



MARIPOSA NEWS

LATE SPRING 2014



Notes from Mary Anne

Spring is bursting forth around us here in Mendocino County. This is the time of year when almost everyone feels happy to be alive and residing where we do in this exquisitely beautiful area. Though our summer may be drier than usual, I personally am grateful for the rains we did finally receive, rains which kept us from experiencing the driest year on record. Bubbling streams and swathes of wildflowers make us forget that life can be challenging. This truly is the fairest season.

To help make your garden grow, Mariposa is offering plant starts from four different local growers. All of them use organic practices, but C&A Farm is actually certified organic. The various growers have a marvelous selection of summer vegetables ready to plant. And Roots to Shoots from Laytonville has a large offering of spring greens from lettuce and kales to brassicas. These growers all work hard to present a professional product. They use organic soil mixes and seeds whenever possible. Best of all the plants are adapted to this area and are grown in local greenhouses.

Although summer is coming, it's still too early for California to produce summer vegetables. The exception is zucchini. However, some very luscious produce is coming in from Mexico. The melons have been superb so far with seedless watermelon, cantaloupe, and honeydews topping the list. Cucumbers, which have been expensive all season, are really down in price. If you love cucumbers, be sure to give the Persian cukes a try. These small cucumbers are very sweet and tender with edible skin. They originated in Persia (Iran) but are grown in Mexico. Usually quite expensive, they are very reasonable right now and are definitely worth trying.

Strawberries are starting to decrease in price

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Be Positive Something to Think About By Camille Stuart

From Norman Vincent Peale to the Dalai Lama, Dr. Seuss to Katie Couric, there's been hundreds, if not thousands of books written on positive thinking. Usually when I see something new, I think, "good grief, not another one." However, this title caught my eye; The Antidote: Happiness for People Who Can't Stand Positive Thinking, by Oliver Burkeman. Right up my alley!

Here's a little sample:

You are putting something off because you don't feel like doing it. Solution: Make like Spock and ignore your feelings. They're getting in your way. He (Burkeman) points out that when we say things like "I just can't get out of bed early in the morning" or "I just can't get myself to exercise," what we really mean is that we can't get ourselves to feel like doing these things. Physically, nothing is stopping you – you just don't feel like it. Who says you need to wait until you 'feel like' doing something in order to start doing it?

Without consciously realizing it, we've all bought

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into the idea that to be motivated and effective we need to feel like we want to take action. Burkeman goes on to say that he really doesn't know why we believe this. Yes, on some level you need to be committed to what you are doing, that you need to want to see the project finished, or get healthier, or get an earlier start to your day. But, you don't need to feel like doing it. Many artists, writers, and innovators have become so in part because of their reliance on work routines to put in a certain number of hours a day, no matter how they might have felt. He reminds us of renowned artist Chuck Close's observation that "Inspiration is for amateurs. The rest of us just show up and get to work." (Just what I needed to hear!)

So, if you find yourself putting something off because you don't feel like it, remember that you don't actually need to feel like it. There is nothing stopping you!

Source: *Psychology Today*, "How to Make Yourself Do It When You Just Don't Want To", by Heidi Grant Halvorson, Ph.D.



The Time of Beer

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and increase in sweetness. The quality is exceptional. The months of May and June are the pinnacles of the strawberry season. So be prepared to pig out on America's favorite berry---think shortcakes, and pies, smoothies and just plain eating. They are also a very nutritious berry with lots of Vitamin C and fiber.

The first of summer fruits are starting to trickle in. By the end of May there will be grapes, some peaches, and cherries .In June we are projecting that there will be organic apricots by the lug and by the lb. We will post more information about this as the time draws closer.

Apples are starting from South America now. They should be quite tasty but the price may be a little high. Valencia oranges are in season, price is good and quality is very good. Navels, Cara Caras and Minneola Tangelos are on their way out. Lemons will be going up in price soon. Hopefully, Limes will be cheaper as the summer progresses. Avocados should stay steady through the summer.

Thank you to all of you who helped us celebrate Earth Day. We had a lot of fun and hopefully reminded everyone who shops here about their obligation to the earth. Enjoy this beautiful spring.

Imported Apple Season Begins

No matter what the price, apples are the number one selling fruit, after bananas. This time of the year sees the apple market at its bleakest. Cold storage domestic apples, which were picked in the fall, have all been sold. Our only prospect on the horizon is the new crop fruit from South America. May is the month when the first imported apples begin to appear on the market. Galas will be the first apple of the season. Crisp and sweet, they are most excellent when they are fresh. Granny Smith and Braeburns will follow, with Fuji and Cripps Pink rounding out the South American harvest around the end of May. Imported apples stay on the shelves until August, just in time for the first local Gravensteins to become available.

— Mary Anne

Propolis: It's All The Buzz

By Alecia O'Neil

Propolis is a natural resin created by bees. Also nicknamed "bee glue" it comes from two Greek words "pro" meaning before, and "polis" meaning city. The Greeks recognized that the bees use it to glue their hives together, seals gaps, and keep out unwelcome intruders. Propolis is not only used as form of protection from the elements, but also comes in handy if a small critter such as a lizard or a mouse were to get into the hive and die. The bees could seal the carcass in propolis resin and mummify it, preventing disease from parasites and bacterial growth. This may be where the Egyptians got the idea since they used it for the same mummifying purpose! Propolis also gives the hive stability, reduces vibrations, and has a long history of medicinal use which dates back to 350 B.C. It has been particularly effective treating infections and soothing pain. Propolis has antiviral, antimicrobial, antibacterial, and antioxidant properties.

Propolis is used for:

Serious cuts, wounds and burns.

Athlete's foot.

Soothing inflammation.

Healing stomach ulcers caused by certain types of bacteria such as pylori bacteria.

Viruses such as herpes, cold sores, or the common cold.

Vaginitis

Acne

Allergies

Bacterial and fungal infection of the mouth; gum infection, plaque and cavities

Canker sores

Sore throats and cancers of the nose and throat

A side note on propolis and its highly antibacterial properties is that it does not destroy the friendly bacteria, but it has been proven effective against strains of bacteria that resist chemical antibiotics.

So you might be wondering where does this magical sticky resin come from? Resin that seeps from buds or barks of some trees, mainly conifers and poplars, is gathered by the bees. Once it is carried back to the hive, it's blended with wax flakes the bees se-

crete from special glands on their abdomens. With its highly antiseptic properties the bees layer it down to create a sterile environment for the queen bee to lay her eggs. Depending on the botanical source the Propolis is gathered from, the color of the resin will also be determined. Most commonly it is dark brown, and depending on the region of the planet it comes from, the chemical composition and its medicinal properties vary as well.

Natura Nectars is a new company Mariposa is now carrying that has brought the rare red and green bee propolis from Brazil to the U.S. market. They use a unique water base extraction method that ensures elimination of impurities that keeps its valued medicinal components intact, chemical free. The scientific research done on these exotic varieties of propolis is available on Natura Nectars website. There is a library of publications to reference based on studies performed using red propolis and cancerous pancreatic cells, leukemic/ blood cells, prostate cells and lung cells, to name a few. The red variety has the highest ORAC score compared to all foods on the USDA database at 3,549 per/ gr. The ORAC value measures the antioxidant value of foods, making red Propolis an incredible anti-aging product!

Natura Nectars makes three propolis products available; red, green and a lesser expensive Trio with a red green and brown blend. Through their research they claim some of the benefits to be that it:

Has immune modulation properties for daily immune support

Supports healthy inflammation response

Supports pancreatic, lung, blood, prostate, breast, cardiovascular, and hepatic cell health

Support healthy blood sugar levels

Supports heart and circulatory health

Supports larynges health

Supports healthy metabolism

Supports hormonal balancing

Sounds like some pretty impressive benefits, and just another reason to save the bees!



A Few Words on Yerba Mate and Coffee

Hi, my name is Kasey and I'm an assistant manager in the grocery department. One of my responsibilities is ordering coffee and tea, and, in the year I've worked here I've helped many people with their choices. One of the more frequently asked questions is, "What's the difference between Yerba Mate and Coffee?" One difference is that coffee contains caffeine, while yerba mate contains mateine. They are both a part of the xanthine family, all of which are stimulants.

Yerba mate tea is a South American beverage made by steeping the ground leaves and stems of the yerba mate plant. The plant contains mateine, a central nervous system stimulant along with a number of other nutrients including antioxidants, amino acids, polyphenols, vitamins and minerals.

Yerba mate also contains about 90% more antioxidants than green tea and has significant immune boosting properties. It can slow the signs of aging, detoxify the blood and prevent many types of cancer. Yerba mate also helps reduce stress and insomnia. Users report increased mental energy, clarity and focus, but they also say that yerba mate doesn't cause any of the uncomfortable side effects associated with drinking caffeinated beverages, such as headaches, stomachaches and jitters. The chemical compounds and nutrients in yerba mate tea affect your metabolism to make your body use carbohydrates more efficiently. This means you'll get more energy from the food you eat. You'll also burn more of the calories your body has stored in fat cells as fuel when you drink yerba mate tea regularly.

Regular consumption also helps keep lactic acid from building up in your muscles so you can decrease post workout soreness and cut your recovery time. The native peoples of South America have long used the tea as a traditional herbal remedy against digestive ailments. It aids digestion by stimulating increased production of bile and other gastric acids. Yerba mate helps keep your colon clean for effective and efficient waste elimination, and helps reduce the stomach bacteria that can contribute to bad breath. Yerba mate has stimulant qualities to help you feel full sooner after you begin eating, and it slows your digestion so that your stomach stays full longer. Combining yerba mate with a healthy diet and regular exercise can help boost your metabolism to burn more calories, and it can help you eat less by curbing your appetite slightly. The antioxidants and amino acids present naturally in the tea help fat and cholesterol move through your bloodstream so that they don't accumulate on artery walls. Yerba mate also helps prevent arteriosclerosis (hardening of the arteries) and prevents blood clots that may cause heart attack or stroke.

There are many differences of opinion when it comes to the topic of coffee. Some opinions may sway depending on whether or not that person is a consumer. It's hard to say what is true or not, but here is what I found out. An unroasted coffee bean has acids, protein and caffeine but no taste. Coffee roasting involves heat to make a chemical reaction that turns the carbohydrates and fats into aromatic oils. The coffee bean has natural oils, cafestol and kahweol, that are released during this process. The roasting process is what gives coffee its flavor. One of the oils found in coffee, cafestol, takes control of an important bile acid receptor located in the intestines that helps to regulate cholesterol in the body. In doing so, cafestol raises cholesterol. According to scientist Dr. David Moore, cafestol is the most potent dietary cholesterol-elevating agent currently known. However, the coffee oils suspected and proved to raise cholesterol are also present in unfiltered coffee, the end product of boiled coffee, or a French press.

Filtered coffee, the kind typically seen with traditional coffee makers, contains very little of the coffee oils. It is said that the paper filters used in coffee makers trap the oils that increase cholesterol. There are also benefits to drinking coffee. Some are similar to the benefits of drinking yerba mate. The caffeine in coffee can increase fat burning in the body and boost the metabolic rate. It stimulates the nervous system, causing it to send signals to the fat cells to break down body fat. Caffeine makes the fat cells break down body fat, releasing them into the blood as free fatty acids and making them available as fuel. Coffee is more than just black water. Many of the nutrients in the coffee beans do make it into the final drink. Coffee contains riboflavin (vitamin B2) 11%, Pantothenic (vitamin B5) 6%, Manganese and potassium 3%, Magnesium and niacin (vitamin B3) 2%. These percentages are based on the recommended daily amount. Although the amounts may not seem like a big deal, most people are drinking more than one cup per day. If you drink 3-4, then these amounts quickly add up. Research over the past few years suggests that coffee consumption may protect against type 2 diabetes, Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's, liver cancer, and liver cirrhosis. Of course, any health benefits will depend on how you consume it. If you have a specialty coffee made every day with cream, sugar, flavored syrup, and whip cream, the bad will begin to outweigh the good. All in all, it is up to each person to decide what is best for them.



Buy Organic—Why It's Worth It

Chief Content Officer & Strategist for *Taste for Life*, Lynn Tryba has published articles in national magazines—including *Psychology Today*, *Whole Life Times*, and *Mind and Life* as well as numerous online outlets, including CNNfyi.

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When it comes to cancer prevention, people need to be more proactive than just getting the recommended screenings and doing self exams.

The centers for disease control and prevention report that 1 in 3 women will get cancer in their lifetime. For men, it's 1 in 2. Cancer is the leading cause of death in American children younger than 15.

One of the most important ways to protect your family's health is by choosing organic food whenever possible, according to the President's Cancer Panel and the American Academy of Pediatrics. This step will greatly reduce exposure to pesticides.

Protection against pesticides is especially important when it comes to children, whose internal organs are still developing and whose immune systems are not as strong as those of adults.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, "There are critical periods in human development when exposure to a toxin can permanently alter the way an individual's biological system operates."

Pesticide use has been linked to birth defects, ADHD, cancer, and food sensitivities as well as neurological, developmental, and reproductive disorders. Pollutants like organochlorine pesticides can reduce fertility in both men and women. A study of about 500 couples who were trying to become pregnant showed a connection between their exposure to environmental pollutants and their ability to conceive.

Reducing Chemical Exposure

The *New York Times* reports that there are 80,000 chemicals being used in the US. Of those, only a few hundred have been tested for safety. According to the EPA, more than a billion pounds of pesticides per year are used in this country.

The ubiquity of chemicals may help explain why 300 contaminants have been found in the umbilical cord blood of newborns. Maternal exposure to toxins found in everything from the air a woman breathes to the foods she eats, from the products she puts on her body to the household products she cleans with are having a cumulative effect to such an extent that "babies are born 'pre-polluted,'" warns the President's Cancer Panel.

While debate exists over whether organic foods offer more nutrition than conventionally grown foods, there is one thing we know for sure: Organic food is *NOT* delivering pesticides, insecticides, growth hormones, and antibiotics into your body. Unlike conventional agriculture, none of these unwanted substances is allowed in organic food production.

Steps to Take

Besides choosing organic food whenever possible, how do you "detox" your lifestyle in ways that bolster health? Here are five easy tips. You can find information about chemicals used in consumer products at websites such as www.cosmeticsdatabase.com, www.ewg.org, and www.healthystuff.org. Also, when choosing children's products, look for Global Organic Textile Standards, which prohibit use of toxic heavy metals, formaldehyde, nanoparticles, GMOs, and phthalates.

1. Remove shoes when entering the home to prevent chemicals from being spread about the house.
2. Filter your drinking water.
3. Do not use plastics that contain BPA.

If you microwave food, avoid plastic containers. Use ceramic or glass containers instead.

Encouraging stats

The importance of going organic is hitting home with the American public. Seventy-six percent believe that organic food is better for the environment. Almost 75 percent believe it is healthier to eat organic than conventionally grown food. Eighty-one percent of US families buy organic at least some of the time. Sixty-three percent believe organic is better for animals.

SELECTED SOURCES "Are Organic Foods Safer or Healthier Than Conventional Alternatives? A Systematic Review" by C. Smith-Spangler et al., *Ann Intern Med*. 9/12 n "Children Are at Greater Risks From Pesticide Exposure," Environmental Protection Agency, www.epa.gov, 1/02n "Eight In Ten Parents Report They Purchase Organic Products," Organic Trade Association, www.organicnewsroom.com, 4/13 n "Exploring Cancer Development in Adulthood...From Chronic Exposure to Organophosphate Pesticides Among Rural Farm Children" by V. How et al., *J. Agromedicine*, 2014 n "New Alarm Bells About Chemicals and Cancer" by Nicholas D. Kristof, *New York Times*, 5/6/10 n "Organic Food vs. Conventional: What the State Article Missed" by Robyn O'Brien, *Prevention*, 1/30/14 n "Organic Foods: Health and Environmental Advantages and Disadvantages" by J. Forman and J. Silverstein, *Pediatrics*, 11/12 Volume 84 in the Expert Advise Series.

The Chill Department Speaks By Camille and Carrie

As the summer months approach, we will see the return of some of our seasonal cheeses. Cheeseland's Kokos Coconut cheese, made from cow's milk, will be back, as well as Redwood Hills Crottin which is made from goat's milk. New cheeses from Marin French Creamery, Nicasio Valley Creamery, and Cheeseland will also be appearing in our case sometime in early May. New to our shelves will be some products from Fabrique Delices Artisanal Charcuterie. These fine meat products pair well with many of our cheeses at any gathering or celebration.

For those of you looking for Niman Ranch products, we are sad to say that they are no longer available to us from our present distributor. If we hear from you that you absolutely must have Niman Ranch products, we can try to get them from another provider. At present, we would like to stay with our current distributor since they are a smaller family owned operation which is local out of the Santa Rosa area. They can provide us with a new line of sausages and sliced lunch meats which we are very interested in receiving. These products are made at Fra'Mani, a meat company out of Berkeley. Their products are made with Niman Ranch pork, so the change should not be huge. We would like to try these products before we make a switch to another distributing company. Please let us know how you like the Fra'Mani line.

Now, a few words about tilapia. You may have noticed that we are carrying tilapia in our fish case from time to time. We are committed to providing only wild caught fish, but some customers have asked for tilapia (only available as a farmed fish) because it is good tasting fish at a better price. We did a little research and found out that the tilapia which is available to us comes from a very reputable source and is listed on the Monterey Bay Aquarian safe fish list. The fish is produced by Rain Forest Aquaculture. Located in Central America (Costa Rica and Panama) where high commitment to the environment and their community are a part of their mission statement, Rain Forest Aquaculture takes great care for the well-being of the fish, the natural environment, and your health. The fish is of premium quality, is healthy and safe. Any comments about this decision are welcome.

Enjoy the warming weather and get ready to celebrate summer with our new offerings!

Mangos by Debbie Flowers

Mangos are grown in tropical climates all over the world. They are harvested at different times so we can enjoy them year round. They have two seasons; Spring/Summer and Fall/Winter. Ataulfo mangos are very sweet and creamy, smooth with firm flesh with no fibers. This is one of my personal favorites. When ripe, the skin turns to a deep golden color with small wrinkles. They are available March thru July. Ataulfo mangos are grown in Mexico. Haden mangos are rich with aromatic overtones, firm flesh with fine fibers. They are bright red, green, or yellow with small dots. The green turns to yellow when ripe. Haden mangos are available April and May. Keitt mangos are sweet and fruity. They are dark to medium green with a pink blush. The skin stays green even when ripe. Available August and September. This mango originated in Florida. Keitt's are very fragrant, juicy and tangy. The thin seed means you get more edible fruit. They are available from California late in the season and are considered one of the best for flavor. Kent mangos are juicy with tender flesh and limited fibers; dark green and often with a dark red blush over small portions. When ripe, they have yellow undertones on dots that cover more of the mango as it ripens. They are available January thru March and June thru August. Tommy Atkins mangos are mildly sweet with firm flesh due to fibers throughout. A dark red blush covers much of the fruit with green and yellow accents. This mango doesn't provide any visual cues of ripeness. Squeeze gently to judge ripeness. They are available April and May.

Mangos are very popular because of their wonderful sweet flavors. They can be used in many recipes such as smoothies, tarts, and salsas. They also make a wonderful embellishment to a green salad. Mangos are very low in saturated fat, have no cholesterol, they are high in dietary fiber, and very high in vitamin A and C. They are rich in potassium and low in sodium. Enjoy a wonderful sweet mango with your next meal.

From Our Suggestion Box

Australia's Darrell Lea Red Licorice, please bring it back. – Unfortunately, this did not sell well. You can always special order some.

Would really love to see some 'oil free' granola – We will definitely look into it.

Please carry organic raw Kombucha Chai – The Chai Kombucha is not a good seller, plus we are limited on space.

Please consider carrying Larapin BBQ Sauce – We'll look into this one, also.

A few months ago you carried some sweet potato chips cooked in avocado oil, they were awesome! – Unfortunately they were "temporarily discontinued" by the distributor, and we have no date for when we can order them.

Consider bagtonature.com, 13 gallon garbage bags that are 100% biodegradable, or ecosafeplastics.com for 100% compostable garbage bags – Great idea, we'll look into it.

The Chia Co. Chia Pod/Vanilla Bean, 6oz – Sorry, but this item is not available thru our distributor.

Thanks for the great food – Thank you.

How about the "BioBag" compostable plastic bag for produce? – We're checking this out, and it looks like a very good (and affordable) idea!

Can you order the Biodegradable Twist Naked Sponge? – For some reason this particular sponge did not sell well, sorry.

Evolution, Sweet Burn – Not currently available through our distributor.

Schats Pizza, big squares, please bring it back! – We discontinued this because it wasn't selling. Maybe we'll try getting it once a week.

Better Than Bouillon in jars (no chicken or beef) – BTB has "no chicken", but did not sell well. We do carry No Chicken in cubes.

Third Eye Chai Classic Organic Raw Kombucha – We've got it!!

Goose berries/Golden berries in bulk – Goose berries are not available in bulk, however, we do have Golden berries packaged in our raw food section.

Watermelon candy – We will look into adding an organic watermelon candy.

Compliments! Everyone who works here is great! I love shopping here!

Nubian Heritage Lotion – The soaps are popular and we've looked into the lotions. We'll consider bringing in some if and when we have the shelf space. We also need to check that the ingredients are clean before ordering. Thanks J

Crispin Hard Cider with Belgian yeast, unfiltered – We don't have plans to carry this product right now, but will definitely consider for the future!

The Time of Beer by Debbie Mac

As the weather warms up and backyard barbecues, lazy days by the river and outdoor concerts return, so does beer consumption. There is nothing like an ice-cold beer on a hot day. I can remember when beer choices were limited and there was little surprise when you walked into a grocery store. With microbreweries on the rise, it seems every day there are new beers with unique names. The beer companies sure know how to be creative. Although this is certainly not a bad thing, it can be a little overwhelming at times.

All beer is made from four basic ingredients: hops, malted barley, yeast and water. Most beers have other botanicals--spices, fruit, vegetables or herbs, added to the basic beer recipe. There are two main types of beer: lager beer and ale beer. The third type is lambic, which is made in Belgium and is not as popular as ales and lagers. It may seem an unlikely claim that all beer is in the category of an ale or lager considering all the choices offered to us these days. But, it is true. There are a few so-called hybrid styles that employ traditional brewing methods of both, but even these can be distinguished as ale or lager, based on the yeast used to ferment them. It is the yeast that makes the difference between lagers and ales. Ale yeasts flocculate at the top of the fermentation tank and thrive at temperatures between 60 and 72 degrees. Lager yeasts are more successful at lower temperatures, typically 46 to 55 degrees and flocculate closer to the bottom of the tank. Lager yeasts tend to ferment more aggressively, leaving behind less residual sweetness and flavor than ales. Although both are beer, the two are as different and red and white wine. Lagers are clean, refreshing beers with typically light aroma and flavor. They are invariably served cold and can pair easily with a wide variety of food. Ales are complex, flavorful beers. Many are served closer to room temperature and contain rich aroma and flavor. Their complexity makes pairing more selective. Stout and porter are dark beers using roasted malts or barley and typically brewed with slow fermenting yeasts. There are a number of variations including Baltic Porter, dry stout and Imperial Stout. Pilsner beer is somewhat like a lager, pale in color but slightly bitter. The flavors of pilsners are more distinctive than pale lager.

There are a few beers new to Mariposa Market which we have available right now. From Eel River is a double IPA called "Earth Thirst." It is organic and comes in a 22 Oz. Also new from Peak Organic Brewing Company is a non-GMO and organic beer from Maine. Peak Organic is working on the west coast with California farmers so they can expand their company. Four flavors are available: an IPA, a pilsner, a nut brown, and a seasonal. Beer drinkers! Come indulge in the "time of beer".

Strawberries and Oranges in Basil Syrup

Ingredients

Strawberries have an undeniable affinity for the cinnamon-spicy flavor of basil. This recipe can be prepared several hours in advance, but if you store it too long, the berries will soften and lose their texture. Serve this with sugar cookies to dunk in the leftover syrup.

8 servings

- 1-1/2 cups water
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup thinly sliced fresh basil leaves
- 2 pounds strawberries
- 4 navel oranges



Directions

1. Prepare the syrup by bringing the water and sugar to a boil and then cooking just until clear, 2 to 3 minutes. Let the syrup cool very briefly, then add the sliced basil. Set aside to steep and cool while you prepare the fruit.

2. Rinse the strawberries, remove their caps and cut them into quarters if normal size or sixths if very large. Peel the oranges, being careful to remove all of the bitter white pith. Working over a bowl to catch any juice, cut the oranges into sections, leaving behind all the tough skin that separates the sections.

3. Add the strawberries to the orange sections and juice and pour over the syrup. Refrigerate for at least 30 minutes before serving.

Excerpted from *How to Pick a Peach: The Search for Flavor from Farm to Table* by Russ Parsons (Houghton Mifflin Company, 2007). Copyright 2007 by Russ Parsons. Source: *The Splendid Table Website*: <http://www.splendidtable.org>

Simple Tips to Live an Organic Lifestyle By Luana

While the word “organic” typically demonstrates the commitment to an environmentally sound growing method for farmers, there’s an increased interest in finding ways to live organically beyond just food choices. It’s driven by the growing desire to make wise choices for the planet. Living an organic lifestyle not only offers something to people of all ages, it can be achieved in the kitchen, garden or even during an outdoor activity.

Here are a few simple tips to start living an organic lifestyle:

Take small steps – Take the first step with your staple shopping ingredients. Consider replacing conventional products one by one with organic alternatives. Make foods like fruits, vegetables, milk and meat your first priority.

Grow an organic garden – Why not grow your own organic vegetables and herbs? Plants like tomatoes, peppers, onions, potatoes and cucumbers are easy to grow and can be easily maintained on a rooftop or patio garden. Plus, it’s a great way to teach kids where food comes from and how it grows.

Read the labels – Look for products with the “Certified USDA Organic” seal and read labels carefully to check out the main ingredients and any additives that may be included. The first ingredients listed should be common names and easy to pronounce.

Pack an organic lunchbox or picnic lunch – Send your kids off to school each morning with a delicious, organic lunch. For example, Organic peanut butters and fruit spreads offer a variety of options and flavors to kids excited at lunchtime. To help round it out, fruit sauces are a tasty, organic treat, with an ounce sauce cup providing 100 percent of the Reference Daily Intake (RDI) of Vitamin C. Great picnic snacks may consist of organic celery with peanut butter, carrot sticks, or anything that’s simple, nutritious, and of course, make it “Organic”.