

Farmgate Roundup 25/3/06

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Salutations!

This week we're going a bit nutty on the Farmgate Trail.

It's Chestnut season. Walnuts and Pecans will be ready in a couple of weeks. Chestnuts were very important in past civilisations, they served as year round food for humans and animals. The chestnut tree provided wood for railroads, house building and fencing, tannin for leather processing and of course nuts for eating. Now you can admire these terrific trees at the Kookootonga Walnut & Chestnut Farm and the Nutwood Farm, both are situated in the scenic Mt Irvine.

There you'll be provided with buckets and bags for picking and you can wander through the groves and collect your own chestnuts. Wear good strong shoes so that you don't cut your feet on the burrs.

Ruth from Kookootonga tells me that the crop is very good and the chestnuts are very large this year. If you don't know what to do with them there's a good Australian Growers website you can have a look at, www.chestnutgrower.com.au or just do a google search for chestnuts Australia. They have recipes and lots of other information.

Ted and Jo at Basha Produce have pecan nuts coming on, they'll be ready in two weeks. Right now they have Fuyu persimmons in season. These have an orange skin and yellow flesh. Unlike some other varieties the Fuyu persimmon doesn't leave your mouth dry, they are a non astringent variety. Nor do you wait till they soften, these are eaten hard like an apple and are quite sweet.

Fruit

Other fruit in season...figs, apples, raspberries and strawberries.

Vegetables

Vegies available include Roma and round tomatoes, corn, potatoes, lettuce, eggplant, snow peas, mushrooms, cabbage, beetroot, Lebanese cucumbers, shallots, capsicum, eggplant, broccoli, butternut pumpkins, Jap Qld Blue and baby carrots.

Other Produce

Wine, port, goats cheese, free range eggs, baked crisp breads including lavosh, fresh honey, apple juice. All kinds of pickles and jam, native bush tucker products.

Meats include duck, beef, pork, and venison. local spring water.

Events

Seniors Week at Mt Tomah Botanical Garden is on from Sunday 2nd April till Sunday 9th April.. The highlight will be “Grandparents Day” on Wednesday 5th April. Grandparents will receive free entry into Mt Tomah Botanic Garden when accompanied by their grandchildren. Once inside the generations can enjoy book readings of May Gibbs work and a complimentary morning or afternoon tea. Other activities planned for seniors week include a video workshop teaching seniors how to make a great travel video, led by acclaimed video lecturer and producer Martha Mollinson. This workshop is suitable for beginners or intermediates, or you might like to catch a screening of a documentary film retracing George Caley’s historic trek through the Blue Mountains in 1804. For all the details of these activities contact Mt Tomah Botanic Garden.

One more event.....The 6th Hawkesbury National Fiddle Festival is on again at the Hawkesbury Showground from the 7th to the 9th of April. This is where a couple of thousand music lovers and fiddlers congregate to enjoy the music. This years major artists (and tutors) include Martin Lass, Ian Cooper, George Washingmachine, the Toe Sucking Cowgirls, Andrew Clermont, Sean Keenan and many more. There’ll be workshops, performances and plenty of kids activities. Go to www.fiddlefestival.com for information.

You can download a map so you can find our growers and event details or organise accommodation such as a farmstay on the Farmgate Trail, all the details are on our website www.hawkesburyharvest.com.au.