

28th January, 2009

RECOMMENDED VEGETABLES BEANS, EGGPLANT, COS LETTUCE, SQUASH



BEANS – Great quality beans out of Victoria. Colour and texture are good and highly recommended this week. Also available are excellent local snake beans and well worth a try. The local variety have a much better flavour than the Northern Territory variety. Also available are Borlotti, Baby, Butter, French Flat, Flat Italian and local snake beans.



CAPSICUMS – Limited supplies of green capsicums has forced prices up this week. Very little fruit is coming in from Queensland as growers are leaving the fruit on the vines longer to turn red and with the local heat killing the flowers, yields are back forcing prices up. Red capsicums remain high in prices also; quality on the whole for green, red and yellow capsicums is good.

CARROTS – Tasmania carrots now; excellent quality and good value. Dutch carrots are also excellent quality.

CAULIFLOWER – another week or two for local Cauliflower then we start with Victoria. Great sizes and snow white heads.



CORN – prices are up significantly due to a lot of the local corn going interstate to Queensland and Victoria to supplement their supplies. Baby corn appears to be back to regular supplies this week.

EGGPLANT - excellent local eggplant and baby eggplant this week. Great quality and good value; highly recommended this week.



LETTUCE - Baby Gem Cos out of Victoria has also suffered from the recent heat in Victoria. Quality has been very poor and we will substitute with Baby Cos to meet demands. Heat in Victoria has just about knocked out regular Baby rocket and with Wild Rocket already depleted in supply we may not be able to meet demands. Where possible we will substitute Wild Rocket for Rocket if supply is sufficient. This situation is expected to continue for a few weeks. Cavalo Nero has also been affected and very little stock has been available. Some Cavalo may be available in bunches but there is no guarantee of supply of this item either. Regular Cos Lettuce is excellent buying this week.



MUSHROOMS – Oyster Mushrooms will be very limited for the next few weeks. Oyster Mushrooms are grown in Igloos and cannot be air conditioned, so once the temperature exceeds 40° as it did last Saturday, the mushrooms just cook. Depending on the heat over the next few weeks supplies will take about two weeks to return to normal.



PEAS – Snow and Snap Peas are great quality and certainly worth including on the menu. Regular garden peas are plum and sweet tasting.



SQUASH – good quality continues on small and large squash. Excellent large and small squash available and a good time to include on the menu; recommended buying this week.

TOMATOES – supply, quality and prices are quite good this week; prices remain good but expect fruit later in February to show signs of increasing due to the current weather conditions. Teardrops remain impossible to source and we have had to substitute with Yellow grape tomatoes. Also available are Grape tomatoes, Vine ripe, Truss Tomato, Cherry Truss and Cherry Tomatoes. Cherry Tomatoes are all local fruit and heat has affected supply and quality. A lot of the fruit is soft. Ox heart and Heirloom tomatoes are just average in quality and fruit is also quite soft however flavour is excellent



ZUCCHINI – great supply of local zucchini as they have not suffered from the recent heat wave. Quality is good. Zucchini flower continue but the heat has reduced supply.



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RECOMMENDED FRUIT BUYS THIS WEEK WHITE GRAPES, PEACHES, NECTARINES, PLUMS, ROCKMELONS



APPLES – all apples are old season and probably it is best to stick with stone fruit which is at the peak of its season and much better value. It is certainly a lot better tasting.

APRICOTS – fruit continues and quality is still quite good.



AVOCADO – Sheppard variety will commence this week. These are a smooth skin Avocado and will remain green in colour as opposed to the Hass variety that goes quite dark. These avocados are more delicate than the Hass variety, so please handle with care.

BERRIES – **Strawberries** – quality has been greatly affected by heat in South Australia and Victoria. Fruit will have poor shelf life and we suggest only buying what is required on the day. The size of the fruit will be running on the smaller size; XL and XXL fruit will be very hard to source due to fact that the heat is causing the fruit to change colour quickly and fruit has to be picked much sooner. This situation will continue for a few weeks. Raspberries are also expected to be an issue due to the heat. Blueberries and Blackberries appear to be okay at this stage.



CHERRIES – Tasmanian fruit only. Quality is excellent however fruit is commanding very high prices. Not good value.



DRAGON FRUIT – both Red and Yellow Dragon Fruit are available and make an excellent presentation fruit; fruit holds up quite well when cut and left exposed on Platter.

FIGS – all local fruit now and quality remain good considering the heat. Majority of Figs are black however a few green are available. Local fruit will continue into March.



KIWIFRUIT - all fruit is now Italian and prices are high. Not great value.



CITRUS - Lemons – much improvement in quality now that we have started with fruit out of Queensland.

Limes are excellent quality and value. Valencia will now start to appear greener due to the heat which is the natural process of the orange to protect itself from the heat. Fruit is still sweet and eating well. USA navels are the only fruit that will be all orange however this late in the season most fruit is starting to breakdown and fruit is expensive. Grapefruit and Ruby Grapefruit are both very well supplied and quality is good.



GRAPES – White minindee seedless are excellent quality and recommended buying this week. Black grapes are Flame seedless. Local Muscatel grapes have started for a VIP grape. Current Grapes continue for a short time only.

PEARS – William pears have now started and available for both stock and contract fruit. Quality is good and fruit is eating well. Paradise pears are available for another six weeks or so if wanting to include on the menu.



MANGO – Fruit continues; variety is Kents and Keat. If you require a VIP Mango please order ahead to ensure fruit can be sourced and is ripe for eating.

MELON – **Rockmelon** – fruit is excellent quality and super sweet to eat. Honeydews are good quality also but rockmelons are by far the better value this week.



PEACHES, NECTARINES & PLUMS – not much more to say except that everyone should be using Peaches, Nectarines or Plums now while fruit is good quality, great eating and excellent value. Fruit is available in volume pack and recommended for residential sites. VIP White Nectarines and Peaches are available and fruit is great eating.

PINEAPPLE – Regular or Bethonga – both varieties are excellent quality and eating very well.

EXOTICS AND TROPICAL DELIGHTS

AVAILABLE – USA Dates, Dry Muscatel Grapes, Rambutans (average quality), Lychees, USA Pomegranate, Star fruit, Figs, Dragon fruit, Pomegranate, Paradise Pears, Longans.

Please note that all Exotics may not be available every day.

