non-organic, pesticides are used with the goal to use as little as possible. ***Spraying occurs when pest populations are high enough to threaten the quality of the crop.*** Over the years, we've requested copies of Pettigrew's spray records as part of our verification program. This year's record shows no Class I pesticides (the most toxic class of pesticides) but several Class II and III materials, many of which are designed specifically for IPM programs. ***These materials are pest specific and don't harm beneficial insects, some are even synthetic versions of organic materials.*** While these pears are not organic we recognize the Pettigrew family's commitment to reducing pesticide use while growing special and flavorful pears. Family farms like theirs are an integral part of supporting sustainable agriculture in the Bay area.



METHYL BROMIDE ACTION ALERT!


Tell the EPA to phase out ozone-destroying, cancer-causing methyl bromide

Methyl bromide is a dangerous pesticide used primarily on **tomato** and **strawberry** fields. It is the most powerful ozone-destroying chemical still in widespread use, exposing millions of Americans and people around the world to increased risks of skin cancer, cataracts and immune system illnesses from ultraviolet radiation that breaks through the earth's weakened ozone layer. Methyl bromide also increases rates of prostate cancer among workers who apply it to crops and others directly exposed to it.

Under the terms of the **Clean Air Act and the Montreal Protocol** (the international treaty to protect the ozone layer), methyl bromide production is supposed to stop at the end of this year. Chemical companies have had more than a dozen years to develop safer alternatives, and many have done so. **By 2003 methyl bromide use had been cut by 70 percent**, and even more alternatives have become available since then.

But at the urging of a few big chemical companies and agribusinesses, the Environmental Protection Agency has proposed huge exemptions to continue methyl bromide use and production in 2005 and beyond -- and at even higher levels than in 2003. **In other words, the EPA wants to go backwards, reversing the phase-out and increasing the use of this dangerous chemical once again.**

What's more, the big chemical companies have built up a huge secret stockpile of methyl bromide. The Montreal treaty says that any small remaining needs should be met from stockpiles before any new methyl bromide can be produced. But the EPA is proposing to let chemical companies keep making more methyl bromide even though they have lots tucked away in stockpiles.

 **WHAT TO DO:** Send a message, **before the October 21st comment deadline**, urging the EPA to complete the long overdue phase-out and not allow huge exemptions and secret stockpiles for methyl bromide. OR, send an official comment directly from NRDC's Earth Action Center at <http://www.nrdc.org/action/>.

Docket # OAR-2003-0230, Environmental Protection Agency, Mail code 6102T1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW Washington, DC 20460, Fax: 202-566-1742, Email: a-and-r-docket@epamail.epa.gov