



HARVEST HEADLINE - CITRUS



It's [citrus](#) season and this year the weather has been perfect for this California fruit. With a strong market for oranges, tangerines, and grapefruit, farmers are continually working to get citrus to your table.

All of our farmers say that citrus is right on time or at least two weeks earlier this year. The weather has been perfect for citrus, not too cold and not too rainy. Both Allard Farms and Diaz Farms have a nice quantity to start the season off with, while Ken's Top Notch has a copious amount of oranges and tangerines to begin the month.

The farmers at your local farmers' market offer some delicious varieties to try. Some have been around while, while others have just been released. Many of these varieties cannot be found elsewhere! And this year seems to be bountiful!

- 1. Mandarins/Tangerines:** California mandarins have grown in popularity with their sweet, slightly less acidic flavor and unique, easy-peel rind. By the way, tangerines are hybrids of the original mandarin orange. There are new Page, Murcott, Dancy, Tango, Okitzu, seedless Daisy, and Shasta Gold varieties, all with varying sweetness.
- 2. Finger Limes:** These are small and elongated, almost resembling gherkins, containing tiny spherical vessels filled with tart juice that is sometimes called citrus caviar.

VESSELS FILLED WITH CITRUS JUICE THAT IS SOMETIMES CALLED CITRUS CAVIAR.

3. **Tangelos/Minneolas:** Tangelo oranges are a cross between a Dancy tangerine and a Duncan grapefruit. The “lo” part of “tangelo” comes from “pomelo,” the fruit from which grapefruit originated. Confused yet? They’re also known as Minneola oranges and Honeybells.
4. **Calamansi:** Calamansi is small, round, and green, and said to be a cross between a kumquat and a mandarin orange, giving it both tartness and sweetness. It’s difficult to find anywhere but the farmers’ market.
5. **Blood oranges:** Late-season navel blood oranges are a fairly new variety, mostly grown in California. They’re designed to extend the season through the spring months. They’re also called raspberry oranges because the name blood orange was found to be rather off-putting. This orange has a rather fruity raspberry citrus flavor.
6. **Navel oranges:** Several varieties are appearing, such as the Atwood, derived from the Washington navel, pink Cara Cara navel oranges, Late Lane variety, also from the Washington navel but late season, and the old Valencia variety, used mostly for juicing.
7. **Yuzu:** This looks like a cross between a lemon and a small mandarin. It ripens from green to orange-yellow and has loose, slightly wrinkly skin. It has a strong tart flavor good for juices or marinades.
8. **Grapefruit:** Grapefruit is a cross between a sweet orange and a pomelo and comes in over 20 varieties nationwide. The varieties grown in California are mostly the Oro Blanco, a sweet, juicy, and seedless variety, and the Star Ruby, prized for its beautiful, deep red color and exceptional sweet-tart flavor.
9. **Pomelos:** The Chandler, or Pink, pomelo is an exceptionally large fruit with a yellow to yellow-pink rind and a light to dark pink-colored, juicy flesh that is mostly sweet but slightly tart. There are also varieties with a greenish skin and yellow flesh called the Melogold which is a cross between a grapefruit and a pomelo.
10. **Lemons:** The favorite specialty variety of lemon in California is the Meyer with a subtly sweet, mellow flavor. It’s a cross between a mandarin orange and a standard lemon. The standard lemons are Lisbon and Eureka varieties, more tart, and great for zesting.

Look for new and delicious varieties of winter citrus at your local farmers’ market where you’ll find the best, just-picked citrus from local farms. Stop by and get a taste of California’s freshest citrus.

TAGS

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