



Small Wonders

What are these funny little guys in your box this week? One is bluish-green, the other fuzzy; they sure don't look like the apples & oranges you've been seeing lately. These are feijoas and kiwis, two tasty winter-harvested California fruits. Kiwis, of course, are now common, but you might not have known that they're harvested in the winter, from tall, woody vines that sprawl over sturdy trellises, looking a bit like a cross between a grapevine and a wisteria. In the summertime, a kiwi plantation is a paradise of humming bees, as thousands of insects converge to sip the sweet nectar from the vines' creamy yellow blossoms. Thus pollinated, the flowers turn into tiny brown, hairy-skinned fruits that slowly swell to egg-sized or larger. Kiwis do best in a cool, mild Mediterranean climate, making them a good choice for California, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa, all of which share similar climates of wet, cool winters and dry summers.

You've probably walked under a feijoa tree dozens of times without noticing its fruit. These tall evergreen shrubs with silvery bark have become a common ornamental tree around the California landscape. Named for a Brazilian botanist, it's native to the highland regions of southern Brazil, Uruguay, Paraguay, and northern Argentina. The fruits are often hard to see, since their bluish-green, nubby skin can hide in plain sight behind the trees' silvery green leaves. Pronounced "feh-JO-ah", these subtropical fruits are also known as "pineapple guavas".

When ripe, a juicy, slightly granular yellow pulp rings a center of clear, jelly-like seed pulp. The flavor is mild and tangy, with hints of pineapple, kiwi, and guava. They're best eaten fresh--just slice them open lengthwise and scoop out the pulp with a spoon (the rind may be bitter). Let them ripen at room temperature until the fruit gives a little when squeezed. Once ripe, store in the refrigerator.

-Stephanie J. Rosenbaum

NOTE: The kiwis especially might benefit from a few days of extra ripeness—they should be at their peak this weekend, the 9th-10th.

CSA NEWSLETTER

04 January 2010

- **Bacon avocados**
Stehly Organics, Valley Center
- **Hayward kiwifruit**
Swanton Berry Farm, Davenport
- **Feijoa**
Swift Subtropicals, Los Osos
- **Arkansas Black apples**
Cuyama Orchards, Cuyama
- **Braeburn apples**
Filigreen Farm, Anderson Valley
- **Navel oranges**
Murdock Oranges, Lindsay

CSA Office Hours

9am-4pm, Monday-Friday

Contact Karen or Danny at
1-888-779-4511 opt 4

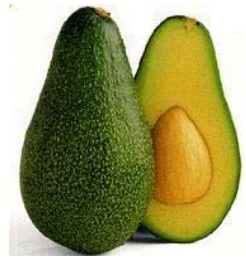
or

Email csa@froghollow.com

Can't pick up your box?
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your next delivery to
place a hold on your
delivery.

Bringing Home the Bacon

Did you know that there are over 1000 varieties of avocado? Here in California, commercial growers usually choose from 7 common varieties best suited to our climate. Of those 7, the dark, pebbly-skinned Hass accounts for over 90% of all avocados grown and sold in the state. However, tasty as it is, the Hass isn't the only game in town. The main season for California-grown Hass avocados runs from April to November. During the winter, you'll get the best flavor from other varieties. So this week, we've included smooth, green-skinned Bacon avocados in your box.



The green, pear-shaped, thin-skinned Bacon has a more delicate flavor than the Hass, and a texture that's more creamy than buttery since its oil content is usually lower. The skin will darken slightly when ripe (although it will still remain green) and the flesh will yield to gentle pressure. The Bacon is a midwinter variety, available from now through early spring. Unfortunately for you bacon fans, its name is a tribute not to its flavor but to James Bacon, who first discovered it as a chance seedling in Buena Park, California, in 1928. It has a large pit and pale yellow flesh shading to light green, and was introduced commercially in 1951.

Once cut, avocados quickly oxidize, so brush the surface with lemon juice or vinegar to keep the flesh from turning brown. Avocados ripen best at room temperature, and **Bacon**s in particular have a brief peak of ripeness before they start deteriorating. Once ripe, they can be stored in the refrigerator for a few days. Refrigeration slows but doesn't stop ripening, so be sure to enjoy your avocado promptly once it's ripe!

Avocados contain both mono- and polyunsaturated fats, and help the body absorb fat-soluble nutrients. Like all plant foods, they are free from cholesterol, and can often be used as a healthier substitute for creamy cheeses, sour cream, or mayonnaise in dips and sandwiches. They're also rich in Vitamin C, E, folate, and potassium.

BISTRO AVOCADO SALAD

RECIPE OF THE WEEK

Adapted from *Vegetarian Planet*, by Didi Emmons.

- 1 ripe avocado, cut into small cubes
- juice of 1 lime
- 2 heads endive, ends removed, cut into wide ribbons
- 1/2 cup minced red onion
- 1 red bell pepper, chopped (optional)
- 1 tsp brown mustard seeds
- 1/2 tsp ground coriander
- 2 tbsp Frog Hollow Farm extra virgin olive oil
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 head Bibb or Boston lettuce

Toss avocado and lime juice together. Add remaining ingredients except for lettuce. Mixture can be chilled for several hours if necessary. To serve, make a bed of lettuce leaves on 4 plates. Arrange a mound of salad on each plate and serve.