



Apples and Oranges

CSA NEWSLETTER

11 January 2010

It may be [misty in the mornings](#) and chilly in the afternoons out here on the farm, but we've got a new harvest to celebrate. Our Frog Hollow Farm blood oranges are ripening, and in this box you're receiving the first of our "[Moro](#)" blood oranges. We're still building our citrus crop on the farm, so most of our pick goes directly to our CSA members. (The rest goes to the farm kitchen, to be made into [marmalade](#) and other treats.)

Blood oranges are a special delicacy. Popular around the Mediterranean, but less common in the U.S., the original blood oranges came from Sicily, long known for the high quality of its citrus. The most striking element the blood orange is its color, of course; instead of being uniformly orange, the flesh (and sometimes the peel) of a blood orange is streaked and splashed with red or burgundy. These early ripening "Moros" are among the most intensely pigmented of all blood oranges, with flesh that can be deep vermillion or even dark reddish purple all the way through. The flavor offers a note of crushed raspberries alongside the usual bright tart-sweetness of the citrus.

In Italy, they're commonly squeezed fresh to make a wonderful juice, perfect on its own or mixed with sparkling wine to make a particularly ravishing aperitif. In the Bay Area, they're often used in winter salads, mixed with bitter greens such as chicory, raddichio, and escarole. Their color and flavor also make them wonderful for sorbets and mousses.

Next week we'll probably have a few more of our "Moros" and then we hope to have our "[Tarocco](#)" blood oranges for a week or two after that.

So, the oranges are purple, the kiwis are hairy, and the apples are...tiny! Yes, it's a crazy fruit salad in your box this week. But don't under-estimate these little-bitty apples; they may be little, but their flavor is outta sight! These Crimson Gold apples are probably a cross between the dainty, bite-sized sweet Lady apple and the sour crab apple. The result? A small but potent fruit, equal parts tart and sweet. They make a great lunchbox snack. You can also prick them lightly and roast them whole alongside a chicken or pork roast for great taste and a beautiful presentation.

continued on page 2

- **Moro blood oranges**
Frog Hollow Farm, Brentwood
- **Bacon avocados**
Stehly Organics, Valley Center
- **Hayward kiwifruit**
Swanton Berry Farm, Davenport
- **Feijoa**
Swift Subtropicals, Los Osos
- **Crimson Gold crabapples**
Cuyama Orchards, Cuyama
- **Navel oranges**
Olsen Organics, Lindsay
- **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

continued from page 1

The Crimson Gold apple was first bred by Albert Etter, a California plant breeder who was particularly enamored of crab apples. Crab apples are usually small, tannic and astringent, better for jellies and jams than eating out of hand, but Etter imagined crossing his favorite crab apples with sweeter apples to produce small, vividly flavored, late-ripening fruits with high sugar and just a hint of tannin. And he succeeded, creating several new varieties including Humboldt, Wickson, and Crimson Gold. Just before the beginning of the 20th century, Etter settled on a parcel of wild California land he dubbed [Ettersburg](#). As long as he cleared it, cultivated it, and lived on it, he could own the land for free, thanks to the [Homestead Act](#) of 1862.

Through painstaking hybridization and grafting, he created numerous new apple varieties, many of which were introduced commercially through a partnership with a local nursery in the 1940s and 50s. Sadly, though, Etter's original experimental orchard fell into disrepair over the years, and many of his crosses were lost, mislabeled, or doomed to obscurity. Thanks to the efforts of a few dedicated local nurseries and orchardists, some of Etter's most popular varieties were eventually re-discovered and brought back into circulation. (The Pink Pearl apple, a tart, early-season apple known for its arresting hot-pink flesh, is probably the best known Etter apple.)

The Crimson Gold was revived through fruit found on a single limb of a multi-grafted test tree. Luckily, the limb still bore its original zinc label, and the fruit proved to match descriptions of the original Crimson Gold apples. We hope you'll enjoy this little taste of California history!

-Stephanie J. Rosenbaum

ROASTED APPLES WITH ALMOND CRUMBLE

RECIPE OF THE WEEK

This makes more crumble than you may need, but it freezes well. It's also a nice gluten-free option for those who can't have wheat or gluten products.

- 6 tablespoons butter, softened
- 1/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- seeds of one vanilla bean (split bean and scrape out seeds)
- 3/4 cup rice flour
- 1 1/2 cups almond meal (finely ground raw almonds)
- pinch of salt
- 1 cup raw almonds, chopped
- 8 small apples or 4 large apples
- Vanilla ice cream, optional

Cream the butter, sugars, and vanilla bean seeds with the paddle attachment. Add the rice flour, almond meal and salt and mix. Add the chopped almonds and mix until crumbly.

If using small apples, cut in half horizontally, removing core. For large apples, cut into 3 or 4 slices horizontally so that slices can be "stacked". Keep the top, but core the rest of the layers. Place them in a baking pan. Sprinkle the crumble in between the layers and in the cavities.

Bake at 350F for about 30 minutes or until tender. You can baste them with a bit of melted butter and/or apple juice in the process if the apples seem a bit too dry. Serve warm with vanilla ice cream if desired.