

# SPECIALTY FOODS BOSTON

PROUD TO SUPPLY NEW ENGLAND'S BEST CHEFS SINCE 1989

## *news and highlights*

June 15, 2007

Menu adjustments may be needed as many spring favorites wind down ... the ramp season is behind us, with green garlic to follow in a few days ... domestic Asparagus in 28# cases is done for the season, and all Asparagus going forward will be 11# cases from Peru ... the season is over for Vidalia Spring Onions, Green Almonds and French White and Wild Asparagus ... Fiddleheads will finish in a week or two.

Meanwhile, our local growers are starting to come on line with an eclectic collection of lettuces, greens and vegetables. Ward's Farm is expecting to have English Peas, Sugarsnap Peas and Spring Onions for us by next week. Native Strawberries have just started, and Native Rhubarb is plentiful. On the West Coast, all of our stone fruit growers are describing this is the best season they've had in fifteen years, and the quality of all the summer fruits has been outstanding. Art Lange at Honeycrisp Farm, normally the poster boy for doom and gloom, is actually sounding positive and is sending us some fantastic fruit, including his amazing Snow Queen White Nectarines, which are due this weekend. Fresh Lychees have just started, and Fresh Black Mission Figs are becoming more plentiful and are now available in pint baskets.

Fresh Oregon Porcini are having a very good season, and price has been very favorable. Price of Fresh Morels has improved as some new picking areas have opened up, but remains in the high teens. European Chanterelles and Mousseron have been plentiful and affordable.

Hydroponic Boston lettuce will be almost nonexistent for the next 2-3 weeks, as the Canadian grower that supplies most of the United States had a bad lot of seed and lost a substantial portion of the harvest.

We have recently introduced Fra'Mani salami from Chef Paul Bertolli(ex of Chez Panisse and Oliveto) in Berkeley, California. This is a traditional, handcrafted salami made from the finest artisanal fresh pork and natural hog casings. All pork comes from family farmers, committed to the well-being of their animals and their land. We are offering two types: *Salametto*, a small(1# avg) coarse ground, garlic-scented salame, and *Salame Nostrano*, which is a larger(3# avg) salame, more coarsely ground and less dense than the *Salametto*.

## *highlights & new items*

Native Strawberries & Rhubarb from Ward's Berry Farm  
Native Mesclun & Baby Arugula from Equinox Farm  
Native Braising Greens & Pea Tendrils from Nesenkeag Farm  
Fresh Black Mission Figs  
Full-Pint New Jersey Blueberries  
Fresh Lychee Fruit  
Fresh Oregon Morels and Porcini  
Fresh Oregon Wild Pousse-Pied  
Fresh European Chanterelles & Mousseron  
Fresh California Bing Cherries and Golden Ranier Cherries  
Fresh California Peaches & White Peaches  
Fresh California Nectarines. Apricots, Plums & Pluots  
Honeycrisp Farm Snow Queen White Nectarines – due this weekend  
Native English Peas, Sugarsnap Peas, Red & White Spring Onions – due next week

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## available by pre-order

Stinging Nettles  
Shiso (Red or Green)

*Peeled* Red Pearl Onions  
Onion Sprouts

Fresh Wasabi Root  
Honshimeji Mushrooms

Fresh Hearts of Palm  
Kaiware Sprouts

## done/ending/gapping

French Wild Asparagus  
Meyer Lemons  
Honey Tangerines

French White Asparagus  
Chantenay Carrots  
Vidalia Salad Onions

Wild Ramps  
Pomegranates  
Green Garlic

Green Almonds  
Muscat Grapes  
Fiddleheads

## produce market report

Allium – Ramps and Green Garlic are both done for the season. Plenty of Vidalia Onions, but Vidalia Salad Onions are finished -- we are substituting Spring Onions from California, and we expect to receive native Spring Onions(both red and white) next week. Also Cipollinis, both whole and peeled in gallons, three colors of whole pearl onions and peeled white pearls in gallons.

Artichokes – Artichokes love the spring and hate the summer, which is why we consider March through May to be best of the season, and we are now in the final weeks of the “good artichokes”. After that we move into the summer style of artichokes which are grown from seed and have a much smaller yield than the Castroville style. Also, the summer artichokes are mostly medium size, and small or baby artichokes are very hard to get.

Asparagus – All U.S.-grown 28# cases of Asparagus are done for the season, and everything from now until next spring will be 11# cases from Peru. Both French Wild Asparagus and Jumbo French White Asparagus is done for the season, but we have plenty of Peruvian White Asparagus; quality is fine.

Beans and Peas – Good supply of English Peas from New Jersey, and we expect native English Peas and native Sugarsnaps to start by the end the next week. Favas are mostly California, with New Jersey just around the corner. Fresh Cranberry Beans, Fresh Garbanzo Beans, Green Romano Beans and Yellow Wax Beans are available most days, and Chinese Long Beans are readily available. Dragon Tongue Beans require a pre-order. Pousse-Pied are now wild crop from Oregon, although they are now cultivated and available pretty much year-round.

Berries – Native Strawberries from Ward’s Berry Farm have just started and should be available for about six weeks. California Strawberries from Watsonville are plentiful and cheap. Blueberries have made their seasonal shift from half pints to full pints – shipments from the Carolinas are winding down, just in time for the New Jersey, which starts this weekend and will be followed by native Blueberries. Raspberries are plentiful at this moment but will probably get tighter in late June or early July, and won’t be abundant again until August. Blackberries are virtually non-existent, as Mexico has finished and California is slow to get started – this should continue for at least two weeks. In the freezer, we have Cranberries, Red Currants, Black Currants, Huckleberries, Lingonberries and Boysenberries. Look for Fresh Red Currants and Green Gooseberries in about two weeks, and Fresh Huckleberries in late July.

Citrus -- The whole citrus deal is basically finished ... all Meyer Lemons and Tangerines are done for the season. Blood Oranges are all Italian - they are good, but not great, and will only be around for a few more weeks. Texas Star Ruby Grapefruits are done, and we have only “regular” pink grapefruits. Kumquats remain available but are from storage, and if the quality starts to suffer we may have to pull the plug. Seville Oranges, Cara-Cara Pink Navels, Satsuma Mandarins, Cocktail Grapefruits, Pummelos and Oroblancos are all done for the season.

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Lettuces & Greens – Equinox Farm is sending us beautiful native Mesclun and Baby Arugula three times a week. From Nesenkeag Farm, we have organic Braising Greens and Pea Tendrils. Also Tuscan/Black/Dino Kale, Young Beet Greens, Ultra Baby Bok Choy (finger size), Red Endive, Radicchio Trevisano, Rainbow Swiss Chard (aka Bright Lights). Mixed Micro Greens are available every day; other varieties are sometimes available “day of” but a preorder is always a good idea.

Melons – Cantalopes are excellent and Honeydews are very good. We also have the full lineup of California varietal melons, including Canary, Casaba, Crenshaw, Galia, Sharlyn, Orange-Flesh Honeydew and Yellow Watermelon -- all of these are good, but July is prime season for melons and quality will improve with each arrival. Also, good Charentais melons from the Dominican Republic.

Mushrooms – Fresh Morels are having a good season and Fresh Porcini are having a very good season. We are also getting a steady supply of Chanterelles and Mousseron from Europe, and prices have been favorable for both. Cultivated Maitake have been readily available; Bluefoots and Honshimeji generally require a pre-order, but you might get lucky.

Roots – Watermelon Radishes are back, after a long absence – also Black Radish and French Breakfast. Chantenay Carrots are done for the season, and the only Jim Cook Potatoes we have left are Rose Finn Fingerlings, as well as a few Purple Sun Potatoes, which are purple outside and gold inside. Parsnips are native, but not from Jim Cook. Sunchokes are available from California but nearing the end. Plenty of Vidalia Onions, Okinawa Yams, Baby Turnips, Baby Carrots (Red, Orange, Yellow & Round), Baby Fennel and Baby Beets in three colors. Good supply Large Chioggia & Gold Beets, Salsify & Parsley Root. Plenty of Celery, Taro, Yucca & Lotus Roots; Burdock Root with a pre-order.

Spring Greens & Vegetables – Many items in this category are either finished or nearing the end, particularly those that are not native. We are done with Ramps, Green Garlic, Domestic 28# Asparagus, French White and Wild Asparagus, Green Almonds and Vidalia Salad Onions. Fiddleheads have only one or two weeks remaining. Native Pea Tendrils and Braising Greens are plentiful, with Native Spring Onions, English Peas and Sugarsnap Peas expected to start next week. Fava Beans switching from California to New Jersey soon. Native Stinging Nettles with a pre-order.

Summer Fruits – Many of our stone fruit growers are describing this is the best season they’ve had in fifteen years, and the quality of all the summer fruits has been outstanding. Every size, shape and color of Peach, Nectarine, Plum, Apricot and Cherry is now readily available and at best-of-the-season quality. Art Lange at Honeycrisp Farm, normally the poster boy for doom and gloom, is actually sounding positive and is sending us some fantastic fruit, including his amazing Snow Queen White Nectarines, which are due to arrive this weekend. Plenty of Black Mission Figs, in both trays and full pints.

Tomatoes – Plenty of little tomatoes from Del Cabo in half-pints, and we are only a few weeks away from those fantastic full pints of organic California Mixed Medley Tomatoes. California Heirloom Tomatoes will start in about two weeks, with natives to follow at the end of July. In the meantime, Ugly Tomatoes seem fairly available, although the price remains high.

Tropicals & Misc. Fruits – Fresh Lychee Fruit is just getting started. Mexican Champagne Mangoes are well past the midpoint of their season and will only be available for a few more weeks. We have a good supply of native Rhubarb, and Oregon field-grown Rhubarb is also looking very good. Starfruit & Key Limes are readily available. Cactus Pears, Passion Fruit and Florida Guava are hit-or-miss; Pomegranates are finished.

## *coming in july*

California Heirloom Tomatoes and Full Pint Mixed Medley Tomatoes ... Fresh Wild Huckleberries ... Fresh Oregon Lobster Mushrooms ... Champagne Grapes ... Fresh Red Currants, Black Currants & Gooseberries ... Native Baby Carrots & Squash Blossoms ... large selection of “best of the season” specialty melons.

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