



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
HEALTH / AGRICULTURE BUILDING
PO BOX 330
TRENTON NJ 08625-0330

CHRIS CHRISTIE
Governor
KIM GUADAGNO
Lt. Governor

DOUGLAS H. FISHER
Secretary

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Surprise! While initial estimates were that weather conditions could mean a smaller-than-usual crop of *Jersey Fresh* peaches and nectarines, New Jersey's farmers want you to know that these fruits of their labor are plentiful and at the peak of their season right now and throughout September.

The recent warm and dry weather has provided the perfect conditions for beautiful, extra flavorful peaches with high sugar (or "brix") concentrations. Our growers harvest nearly two dozen varieties of peaches including the Gloria, Jersey Queen and Laurels, which are now in season.

With our youngsters returning to school after Labor Day, many people may think the summer growing season ends, but nothing could be further from the truth. Our growers will still have peaches and nectarines, and all our summer *Jersey Fresh* favorites, throughout September. During the first few weeks of school, consider making a peach or nectarine a healthy and delicious addition to your child's lunch bag.

When you are shopping for peaches, there are a few tips to remember to maximize your experience. Look for peaches with a nice red color and a deep yellow background. If the peaches seem a bit firm, refrigerate some and leave a few others out on a countertop to finish the ripening process. Within a day or two, they should be perfect, and you can move more from the fridge to the countertop.

Everyone knows that the closer the source of peaches and nectarines is to the retailer or farmers market, the more they are able to mature on the tree, and thus are sweeter, compared to those which must be shipped over several days from farther away. *Jersey Fresh* peaches and nectarines are as fresh and local as it gets. So be sure to tell your grocer you want *Jersey Fresh* peaches and nectarines.

I encourage you to take advantage of these sweet treats now, and be sure to look for New Jersey peaches and nectarines when you are shopping.

Douglas H. Fisher, Secretary
New Jersey Department of Agriculture

