

HARRIS FARM MARKETS

fresh news

— NOVEMBER 2011 —

This month's best...

They're back...beautiful bananas!

New season stone fruit...early season peaches
and nectarines

Sweetcorn success

The Farmer & his wife...
Strawberry Fields - Jon and Bernadine Carmichael



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What to eat in November:

Pink lady apples, avocados, bananas, blueberries, cherries, grapefruit, mangoes, melons, mulberries (available until mid-month) papaya, pawpaw, passionfruit, pineapple and watermelon.

Asian greens, asparagus, beetroot, broad beans, cucumber, chillies, garlic (fresh), globe artichokes, green beans, lettuce, mushrooms, peas, potatoes, shallots, silverbeet, spinach, spring onions, sweetcorn, tomatoes, watercress, zucchini and zucchini flowers.

They're back...beautiful bananas!

Down in price and up in quality, we are delighted to sing their praises.

We think bananas are better eating than they have ever have been. Their outstanding flavour is due to the long, cooler winter Queensland and Northern NSW has just had. The bananas have been allowed to mature on palms for much longer than they would in a normal, warmer winter season, and as a result the bananas are much sweeter.

Banana basics

- Yellow bananas will keep for a couple of days. So don't just buy yellow, buy some green as well. These will ripen to yellow over the next 3 to 4 days.
- Alternatively, yellow bananas (not green) placed in the vegie crisper drawer of the fridge will keep firm and tasty. The skin may go brown but the flesh inside is still the same delicious banana.
- To speed up the ripening process, keep bananas in a bowl with other ripe fruit, or stash the bananas in a paper bag with ripe apples or avocados. In both cases, the natural ethylene gas produced by the bananas and other ripe fruit hurries the ripening process along.

PUT THEM ON YOUR SHOPPING LIST...

BANANAS ARE PACKED WITH FLAVOUR
AND GOODNESS

People love bananas for their sweetness, flavour and ease of eating – the nutritional benefits are a wonderful bonus. The banana is filling, with no fat, cholesterol or salt. A sliced banana on breakfast cereal with milk makes the first meal of the day nutritious and long lasting.

FOR BREAKFAST ON THE GO

TRY OUR BANANA OAT SMOOTHIE

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this month's best

Yes, we have some bananas and boy, are they good! Bananas are excellent eating right now. Since their arrival back into market last month they're even better. You'll be won over by their sweet flavour and luscious creaminess.

Western Australian Pink Lady apples are one of the last apple varieties of the season to be harvested. This month sees the best of the crop. You'll find they're great for eating fresh or for salads, sauces and pies. Pink Lady apples have a distinct colouring. Rather than red all over like other apple varieties, they have a pink tone with a green background. Growers tell us the best tasting ones are just that little bit greener in hue.

The Katherine (NT) mango season is underway this month and we're seeing some top quality mangoes in the market. The Kensington Pride mango still ranks as the most popular mango variety due to its fabulous aroma, fibre-free flesh and flavour. Buy some of varying ripeness and keep them in the fruit bowl until just ripe. Mangoes freeze really well. They can be sliced, cubed and bagged, or pureed and placed into ice cube trays.

Watermelons are a warm season crop needing heat to turn sweet. The main growing areas are the Northern Territory and central and western Queensland. November sees watermelon from both these areas come into market. Supply is very good as is the price and the taste is brilliant. Those small white pips you see in the watermelon are called "edibles" like the seeds in a cucumber, and yes you can eat them.

Watermelons don't ripen once they've been picked. To find the ripest and juiciest ones give the whole watermelon a tap on its side. If it sounds hollow it's a good one, if you hear a thud, it's a dud. It should also feel quite heavy for its size. Check under the watermelon too - if it has a yellow or light bottom, it should be ripe. Store them at room temperature until cut and then in the fridge for 1-2 days.

We're expecting good supplies of new season papaya, pawpaw and passionfruit this month. They should be sweet and full-flavoured. It's worth noting that sometimes the skin of papaya remains green, even when the fruit is perfectly ripe, so don't let their looks fool you.

The Farmer & his wife.....

Strawberry Fields - Jon and Bernadine Carmichael

Strawberry Fields are family owned and run strawberry farms with two locations in Queensland. Both farms are run by Jon and Bernadine Carmichael. One of the Strawberry Fields farms is located in Palmview on the Sunshine Coast and the other at Stanhope on the Granite Belt. The Sunshine Coast farm has been run by the Carmichael's since 1980 and the Granite Belt farm since 2009 when Jon and Bernadine expanded the business after taking over from Jon's parents in 2006.

Jon has had a passion for agriculture all his life, having been raised on a live stock/strawberry farm. He completed a Diploma in Farm Management at the Gatton Agricultural College and spent 10 years managing corporate horticultural supply chains. In 2006 he and his beautiful wife Bernadine ventured back to the family farm to take over from his parents due to their retirement. This provided a great opportunity for Jon to put into practice the vast farm management knowledge he had accrued over the years and put it back into the family farm.

Strawberry Fields uses sustainable agricultural techniques to minimize the use of chemicals and various biological controls to prevent disease and pests. They pride themselves on their strawberries and their priority is ensuring the highest quality and sweetness in the fruit they produce. Both farms are known as tourist destinations and attract people from all over the world to experience and enjoy picking their own strawberries.

Harris Farm shares similar ideologies in relation to the consumer need - not only in good quality, safe produce but also in educating the consumer on supply and how we grow and farm our product.



Jon and Bernadine Carmichael on one of their Strawberry farms.

NEW SEASON STONE FRUIT...

EARLY SEASON PEACHES

AND NECTARINES



Sweet luscious stone fruit is making an appearance as we move towards summer. This early season fruit won't be as sweet, or as fragrant as it will become when the weather gets warmer. If you can't wait to sink your teeth into some keep these tips in mind:

- Avoid ones with too much green (they won't ripen).
- An under ripe peach or nectarine will be firm to touch (and quite tart to eat). It is much better to wait until they feel slightly firm with a touch of softness when gently pressed. They'll ripen in 2-3 days
- Store them in your fruit bowl until they are ripe.
- Don't refrigerate stone fruit until it has ripened at room temperature, or they become mealy.

SWEETCORN SUCCESS

What to look for: It's better to buy sweetcorn still in its husks as they protect the kernels from drying out.

How to store: Store in their husks in a plastic bag in the fridge.

How much does one yield? An average cob of corn gives about $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of kernels.

How to cook: Remove the husks, and pull away the silk. Don't salt the cooking water as it will toughen the kernels. Add salt to the drained corn just before serving.

How to get the kernels off the cob: Work on a chopping board (have dry hands), cut a slice away from one of the cob so it can sit flat, then hold the cooked cob upright with one hand. Using a sharp knife and a sawing motion, carefully slice downwards towards the base.

