

Produce Notes and Announcements

April, especially, and May to some extent, are the most difficult months for the produce department. Spring greens are still growing and many fall and winter items like onions, hard squash, potatoes and sweet potatoes are either absent or dwindling. Asparagus and strawberries are the highest stars in the produce firmament – thankfully very popular and delicious items. At the time of this writing, artichokes, cabbage, cauliflower, spinach and lettuce are still quite expensive and limited in supply. This will change as the weather warms toward the end of the month. May usually sees the first cherries and peaches but citrus supplies, except for valencia oranges, will be decreasing and/or disappearing. Try to enjoy the last of the fabulous tangerines and navel oranges now. Look for new crops of onions, and potatoes to come in soon. Eat lots of strawberries.

A reminder to our customers: we no longer provide a drop off box at Mariposa. Our new larger size has made it impossible to deal with personal business between customers. Items are likely to become misplaced or lost. We're sorry, but this is one of the downsides of getting bigger.

Check out our supply of spring plants from Lovin' Blooms. These beautiful, healthy growables are nurtured in organic soil and are Renegade Certified (Mendocino County's alternative organic certifier). Later on Plant Friends nursery will be supplying us with summer edibles.

We know we promised this long ago but it's still in the works after a few setbacks. We plan to obtain an indoor water dispenser and do away with the outdoor set-up, which is chronically out of order. Hopefully, this will be functioning by summer.

Remember Earth Day April 22. We plan to have some celebrations and drawings. On a personal level make a commitment to improve your recycling and re-using.

Natural Choice Awards

Each year in the natural foods industry products come and go. Luckily, there are some stand-out items that continue to remain best sellers. Hence, we are given the Natural Choice winners from Whole Foods Magazine. Winners are selected by anonymous votes cast by retailers around the country. Several of this year's winners are remarkable because they have won for consecutive years. For instance, Millenium's GT's kombucha has won for the fourth year, Garden of Life won the weight loss category two years running and Now Foods full line has won three years in a row.

Here are the winners:

- 1.) Supplement; full line – Now Foods
- 2.) Supplement; psports nutrition – Now Whey Protein
- 3.) Supplements; weight loss – Garden of Life Fuco Thin
- 4.) Supplements; herbs – Gaia Black Elderberry Syrup
- 5.) Supplements and specialty – Barleans Organic Oil, full line
- 6.) Supplements; children – Nature's Plus Animal Parade
- 7.) Foods; organic – Braggs Apple Cider Vinegar

- 8.) Foods; vegan – Amy’s Kitchen Burritos (bean and rice, black bean and vegetable and breakfast burrito)
- 9.) Foods; Nutrition Bar – Nature’s Plus Ultra Energy Acai Bar
- 10.) Foods; sensitive diets – Kinnikinnick Foods full line, all are gluten, wheat, nut, peanut, dairy, and casein free
- 11.) Foods; beverages – Millenium GT’s Kombucha
- 12.) HBC; skin care– Weleda Skin Food
- 13.) HBC; hair care – Nature’s Gate Herbal Daily Shampoo
- 14.) HBC; personal care – Tom’s of Maine Toothpaste
- 15.) Pet Products; Petguard Dog and Cat Foods.

PRODUCE UPDATE

The most important fruits and vegetables to buy organic (to avoid pesticide residue) are: Apples, Bell Peppers, Celery, Cherries, Imported Grapes, Nectarines, Peaches, Pears, Potatoes, Raspberries, Spinach, and Strawberries.

According to : www.GreenAmericaToday.org

Plan It Green for the Planet

Nan and Terri, Grocery and Gifts

This month in recognition of Earth Day we are introducing a few “green” and “natural” products!

While we continue to evaluate products we bring into our market, we seek those which are environmentally safe for our planet, as well as for our fragile allergy sensitive folks, our children and our pets.

In many of the larger ‘not so natural’ outside companies, unless products are potentially hazardous they’re not required to give consumers all the hidden ingredients such as dyes and perfumes. We review our products and promote those with alternative ingredients such as, essential oils, natural enzymes, eco friendly plant and mineral bases, non-chlorine bleaches, biodegradable, and septic friendly properties which also have exceptional cleaning power! Just to name a few: Ecover – laundry and dish detergents and household cleaners frequently go on sale and are very popular. Seventh Generation – (a personal favorite) has several homes here in Mariposa. Under this label there are a wide variety of cleaning and paper goods, as well as baby items to help take care of those little and their environment naturally!

Our newest addition, Grab Green – eco friendly laundry pods are purely mineral and plant based. We sell these individual pods in our bulk section as well as our clean green aisle pre-packed with ziplock bags – so they are easy to travel with. We also carry biodegradable garbage bags, paper products and too many other goodies to list here.

We would like to say “thank you very much,” to all our customers for taking part in our recycling program here at Mariposa. Don’t forget to collect your well earned refunds at the register! Oh, and while you’re there pick up one of our reusable Mariposa green bags to help cut back on plastics and paper.

Did you know plastics take a minimum of 50 years to degrade and paper bags highly pollute in the manufacturing process and also let off gases when degrading? A good quality reusable bag,

such as ours, can be used for at least two years. "If one person uses only one reusable bag each day, it saves at least 2,000 disposable bags over its lifetime. (April 2010, Whole Food Magazine) Then there's plastic! We'll talk another time on that topic. But for now, we would like to mention that we offer a variety of water bottles and Klean Kanteens, Eco friendly food containers and utensils in our gift section. Our furniture care products are amazing. We also cater to our furry friends with many natural remedies, amenities and wonderful natural foods. So "plan it green for our planet" on your next trip to Mariposa Market. Happy and Healthy Earth Day to ALL!

DELI NOTES

We now have a full line of gluten-free sweets from a local baker, Kathryn Sterngold. Look for Sugar Kat Kitchen scones, brownies, and more!

Put a spring in your step.

As the season changes and our senses are awakened to the fresh sights and sounds it provides us with a great opportunity to get reacquainted with our own backyards. And by that I mean our actual backyards, scenic vistas, and local hiking trails.

We've all heard the buzz of greening ourselves, our habits and our habitats. One great way to do that is to get outside and enhance your mind, body and spirit through an enlivening hike or researching the local flora and fauna that grows in your neighborhood and on your property.

I am reading a fantastic book by Richard Louv, [The Last Child in the Woods](#). It offers a perspective that is sensible, yet often overlooked. Today's youth are losing the direct connection with nature that inspires curiosity. The priceless time spent in the woods making forts and ruling imaginary kingdoms builds all kinds of skills that contribute to a greater quality of life. Maybe there are even adults who never forged a connection to the outdoors; it is never too late.

In Mendocino County we are surrounded by landscapes that beg to be explored. Many people own a piece of property that lends itself nicely to the afternoon walk. But, what about the people who live in town? Where are the great local places to take a hike or just build a connection to place? Eating right and using the right household cleaner is just one step going in "green." A large part of the process is ensuring physical, emotional, and mental health so that we have a future full of balanced individuals.

A great resource to find out about local hiking is the Willits Chamber of Commerce, www.willits.org/index. They have information on hiking throughout the county including, Brooktrails, Jackson State Demonstration Forest and Mendocino National Forest. Ridgewood Ranch, home of Sea Biscuit, offers docent led tours on Saturdays through the spring. To learn more visit their website, www.seabiscuitheritage.org/conservancy.html. A great website for trails closer to the coastal side of the county is, www.mendocinowalks.org. Included are trails in Jackson State Demonstration Forest.

I asked people around town what their favorite hiking spots are. Many people liked leisurely walks through city streets and valley roads. Others preferred to get a little further out on the Calypso Orchid Trail in Brooktrails (there is a turnout with a sign for it off of Poppy Drive). The hiking trails in Brooktrails are difficult to find from the car and require a little bit of research and investigation. It is helpful to contact the Brooktrails Community Services District Office for specific trail locations or maybe even a map. Little Darby Trail, run by the Arcata field Office of BLM, is a short but beautiful walk up and down a forest hill. Little Darby is off of Canyon Road on the left hand side as you're headed towards Tomki Road.

By getting outside, we're helping our skin, our joints, our sense of place, and our imaginations.

Skin and Body Care

We now offer Snow Lotus Aromatherapy Facial Serums and Hydrosols here at Mariposa. These serums are blended with organic essential oils in a base of fine, highly absorbent, non clogging vegetable oils, such as rose hip, carrot seed, evening primrose and apricot to name a few. Each formula is designed to condition, nourish, and revitalize a particular skin type. The main reason you want to use a serum is to deliver nutrients into the deeper layers of the skin. Consider a serum as a multivitamin for the face! You only need a drop or two to cover the face and neck.

Before using the serum, after cleansing, mist with the appropriate hydrosol for your skin type to hydrate, tone and nourish your skin. A true hydrosol is the water that is collected when plants, flowers, roots, and herbs are distilled to make essential oils. These botanical waters are extremely hydrating and gentle on your skin. We currently carry lavender, melissa (lemon balm), rose, and neroli.

Another new line now available here is Derma E's Tropical Solutions. These products contain Tamanu oil, CoQ10, pomegranate, Green Tea, and Acai. Tamanu oil is great for the skin and has antioxidant properties also. The products have a yummy pineapple, papaya scent! We have the scrub, the day and night creams an intensive serum, cleanser, and eye cream.

Some skin saving tips to remember are; to eat healthy, get outdoor exercise to increase oxygen flow, and drink plenty of water to keep you hydrated!

The Folklore. The avocado, a true Aztec treasure, originated in south-central Mexico around 7,000 to 5,000 B.C. and became domesticated thousands of years later. Archaeologists in Peru discovered domesticated avocado seeds buried with Incan mummies dating back to 750 B.C. The Aztecs called them ahuatl – “fertility fruits” – but when the Spanish conquistadores arrived they called the fruit “aguacate,” which eventually gave way to “avocado” in English.

The Facts. Avocados (*Persea Americana*) are technically fruit – large berries with one big seed – in the same family as cinnamon and bay laurel. Avocado trees thrive in the temperate climate of Mexico and California, which are the world leaders in avocado production. Like, bananas, avocados are climacentric fruit, which means they can mature on the tree but won't ripen until they are removed. Avocados have suffered a bad reputation for their high fat content, but one-

fourth of a medium avocado contains only 81 calories and contributes a wealth of nutrients, such as dietary fiber, vitamins C and K, and folate.

The Findings. Avocados are virtually the only fruit that has monosaturated fat, plus it has a bonus of polyunsaturated fat, as well. According to the American Heart Association, these fats help reduce blood cholesterol levels and decrease risk for heart disease. The fruit is also rich in carotenoids (plant pigments that act as antioxidants), such as lutein, zeaxanthin, beta-cryptoxanthin, alpha-carotene and beta-carotene. Researchers recently identified four additional carotenoids (trans neoxanthin, neochrome, lutein-5, 6-epoxide and chrysanthemaxanthin) in the California Hass avocado, which was reported in the October 2009 Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry. Carotenoid intake from foods has been linked to immune system enhancement and protecting body cells against damage from free radicals. In particular, lutein, and zeaxanthin appear to protect the eyes against disease.

The Finer Points. Looking for ripe avocado? Find one that is firm, but yields to gentle pressure when it is squeezed. An easy way to slice a ripe, Hass avocado is to cut it in half length-wise around the seed, rotate the halves to separate, and then scoop out the seed and flesh with a spoon. To prevent discoloration, sprinkle avocado with lemon juice or vinegar. The creamy, earthy texture and flavor of avocado pairs well with seafood, poultry, salads, Mexican food, sushi and eggs. Try avocados mashed as a spread on breads, slice, them into sandwiches and salads, and fill avocado halves – beautiful, edible bowls – with your favorite foods from crabmeat to curried chicken. - Sharon Palmer, R.D. (Environmental Nutrition May 2010 Volume 33 Number 5)

Notable Nutrients

¼ avocado (50 grams)

Calories: 81

Monounsaturated Fat: 5 grams

Dietary Fiber: 3 grams (14%DV)

Omega-3 Fatty Acids 55 milligrams

Vitamin C: 5 milligrams (8%DV)

Vitamin K: 10.6 micrograms (13% DV)

Folate: 41 micrograms (10% DV)

Beta-carotene: 31 micrograms

Lutein + Zeaxanthin: 136 micrograms

Here we meet again loyal readers to put the spotlight on yet another one of our quality local wineries. This time around the focus is on a father and sons team, Nelson Family Vineyards. You'll find them nicely nestled in between Hopland and Ukiah just west of Hwy. 101 back behind the strawberry patch. The farm has been in the family since 1952 when Greg's parents, Herman and Clara Nelson sold their farm in what is now the Silicone Valley and established the family farm. What began as a mostly plum and sheep ranch has evolved into the versatile operation that thrives today, with over 200 acres planted with twelve grape varietals, Bartlett pears, olives, rapeseed (Canola), as well as Christmas trees.

In 2003, after many years of enjoying their handcrafted wines at home, the Nelsons decided to share their wines with an awaiting public. The first vintage of Nelson Family Vineyards consisted of 420 cases. Today they continue to make premium wine in ultra small

batches using only 100% estate grown grapes to assure absolute quality. Greg and oldest son Tyler work as a team in the vineyards utilizing sustainable, fish friendly farming practices in order to adhere to their motto, 'Great wines are born in the vineyard.' While youngest son Chris rounds out the trio with his goal of gently guiding the grapes into wines that show off the balance and high quality they strive to achieve.

If you're in the neighborhood their beautifully renovated tasting room, born out of Grandma Clara's old sitting room, is indeed worth a visit. The tasting room patio is an ideal place to enjoy a fine glass of wine along with some amazing views and maybe even a picnic. In years past they have been host to many warm weather music fests and this year will prove to be no exception. Starting in July they will begin their three month fourth Friday music festival. August is shaping up to be a busy and musical month. On Saturday the 7th Nelson Family Vineyards will host Hopland Summer Fest. This event will include live music, Nelson Family wines, as well as many wines from other neighboring Hopland wineries. Next on Saturday the 21st they will be throwing a benefit event for the people of Haiti. Then on Friday the 27th the second fourth Friday event followed the next day, Saturday the 28th, with another benefit. This event will benefit and feature our local Ukiah Symphony! If you're not thinking quite that far in advance then may I remind you of the upcoming Hopland Spring Passport, which will be held Saturday and Sunday May 1st and 2nd. If you're coming from the North then Nelson Family Vineyards will be your first stop.

Let's take a closer look at a few of their offerings available here at the Market:

2007 Cabernet Sauvignon was harvested from five distinctly different blocks in order to create complexity and balance. Aged in 100% French oak for 20 months this Cab is deep and rich with dark berries and earthy notes. Enjoy this wine with a nice hearty stew.

2008 Pinot Grigio is crisp and lively wine. This Grigio starts with an enticing aroma and exhibits flavors of citrus and apple and a hint of mineral qualities. A delicious pairing for this wine would be either crab or salmon and spinach salad with a nice chevre.