BUYER'S NOTES

EARL'S ORGANIC PRODUCE

BUYER'S NOTES MARCH 29, 2020



A special shout out to Eric Ventura, Earl's driver, for delivering this donation to people in need.

BRIARPATCH COOP AND EARL'S DONATE 2,501 POUNDS OF FRESH PRODUCE TO INTERFAITH FOOD MINISTRY

Grass Valley March 24, 2020 – In an effort to feed Western Nevada County's hungry during COVID-19, BriarPatch Food Co-op and Earl's Organic Produce teamed up to donate four pallets totaling 2,501 pounds of fresh produce to Interfaith Food Ministry.

"The Co-op has been a lifeline for so many people during this challenging time and we're grateful we can support them. But we know there are community members really struggling right now. We wanted to give back to families who lost their jobs or are staying home with their kids without much to eat," said BriarPatch Marketing Manager Rebecca Torpie.

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NEW!

- **Crunchy Sweet Import Red Seedless Grapes**

COMING SOON

- **Purple Sprouting Broccoli** back Monday
- **Tutti Frutti English Peas** towards the end of the week

BACK IN STOCK

- **Kabocha**
- **Organic Girl Mache** back for another week or two

TIGHT INVENTORY

- **Sweet Baby Broccoli**
- **Bulk Garlic** is tight to non-existent
- **Celery**
- **Eggplant**
- **Organic Girl Supergreens, Butter Lettuce and Arugula Salads**
- **Yellow Onions, Bagged Onions and Sweet Onions**
- **Parsnips**
- **Potatoes**
- **Romas**

GAPPING

- **White Onions**
- **Delicata**
- **Melons: Mid to late April from Mexico**

FINISHED

- **Coke Farm Sunchokes**
- **Cherry Tomatoes from Covilli** are done. **Covilli Hot Peppers** winding down.

TEMPORARILY DISCONTINUED

CECE will temporarily be discontinuing Beet Spirals starting next week in order to improve efficiency and productivity in their facility during this period of increased demand. On the early side of next week we may be tight on the following items due to tight supplies:

- **Zucchini Spirals**
- **Zucchini Veggiccine**
- **Zucchini Noodle and Marinara**
- **Broccoli Rice**

RHUBARB ARRIVING MONDAY!



The arrival of shiny crimson **Red Rhubarb** is yet another sign that spring has arrived. It is a hearty vegetable that thrives in cooler climates and originally came by way of China, Russia and Mongolia where it was first used as a medicinal herb to treat a variety of illnesses. Rhubarb made its debut in the United States in the late 18th century when Luther Burbank, a world-renowned horticulturist, developed a deep red variety that thrived in much of California's climate. Rhubarb grows best in the northern regions of the United States. It can be found grown on a commercial level in Oregon, Washington and Michigan. Rhubarb from the Pacific Northwest is all field grown and the season runs from late March until the end of June. The Michigan season begins in April with hothouse grown rhubarb and later moves to field grown.

— FRUIT —

Apples

Volume of the storage **Apples** in Washington is decreasing at a faster rate than anticipated, moving market prices up across the board in all varieties. We don't expect any shortages in the short term.

Avocados

California growers have started picking. We should be in good supply of all sizes by Monday.



Avocados are a good source of five essential nutrients: fiber, folate, vitamin K, pantothenic acid (B5) and copper. From breakfast bowls to shareable vegetarian side dishes to enticing entrees, add California Avocados to any meal to elevate your plate. Find delicious recipes on the California Avocado website **https://bit.ly/caavorecipes**

Berries

Blackberries remain very tight.
Blueberries: California Blueberries are in good supply. Forbidden Readycycle Baskets are a great recyclable option.
Strawberries: Some bit of volume coming on. We have seen a lot of rain in Watsonville. Even under hoops there is 100% humidity. We are keeping an eye out for quality issues.
Raspberries: Berry People out of Mexico is in good supply and prices have started to drop.

Citrus

Excellent quality, condition and flavor in most citrus varieties. Still a great time to promote **Navels, Cara Cara, Gold Nuggets and Murcott. Tango** volume has been reduced. **Grapefruit** is now in very good supplies. **Lemon** market is stronger this week as it usually is at the end of March. Expect price to keep moving up as we approach to April and May. **Limes** remain steady in volume and price. **Kumquats, Oroblanco, Cocktail Grapefruit and Moro Blood Oranges** will be available again on Monday.

Grapes

Great news on **Seedless Grapes. Red Sweet Celebration** are now available from Perú and **Green Autumn Crisp**, also from Perú, will arrive on Monday. We expect to have a steady supply for at least a few more weeks. **Mexican Grapes** crop is looking to be a normal to slightly below normal volume but big in flavor and some of our favorite varieties like **Cotton Candy** are expected in May. ***Stay tuned!***

Pears

Bartletts, D'Anjou and Abate Fetel all excellent with attractive prices and great eating quality. **Bosc** expected to start in about two weeks.

Tropicals

Pineapples from Covilli remain in very good supply. **Crespo Ataulfo and Tommy Atkins** are very sweet.

EARL'S ORGANIC CARRIES ORGANIC FAIR TRADE BANANAS 365 DAYS A YEAR.

In 2006, **Equal Exchange**, the nation's first fair trade coffee company, began importing organic fair trade bananas into the US from a small-farmer cooperative in Ecuador. The company's decision to start a banana program was grounded in its founding mission: to make global food trade ethical at all stages of the supply chain.

"The motivation to work with bananas specifically as a product was [to try] to find a way to shift the narrative in the banana industry, which has a really egregious history," says Angelica Hicks, the banana category lead at Oke USA Fruit Company, the produce-importing arm of Equal Exchange. *"The low price of bananas betrays over a century of labor and human rights abuses, environmental degradation, and political and military interventions. ... [Equal Exchange wanted] to shift the power dynamic so that small-farmer cooperatives are directly accessing the market and able to negotiate for the prices and the logistics that they need."*

Breaking into the California market was a major achievement for the company. Since 2016, Equal Exchange has been working with Earl's Organic Produce to import fairly traded Organic Avocados from Mexico. This relationship opened the door for Equal Exchange to start bringing its Bananas to the West Coast in late 2018. The bananas travel by boat from the Pacific coastal city of Machala, Ecuador to Port Hueneme, CA, a major produce import hub.

"It was a huge leap for both Equal Exchange and for Earl's to start [a new fair trade banana program] in California because it's a totally new supply chain, totally new shipping route, totally new market," says Hicks. *"Starting a new organic fair trade bananas business anywhere is really difficult and really unusual."* Yet so far, says Hicks, the program has been going really well, thanks to the support of retailers and consumers in Northern California.

Read the full article: bit.ly/equalexchangefairtradebananas

— VEG —

Asparagus: Cold nights are slowing down the growth but supply is still good. Jumbos are super sweet and great for grilling. We need a few warm days and the crowns will explode.

Bell Peppers: Good volume on choice and 11# on all Colored Bells. We are starting to see prices come down.

Brassicas: Brussel Sprouts, Broccoli, Cauliflower and Romanesco are in good supply.

Celery: Juice celery is plentiful. Regular Celery is tight and we are seeing some quality issues as the transition from the desert takes place.

Cucumbers: Euro Cukes and Persian Cukes are in good supply. Slicer supply is looking up. #2 Persians have an assortment of curved pieces, large and small sizes and some Yellow Belly Cukes.

Ginger is end of season and supply is tight. Prices going up as supply tightens.

Greens: Sun Valley Farms has strong volume of gorgeous Chards and Kales. Dandelion Greens are plentiful.

Herbs: Oregano and Tarragon continue to be challenged quality wise. The lack of sun hampers quality and strength of the plants.

Tomatoes: Now is the time to stock up on Covilli Heirloom Tomatoes, a rich source of vitamin C. Did you know that tomatoes help nourish the adrenal glands and reduce stress? Something we could all use during these trying days. Delicious flavor and a fantastic variety for your customers to choose from. The rainbow of colors shows off not only their diversity but their high content of antioxidants.

Winter Squash: Plenty of Spaghetti and Butternut.

Zucchini: Covilli Choice Zucchini is a good value!

BRIARPATCH COOP AND EARL'S DONATE TO INTERFAITH FOOD MINISTRY

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"Earl's Organic wants to do our part to help people in need during this time of health safety. We are happy to partner with our long-time customer BriarPatch Food Co-op to donate organic produce to IFM, an organization they support throughout the year," said Susan Simitz Marketing and Social Media Manager for Earl's Organic Produce

Food Supply Remains Strong

"Now more than ever, there is a need to provide people and their families with fresh healthy food during a time of economic and job uncertainty. Earl's intention is to eliminate as much concern about one's food supply as we are able," said Simitz.

The donation comes at a time when national food supply chains have come under tremendous stress yet remain strong, vibrant and able to serve and be accountable in times of crisis, said Earl Herrick, Owner and Founder of Earl's Organic Produce. **Read the full article here: https://bit.ly/briarpatchearlfoodbankdonation**

Try This Purple Stokes Sweet Potato Pie!



More people are baking as they shelter in place. This delicious Purple Stokes Sweet Potato Pie is simple to make:
bit.ly/purplestokessweetpotatoepie

Organic Potato Supplies Scarce; Prices Climb



excerpt from Open Connect Newsletter 159 · March 26, 2020

The novel coronavirus-COVID-19, reduced yields in 2019 and the ordinary issues storing Organic Potatoes has led to reduced supplies and higher prices, with a remedy at least several months away, according to several potato distributors. In fact, the Progressive Produce organic specialist added, *"I don't think supply catches up to demand until the Northwest starts up again in August/September."* **Read the full article bit.ly/OPNPotatosuppliescarce**

NOTE ABOUT PICK UPS: The Earl's team is working hard to bring you organic produce. Thank you for continued support. We are operating with an abundance of caution for your safety as well as the safety of our employees. We will all get through this together. If you are a pick up customer with an account please remember to let us know what time you will be picking up. When you arrive please give us a call us, stay in your vehicle, and we will bring your order to you.