



University of California  
Cooperative Extension  
**Tulare County**

Agriculture and Natural Resources



Prepared by: \_\_\_\_\_

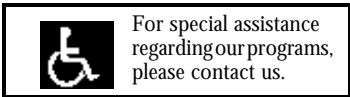
**APRICOTS**

Fresh, ripe California apricots are irresistible. Throughout the month of May and into June, California apricots ripen and satisfy the palates of consumers. And while their peak season is short, consumer demand is growing. California ranks number one nationally in apricot production growing about 95% of the nation's apricots. Annually, apricots begin to ripen in early May and the harvest season continues into July. Stanislaus, San Joaquin, Fresno, Tulare and Kern are the leading counties in production though many other counties also produce significant crops. Freshly ripened, picked and locally marketed produce is always the most outstanding in quality. Consumers who purchase locally grown produce also reap the benefits of not paying for shipping and special handling--thus having the best quality produce at the lowest prices.

Nutritionally speaking, the apricot has much to offer. Fresh apricots are one of the best natural sources of Vitamin A; they are even higher sources when eaten from the dried state. Essential for healthy skin and mucous membranes, Vitamin A is also needed for good sight; insufficient amounts can cause night blindness, impair sight and increase susceptibility to colds and other illnesses. Three average size apricots provide 60 calories with a minimal amount of fat yet provide 45% of the daily allowance of Vitamin A and 20% of Vitamin C along with 1 gram of dietary fiber.

Many apricot varieties abound in California: **Castlebrite** (Approximate maturity date: 5/7); this is a major early variety. Firm and juicy. Good flavor when fully ripe, otherwise somewhat tart. Good size. Bright

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orange color. Ships well. **Katy** (Approximate maturity date: 5/15); large size with good firmness, excellent flavor. Yellow-orange color with some blush. **Improved Flaming Gold** (Approximate maturity date: 5/21); good flavor and juice content. Orange-yellow to pale yellow in color. **Patterson** (Approximate maturity date: 6/12); large size, colorful and firm-fleshed. The Patterson continues to gain popularity due to its excellent yield for fresh shipping and canning. **Tilton** (Approximate maturity date: 6/18); a long-time favorite, tender and juicy with a sweet-tart flavor. Good size, slightly flat oval fruit with light orange color. Other California varieties include: **Derby, Modesto, Royal Blenheim, Tracy** and **Westley**. Consumers may find that they have a particular favorite variety but knowing the varietal characteristics is a good place to begin the search for the perfect apricot if that is your quest.

For information on preserving fresh apricots by canning, drying, freezing or making jams or jellies, contact your local University of California Cooperative Extension Office.

**Sources: California Department of Food and Agriculture and California Apricot Council**

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