

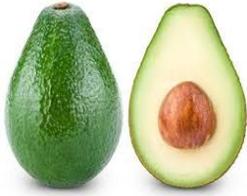


Fruit Harvesting Profiles

Read on for helpful information about all of the different types of fruit that grow in Southern California.

Don't see what you are looking for here? Let us know what other types of fruit or info you think would be useful to share by emailing harvest@foodforward.org

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AVOCADO

HARVEST SEASON: September - July

HARVEST METHOD: Hand picking - Picker and extension

RIPE WHEN: Ripe when the avocado is soft and yields to pressure, but an indent is not left. Check underneath the stem, if able to pull off easily then it is ripe

- Color: Brownish, purple, black
- Shape: Elongated, oval

ADDITIONAL FRUIT INFO:

- Avocados are the highest protein fruit
- Largest avocado was 5 lbs
- Avocado skin is toxic to cats and dogs
- The conquistadors used avocados for ink
- Avocados only ripen when picked off the tree
- On average, 53.5 million pounds of guacamole are eaten every Super Bowl Sunday, enough to cover a football field more than 20 feet thick



EUREKA LEMON

HARVEST SEASON: February - September

HARVEST METHOD: Hand picking - Picker and Extension

RIPE WHEN: Ripe when the lemon feels heavy for its size and has a pleasant aroma.

- Shape: elongated, oval shape
- Color: medium-gold, but can be ripe with some green
- Size: 2-3 inches long

ADDITIONAL FRUIT INFO:

- Eureka lemons can be stored at room temperature for up to one week, or refrigerated to extend shelf life up to one month
- Eureka lemons tend to be more more acidic and have a thicker skin than Meyer lemons
- Lemon trees can produce up to 600 lbs. a year
- The Eureka lemon is a descendant of the Lunario lemon, a variety from Italy, though they originated in California
- Eureka lemons are the standard commercial lemon in the world
- Lemon juice contains slightly more citric acid than lime juice, nearly twice the citric acid of grapefruit juice, and about five times the amount of citric acid found in orange juice



FIG

HARVEST SEASON: June - August

HARVEST METHOD: Hand pick or hand pruner; careful to handle the ripe fruit as little as possible and lift up and away from tree

RIPE WHEN: Fig ripeness are best known to be ripe not solely based on color, but on it's droopiness and how it hangs

- Color: Ranges from brown to purple
- Texture: Will be soft and smooth to the touch, but may have slight cracks
- Size: 2-3 inches long

ADDITIONAL FRUIT INFO:

- California grows many varieties of figs, but the two most common are the amber-colored, slightly nutty-flavored Golden and the dark purple, sweet Mission.
- California produces 100% of the nation's dried figs and 98% of the fresh figs
- Figs made their first commercial product appearance with the 1892 introduction of Fig Newtons® cookies
- Eating one half cup of figs has as much calcium as drinking one-half cup of milk
- Fig tree flowers are actually hidden inside the fruit, which led many early cultures to believe the plants to be flowerless

- Figs have a 55% natural sugar content, making them the sweetest of all fruits



FUYU PERSIMMON (non-astringent)

HARVEST SEASON: September - December

HARVEST METHOD: Harvest with the use of hand pruner is preferred but fruit can also be harvested with pickers using twist & pull* method to prevent limb breakage (persimmon trees can be fairly brittle). Extendable pruners are recommended for taller trees (clip & catch method*).

RIPE WHEN: Fruit is bright orange/golden yellow (see photo). Consistency is firm and crisp like an apple.

ADDITIONAL FRUIT INFO:

- Fuyu's taste profile brings to mind pear, dates, and brown sugar
- Ready to eat immediately after harvest while still firm (unlike its cousin Hachiya).
- Most widely cultivated persimmon in the world.
- High in fiber and vitamin A.
- Native to China.
- Persimmons are considered to be Japan's national fruit.
- Introduced to the U.S. in 1856 by Commander M.C. Perry.
- California is the largest commercial producer of Fuyu persimmons in the U.S.
- It is said that during the Civil War, persimmon seeds were roasted and ground to create a drink similar to coffee.
- Fresh and dried persimmon leaves can be used in tea.



GUAVA

HARVEST SEASON: late Fall into Winter

HARVEST METHOD: The best way to harvest is to allow them to fall from the tree. Shake the tree and gather the fruit from the ground every couple of days. Keep a tarp or large cloth under the tree to catch the fruit as they fall to prevent bruising.

RIPE WHEN: They begin to fall from the tree. The fruit can also be picked when firm and mature and ripen at room temperature. However, the quality will not be as good as when they ripen on the tree. You can tell the fruit is starting to ripen when the fruit has a slight fragrance and the skin gives slightly when touched. Mature fruit can store in the refrigerator for about a week.

ADDITIONAL FRUIT INFO:

- Native to Mexico, Central, and South America, these small tropical fruits are enjoyed raw, dried, and cooked.
- Guavas are rich in dietary fiber, folic acid, and single guava fruit has four times as much vitamin C as an orange!
- There are roughly 100 different varieties of guava, with the most frequently eaten being the apple guava. Due to guavas thriving in tropical environments, the strawberry guava has become an invasive species in Hawaii, threatening 100 native species. On the flip side, several species of guavas are endangered due to habitat destruction, and one species has become extinct.
- Today, though widely grown throughout tropical America, India is the largest grower of these flavorful fruits.



GRAPEFRUIT

HARVEST SEASON: January - November

HARVEST METHOD: Hand picking - Picker and Extension

RIPE WHEN: Ripe grapefruits may still be green. Note that color is often NOT the best indicator for ripeness. The best time to harvest grapefruit is when at least 50% of the peel has turned yellow.

- Texture: Fruit should feel plump and heavy
- Shape: Oval shaped when ripe (flat top & flat bottom)
- Firm: Fruit should feel firm all the way around
- Color: Smooth greenish-yellow rind

ADDITIONAL FRUIT INFO:

- If left on the tree grapefruit will continue to mature, which increases the size and sweetness of the fruit.
- Grapefruit can be stored for two to eight weeks in the refrigerator.
- Oroblanco grapefruit is the most common variety harvested by Food Forward.
- Oroblanco varietal was developed at the University of Riverside in 1958
- A grapefruit is 75% juice
- The grapefruit got its name from the way it grows in clusters (like grapes).
- The grapefruit is a hybrid of pummelo (*Citrus maxima*) and orange (*Citrus sinensis*)
- Grapefruit is a good appetite suppressant
- February is considered National Grapefruit Month



HACHIYA PERSIMMON (astringent)

HARVEST SEASON: September - November

HARVEST METHOD: Harvest with the use of hand pruner is preferred but fruit can also be harvested with pickers using twist & pull* method to prevent limb breakage (persimmon trees can be fairly brittle). Extendable pruners are recommended for taller trees (clip & catch method*).

RIPE WHEN: Harvest when firm but fully colored. Fruit is ripe (ready to eat) when deep orange and skin is almost translucent. Fruit will be soft like a water balloon and hard to handle without breaking the skin.

ADDITIONAL FRUIT INFO:

- Hachiya's taste profile brings to mind sweet apricot

- Fruit will ripen off the tree when left in room temperature.
- Native to China.
- Astringency and bitterness in Hachiya persimmons is caused by tannin present in the fruit when not completely ripe.
- It is said that early settlers to the U.S. had to be taught by Native Americans how to eat astringent persimmons (or how NOT to eat them).
- Hachiya persimmons are widely used in baking for taste and moistness.
- Fresh and dried persimmon leaves can be used in tea.



KUMQUAT

HARVEST SEASON: December - June

HARVEST METHOD: Hand Picking or snipping with sharp knife or hand pruner. Fruit is too small to be picked using a fruit picker.

RIPE WHEN: Fruit is brilliantly orange, plump, and firm.

ADDITIONAL FRUIT INFO:

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- The agencies Food Forward donates to often don't kumquats, so instead they are typically donated to Smog City Brewing Co. for the production of their award winning beer Kumquat Saison beer. A percentage of the proceeds from the sale are donated to Food Forward..
- Only citrus that can be eaten in its entirety (peel and pulp)
- The word "kumquat" originates from the cantonese kam kwat, which means "golden orange"
- Six different varieties are grown worldwide.
- Only three varieties are commonly found in California (Nagami, Meiwa, and Fukushu)
- Native to South Asia and Asia Pacific.
- Taste is a cross between orange and tangerine
- More resistant to cold weather than other citrus varieties



MEYER LEMON

HARVEST SEASON: November - March

HARVEST METHOD: Hand picking; twist and pull method or snipping with hand pruner

RIPE WHEN: Meyer and Eureka lemons have differences that are very distinct, especially when you see both varieties side by side.

- Color: Deep yellow with a slight orange tint
- Shape: Rounder than a normal lemon, 2-3 inches diameter
- Texture: Smooth, semi-thin, and oily
- Taste: Sweeter, tart, and less acidic than other lemons

ADDITIONAL FRUIT INFO:

- The Meyer lemon is a hybrid citrus fruit native to China, where they were a common decorative houseplant
- Their popularity rose when Martha Stewart started using them frequently
- Natural hybrid of a lemon and a mandarin or a lemon and a sweet orange
- The peels of of the Meyer lemon are edible
- Meyer lemons provide a great source of Vitamin C and help to build up the immune system
- Meyer lemons are more commonly used in lemonade than other lemons
- California and Arizona produce the most lemons in the United States
- The Meyer lemon was plagued by disease until 1975 when the University of California re-released the "Improved Meyer Lemon" tree
- Whole lemons will last in fridge up to 5 days



NAVEL ORANGE

HARVEST SEASON: December - March

HARVEST METHOD: Hand pick - pickers and extensions

RIPE WHEN:

- Weight: Feels heavy in hand
- Scent: Fresh and fragrant on the button area of the peel
- Color: Should be orange and uniform in color with no spots
- Texture: Smooth, semi-thin skin with no soft spots

ADDITIONAL FRUIT INFO:

- Navel oranges are named for their “belly button” which is actually another small fruit that develops within the larger fruit
- Navel oranges are one of the healthiest fruits, filled with Vitamin C, fiber and potassium
- Navel oranges more often may protect against heart disease, cancer and diabetes, and help to improve memory, blood pressure, the immune system and overall health
- The name of the fruit “orange” was coined in the 1300s before the color “orange” was named in the 1500s.
- The original navel orange was discovered growing as a mutation on a sweet orange tree in Brazil. Seeds were brought to California, where a navel orange tree produced its first fruit.
- Navel oranges have no seeds while other oranges, such as Valencia, do

**POMEGRANATE****HARVEST SEASON:** September - November**HARVEST METHOD:** Hand-pick or use hand pruner**RIPE WHEN:**

- Shape: As the fruit ripens, the seed sacks swell, changing the shape of the fruit to flat, angular sides rather than a perfect sphere
- Weight: Should feel heavy for its size
- Color: There should be no green on the fruit
- Skin: Smooth, firm, leathery skin

ADDITIONAL FRUIT INFO:

- Grows on a spiny tree (16-33 ft) that is extremely long lived....sometimes a tree can live for 200 years!
- Pomegranates are a great source of fiber, Vitamin C, and Vitamin K
- Pomegranates can be eaten plain, juiced, or used in baking, cooking,

- smoothies, and alcoholic beverages
- Pomegranate means apple with many seeds
 - Pomegranates originated in the Middle East
 - Pomegranates belong to the berry family
 - The antioxidants in pomegranate juice can help remove free radicals, protect cells from damage, and reduce inflammation
 - Pomegranates are native to modern day Iran, Pakistan, and Afghanistan



TANGELO

HARVEST SEASON: January - April

HARVEST METHOD: Hand pick; twist and pull method or snipping with hand pruner

RIPE WHEN:

- Taste: Sweet and juicy with a little tart
- Size: Same size as oranges with smooth, loose skin
- Weight: Firm or slightly soft and heavy in the hand
- Color: Orange with a reddish hue

ADDITIONAL FRUIT INFO:

- Tangelos, a cross between tangerines and grapefruits, were created in the late 19th century in Florida and California
- Tangelos are also called Honeybells
- Their increasing fame is attributed to their similarity to the flavor of the more well known tangerine, along with their larger size and lack of seeds
- Tangelos probably first grew in southeastern Asia many thousands of years ago
- Believed to be genetically modified, the tangelo is actually a product of natural hybridization and does not require genetic manipulation for its production
- Tangelos have little to no seeds
- Tangelos help to boost immune systems, circulation, digestion, and heart health



TANGERINE

HARVEST SEASON: October - January

HARVEST METHOD: Hand pick; twist and pull method or snipping with hand pruner

RIPE WHEN:

- Scent: Citrusy, fresh, and bright
- Color: Bright, vibrant orange
- Weight: Heavy for size, firm to slightly soft
- Texture: Thin, pebbly-skinned

ADDITIONAL FRUIT INFO:

- The tangerine is actually a variety of the Mandarin Orange, which is native to Southeastern Asia
- The name “tangerine” originates from Tangier, Morocco that was the port from which the very first batches of the tangerine fruit were shipped from Tangier, Morocco or Southeast Asia to Europe
- The oil from the skin is actually a signature ingredient in several orange liqueurs
- Most of the tangerines produced in the United States come from Florida and California
- There are several varieties of tangerines in wide production today. These include the Honey tangerine, the Sunburst tangerine, the Robinson tangerine, the Fallglo tangerine, and the Fairchild tangerine



VALENCIA ORANGE

HARVEST SEASON: April - November

HARVEST METHOD: Hand picking - Picker and Extension

RIPE WHEN: Color is not the best indicator of ripeness, but you do not want to pick a green orange.

- Firm: Fruit should feel firm with no soft spots
- Texture: thin, smooth skin
- Weight: ripe oranges should feel heavy for their size
- Taste: fragrant, fruitful, and sweet

ADDITIONAL FRUIT INFO:

- Valencia oranges do not ripen off the tree
- Valencia oranges were originally hybridized in New Mexico, but were named after the city Valencia, Spain which was known for its sweet oranges
- Commonly used for orange juice
- Color may have a slight green tint during warmer temperatures
- Valencia oranges are the most popular in the world
- Oranges provide vitamin C, potassium, and folic acid
- 50% of the citrus grown in Florida is Valencia oranges
- Valencia oranges have 1-6 seeds per fruit
- Valencia oranges last from 2-3 weeks in the fridge



ZAPOTE

HARVEST SEASON: August - September

HARVEST METHOD: Hand pick or hand pruner; mature fruits should be clipped from the branches leaving a short piece of the stem attached

RIPE WHEN: The stem will fall off easily when ripe.

- Color: Ranges from apple-green to orange-yellow at maturity
- Size: Round, oval, symmetrical
- Texture: Skin is very thin and smooth, with a waxy bloom,

ADDITIONAL FRUIT INFO:

- Grown in subtropical high elevation regions of Guatemala, El Salvador and Costa Rica, Central Mexico
- In Central America the White sapote trees are planted as a shade tree on coffee plantations
- High in vitamin B6 and vitamin C, and contain many other vitamins and

minerals.