

Locally Produced

Farms, Food & Gardening on the Southcoast

La Honda, Pescadero & San Gregorio

Volume 17



August 2009

Colorful & Healthy Eating

Fresh from the Farm

Produce Stands:

Phipps Country Store & Farm— Open daily

Pie Ranch – We are open from 12pm-6pm, Saturdays and Sundays. Also, every 3rd Saturday of the month, we host a community volunteer time in the afternoon from 2-6pm, potluck from 6-7pm and barn dance from 7:30-10:30pm. Sliding scale donation \$7-\$15. Lots of fun! 2080 Cabrillo Hwy, Pescadero, 94060; Telephone: 650-879-0995. Website: <http://www.pieranch.org>

Farms and Ranches:

Blue House Farm – Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Fresh locally grown organic produce – Ned Conwell and Ryan Casey, 2601 Cloverdale Rd., Pescadero, Phone: 650-879-0704 Email: bluehousefarm@gmail.com; <http://www.bluehouseorganicfarm.com>

Green Oaks Creek Farm – CSA subscriptions-2060 Green Oaks Way, Pescadero, CA 94060, Phone: 650-879-1009 Email: paulandsteph@greenoakscreek.com Website: <http://www.greenoakscreek.com/>

Harley Farms – 205 North Street, Pescadero, 94060, Phone: 650-879-0480, Website: <http://www.harleyfarms.com/>

Markegard Family Grass-Fed Cattle and Lamb: Providing the community with locally born, raised and processed beef and lamb. doniga@designsbydoniga.com 650 747 0205 www.designsbydoniga.com

Farmer's Markets:

Coastside Farmer's Market – Saturdays, 9am -1pm, at Shoreline Station (east side of Hwy 1, between Kelly Avenue & Hwy 92).

Santa Cruz Farmers' Markets - We have two markets open year round for your shopping convenience. The Downtown Santa Cruz Farmers' Market is open rain or shine every Wednesday afternoon from 2:30pm to 6:30pm. Our weekend market is the Westside Farmers' Market and it operates every Saturday morning from 9am to 1pm.

What's Cooking in Town

Reported by Annie Fresquez

This year I wanted to stay close to home for the 4th of July, so I rallied Flori & Kathy to gather together some family and friends to head down to Cindy's celebration at the **Pescadero Country Store**. The \$20 ticket bought more food than you could imagine! Corn and Black Bean Salad, Caesar Salad, Green Salads along with the barbecued meats, chicken, ribs, and steaks. A really great time for one and all!

Last week I dashed through town. I hit up that great deal on corn from **Norm's Market** and grabbed some of their strawberries too, still priced at two for the price of one. Behind the meat counter, Matt was making some delicious Chicken Italian Sausage. Heading down to **Pescadero Country Store**, I found the produce counter filled with fresh produce. Cindy receives her order from local grower Orlando (**Lady Bug Farm**) on Fridays. Heading back to the ranch I popped into **Harley Farms**, but found Dee was away - of course I didn't leave empty-handed, umm... goat cheese to go! Judging by the amount of parked cars outside their produce stand, **Phipps Ranch** is still in full swing with their U-Pick Olallieberries and Strawberries.

News in from Mike at **Arcangeli Grocery Co (Norm's Market)**... "We have corn and cherries now from Morgan Hill, cherries at 1.99/lb and White Corn at 10 for 2.00. The new season of Apple Butter is finally in. Shirley is now making 4 new cream cheese spreads: Artichoke Herb, Sundried Tomato & Artichoke, Artichoke & Chipotle and Artichoke Pesto, They are very good and becoming popular incredibly fast."

Our Local Schools



School Meal Program Update from Kathy Webster

With school just around the corner, (can you believe it is already August!), we wanted to give you an update on the school meal program. By now, we've all heard the financial woes of the state's budget deficit. This, of course, has affected the public schools pretty hard.

California's meal program is slated to run out of funding by spring, so the state is reducing its contribution to school meals from 21 cents, to basically nothing for the remainder of the year. In the past we have welcomed any community contribution to our healthy meal program. We've had everything from a big box of apples to a menu item sponsorship. So, we are asking for your help once again. Anything from gleamed produce to helping support some of our menu items through sponsorship. The following items are some of the big ticket ingredients we are looking for financial assistance with:

Low-fat (hormone-free) milk	\$13.52/case (10 cases/week)
Niman-Ranch hamburgers	\$48.75/case (5 cases/meal)
Niman-Ranch hot dogs (nitrate and nitrite free)	\$37.89/case (4 cases/meal)
Box of apples (donation of locally-grown apples would be great!)	
Wheat berry bread	\$28.64/case (3-4 cases/week)
Whole-wheat tortillas (for quesadillas, burritos, and wraps)	\$33.15/case (3 cases)
Roasted turkey breast (hormone-free)	\$107.89 for 30#
Parmesan Cheese	\$19.50/5 lb bag (3/week)

On the lines of donations, TomKat Ranch Education Foundation (TKREF) has offered to continue offer my services for another school year to help with menu planning, recipe creation, and sourcing of local food vendors, with a goal for the program to become completely sustainable.

We've also had some wonderful offers from local farmers to help provide and grow produce for our rotating menu. Potrero Nuevo Farms is planning to provide us with local produce for our menu. We are very excited to incorporate locally-grown produce on our menu.

By making our children's health a priority we help take care of our future generation and community.

Recipes, Menus & Health

I CONFESS! I am a magazine hound! I'm constantly on the hunt for something new, interesting and inspiring. I have to say that **Eating Well** magazine came through again with the below article about the health benefits of taking into account the colors of your foods when choosing what to eat. After I read it, I was thinking how much I appreciate a colorful meal on my plate (yes, of course, all parts separate, no touching, merging, or oozing into one another!). Hey, I might be making healthy choices while just trying to create something on my plate that's appealing to my eyes and appeases my picky palate. You can find the complete article in the May/June 2009 issue or online at: -Sandra Stent

http://www.eatingwell.com/eat_drink/eatingwell_in_season/eating_by_color.html.



Eating Well by Color: A simple way to load up on nature's superfoods

"What's fascinating is that nature seems to have a way of highlighting these beneficial nutrients by giving them bright colors that allow you to spot them at a glance. For example, anthocyanins make blueberries blue and may help to keep your mind sharp. Tomatoes get their ruby hue from lycopene, a phytochemical that may help to prevent prostate cancer. To get the maximum disease-fighting power that phytochemicals can provide, choose foods that represent all colors of the rainbow. The USDA suggests paying particular attention to orange (2 cups per week) and dark green (3 cups per week) produce, both good sources of vitamin A and other important nutrients. [Use our vibrant color wheel to inspire you.](#)"

1 Red

Red foods, such as tomatoes and watermelon, contain **lycopene**, a phytochemical that may help protect against prostate and breast cancers.

Guava
Pink grapefruit
Red peppers
Tomatoes
Watermelon

2 Orange

Alpha and beta carotene make foods like carrots and sweet potatoes so brilliantly orange. The body converts these compounds into the active form of vitamin A, which helps keep your eyes, bones and immune system healthy. These phytochemicals also operate as antioxidants, sweeping up disease-promoting free radicals.

Apricots
Cantaloupe
Carrots
Mango
Oranges
Papaya
Pumpkin
Sweet potatoes
Tangerines
Winter squash

3 Yellow & Green, part 1 (leafy greens)

Many yellow and green vegetables are good sources of **lutein** and **zeaxanthin**, phytochemicals that accumulate in the eyes and help prevent age-related macular degeneration, a leading cause of blindness in older people. Leafy greens are also rich in **beta carotene**.

Artichoke
Corn
Lettuce
Summer squash
Wax beans
Arugula
Chard
Collards
Mustard greens
Turnip greens

5 Green, part 2 (cruciferous)

Cruciferous vegetables, such as broccoli and kale, provide compounds called **indoles** and **isothiocyanates**, which may help prevent cancer by amping up the production of enzymes that clear toxins from the body.

Broccoli
Brussels sprouts
Cauliflower
Green cabbage
Kale

6 Blue & Purple/Deep Red

Blue, purple and deep-red fruits and vegetables are full of **anthocyanins** and **proanthocyanins**, antioxidants associated with keeping the heart healthy and the brain functioning optimally.

Blackberries
Blueberries
Eggplant
Plums
Strawberries
Cranberries
Grapes
Radishes (red)
Raspberries &

PLUM CRAZY!!!

Our TomKat plums are almost ripe (the purple delights, Santa Rosa and ever-so-tasty Green Gage).



Benefits of **Seasonal Plums** In *Clean Eating Magazine* (July/August 2009) on page 21, I read: “Move over, blueberries and pomegranates – plums are joining the list of superfruits. A new study by Texas AgriLife Research shows that a plum has the same amount of disease-fighting antioxidants as a handful of blueberries. Since plums are less expensive than blueberries, this is especially great news during tougher economic times. Among the more special attributes of the plums is its ability to help your body absorb iron.”

Choosing & Storing Plums (from San Francisco Ferry Building Farmers’ Market Cookbook, pg 135)

CHOOSING: “The best sign that plums are ready to eat is a rich, well-developed color. Some plums may have a slight whitish bloom. It just means that they haven’t been overhandled. Depending on the variety, some ripe plums are firm while others are slightly soft. A very soft plum is always overripe.”

STORING: “Tree-ripened plums will continue to ripen after they have been picked. At home, arrange them in a single layer on a platter and allow them to ripen at room temperature. Refrigerate ripe plums in a perforated plastic or paper bag for up to 4 days. Allow the fruits to come to room temperature before eating.”

Colorful Eating Recipes



CHICKEN AND VEGGIE STIR FRY

By Annie Fresquez “I am so fortunate to be able to harvest most of my veggies fresh from Flori’s garden.”

1 lb. chicken breast cut in cubes
2-3 carrots
1 zucchini squash
1 yellow squash
1 bunch broccoli

1 bunch green onion
1 red bell pepper
1 1/2 c. sliced mushrooms
2 Tablespoon oil
A handful of chopped cilantro

Marinate chicken in teriyaki sauce. Have all vegetables cut before you start. Heat oil in a heavy skillet or wok. Cook chicken first then remove. Cook the carrots next. After you see a change in the color, push the carrots up to the wall of the wok or skillet. Add the remaining veggies. When the last ingredients are 1/2 cooked, add the chicken back in. I like to add some chopped cilantro with the chicken. Serve with brown rice and soy sauce on the side. Feeds four.

Are you Ready to Cool Off? Here’s one of my favorite colorful treats for a hot summer day! From Sandra Stent

This is a quick dessert that was served during one of the events here at the ranch. I don’t know its source, so I’m naming it after our friend who prepared it...

Mike Kirk’s Very Berry Delight



Ingredients needed: Vanilla Ice Cream, Raspberry Sorbet, Blackberries and Raspberries (fresh best, frozen good too)

In dessert dish (or if you’re feeling fancy, a large wine goblet), place a large scoop of vanilla ice cream, flank with two half scoops of the sorbet; add small handful of mixed berries; top with a half scoop of vanilla ice cream; top that with small scoop of the sorbet; sprinkle with a few more berries. Very refreshing with its blend of tangy-tart and sweet tastes!

Chopped Greek Salad with Chicken (Eating Well Magazine, July/August 2009)

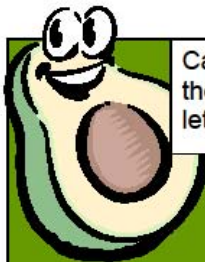


This is delicious salad that makes for a perfect dinner (or lunch) on a hot summer day. You can use left-over roasted chicken or poach a couple boneless chicken breasts.

- 1/3 cup red-wine vinegar
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh oregano (or 1 tsp. dried)
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 6 cups chopped romaine lettuce
- 2 1/2 cups chopped cooked chicken (about 12 ounces)
- 2 medium tomatoes, chopped, or 1 cup cherry tomatoes
- 1 medium cucumber, peeled and chopped
- 1/2 cup finely chopped red onion (optional)
- 1/2 cup sliced, pitted kalamata olives
- 1/2 cup crumbled feta cheese

Whisk vinegar, oil, oregano, garlic powder, salt and pepper in a large bowl. Add lettuce, chicken, tomatoes, cucumber, onion, olives and feta, toss to coat. Serve with some toasted pita and hummus and you've got yourself a meal. Submitted by: Kathy Webster

Budding Chefs, Farmers & Gardeners



California farmers grow \$362 million worth of avocados each year. In fact, they lead the nation in avocado production. First find--then color green--the letters in the word A V O C A D O.

Z F D J N C H
W O E V B X S
D T K A O Y T A

USDA Farm Service Agency
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Backyard Gardens & Orchards



The Garden of Rita Giannini - By Flori Curran



Have you gone down North Street lately and noticed a cute green and white house with towering sunflowers and sea of red and pink poppies? That array of color belongs to my good friend Rita Marie Giannini. Rita Marie is a native of P-town and moved into her 1920 house which was built by Barney Dias (uncle of Ronnie Duarte and Noel Dias) when she was only 5 days old. Her Father Mario farmed artichokes and brussel sprouts all along the coastside. It's no wonder why her garden is so beautiful, Rita comes from a long line of famers both here and in Italy. She learned many tricks and tips from her grandfather and father when she was growing up; for instance companion planting and lunar gardening. Currently Rita is introducing bio dynamic practices in her garden and is a tester for a bio dynamic seed company. Check out and learn more about bio dynamic gardening on the internet.

Her garden is abundant with varieties of bush, pole and dry beans, carrots, beets, lettuces, cucumbers, squash, onions, garlic, corn, chard, broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, potatoes and herbs. She also has plenty of concord grapes, apples and pears not to mention persimmons, plums and lemon trees. I can't forget her flower garden tucked away in the back where she loves to read. Whoever thought that her property could grow so much!!! What Rita Marie can't eat she cans, freezes, and sells her veggies and fruit. She also makes jam from her grapes! She composts everything from kitchen scraps to garden clippings and piles it where it rest thru the winter.

For years Rita used to till her own garden with her trusty rototiller until she sought the aid of long time neighbor and very close friend Tony Gomes. His tractor made things so much easier. Since Tony's passing Johnny Gomes has worked her soil. As far as pests are concerned she has never had a gopher problem thanks to feline Frankie and his posy. She however encounters Racoons that eat her grapes! She says that she uses bowls of amonia around the property to deter the pesky bandits.

So as we sat together under her awning of grapes I asked Rita what she thought of the new trend in organic gardening coming about in P-town. Rita believes that the new interest in gardening and farming will benefit not only the community but the world as a whole.

A Plethora of Pests!

By Sandra Stent

All Winter long, we wait...patiently thumbing through our seed catalogs, gardening magazines and supply catalogs. By Spring our choices have been decided, the garden plan is done; we are ready to dig our fingers into the earth again and get dirty! As Summer begins, we proudly survey our new extended families of plants; delighting in each new unfolding member. And then... and then they come... The simple word THEY seems so small, but in the case of garden pests, it's HUGE. They are here. They are eating up and destroying our treasured plant children. And, oohhh... it hurts! Each loss means a little less for our plates or freezers. Feeling anger at this point would be completely understandable. But you know, I've noticed that though Flori, Annie & I do rant and rave from time to time, we've come to a point where we just accept that there will be the inevitable losses from THEM. Who do you ask are THEY/THEM? Here are some of our greediest eaters this year:



Look familiar? Yellow Jackets have staked the Cherries out as their territory. We humans are cautiously picking around them, thinking: "be calm, be quiet, @#%^ bee, be gone!"



He's Backkkk... The California Vole. Returned with a vengeance – there's not much this little rodent won't eat. Also has sick sense of humor as it loves to test its athletic prowess by zipping right under the human foot, causing instant heart palpitations and panic attacks.



While the super-duper net fence works great keeping the deer out of Flori's garden, the Cottontail rabbits quickly figured out how to shimmy underneath it. The first one was so cute. Then a few more arrived, they dined on salad with peas. Must have invited a few more friends in... there went the beans. Parsley? What Parsley? Our solution? We invited in a man with a huge hunger for wrascally whittle wrabbits... One in the refrigerator so far... Boom Boom... uh, sounds like it's got some company... (Official hunting season July 1st thru the end of January).



Well, Howdy Neighbor! Is there anyone who hasn't been visited by the spotted Cucumber Beetle? Like an impolite house guest, he has really overstayed his welcome. We found he loves to nosh much more on the potato plants than the cucumber or other squash plants. I've desensitized my gross-out factor when dealing with them – I pluck 'em off the plant, give a little twist of my fingers and leave squished bugs in my wake. They fear me! They must! Well, okay...they should!

It's true, we haven't offered up any really great, true blue solutions to the problems we all have with our pests. Just remember you're not alone with all your uninvited garden guests. All we can say is keep smiling, laughing and enjoy being out in your garden.

Bookshelves – Cooking, Gardening, Magazines

Booklet Guides Produce Shoppers (*Ag Alert*, July 15, 2009, pg. 35)

Aiming to help consumers select high-quality produce at the grocery store, two experts at the University of California, Davis, have written a 16-page consumer guidebook. Titled ***Fresh the Farm to Your Table: Consumers Guide to Fresh Fruits and Vegetables***, the book explains, among other things, what to look for in selecting fresh produce, which fruits and vegetables should be refrigerated and which shouldn't. Written by James Thompson and Adel Kader of the UC Davis Postharvest Technology Research and Information Center, the guide may be purchased for \$7 a copy at <http://anrcatalog.ucdavis.edu/Items/21643.aspx>.

Meetings & Event

Pescadero Arts and Fun Festival – Saturday & Sunday, August 15th & 16th 10am–6pm. – Benefitting Local Youth Programs and promoting local artists. FREE ADMITTANCE. No need to pack a lunch – plenty of food available – Down Home Country Cooking – Locally Grown Organic Vegetables & Herbs. Non-Stop Live Entertainment. For more information: [http://www.pescaderoartsandfunfestival.com./](http://www.pescaderoartsandfunfestival.com/) No pets please.

SAN MATEO COUNTY JR LIVESTOCK AUCTION - Saturday, August 22nd at 9am – Support the local members of 4-H Clubs and FFA by purchasing one of their animals! You benefit from meeting and knowing the person your food was raised by and the young people benefit by your financial support. The wide assortments of animals have been raised by these members under the supervision of their project leaders or instructor. All market animals are judged for quality by an independent authority. Rabbits, Turkeys, Chickens, Hogs, Lambs, Goats and Beef are auctioned off and sold to the highest bidder. For more information contact: San Mateo County Fair, 650-574-3247.

3rd Annual Willowside Ranch PICNIC & BARN DANCE - Saturday, 22nd August from noon-8:00pm 2400 Stage Rd, Pescadero. EATING, DRINKING, MUSIC & DANCING with SAXYMAN & THE LADDS. There will be hotdogs, hamburgers, vegiburgers & sodas. Bring you favorite side dish &/or something that you like to drink to share. Bring your friends, but LEAVE YOUR PETS AT HOME. Call Michael & Julie for info (650) 879 0768 or email willowsideranch@gmail.com.

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****Other Information:**

If we at TomKat Ranch have surplus produce to share, we plan to harvest it ourselves, package it ourselves, and then make it available for sharing. That way, we feel we can control the impact on our land and the quality of our gift. Also, there's that liability issue always to think about and we are wrestling with how to be careful, generous and safe, all at the same time. Your ideas are welcome. And Please be careful if you decide to interact with others you may meet through the newsletter. A meeting in town versus at one's home might be more comfortable for everyone. Just food for thought...