



MEDIA RELEASE

TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
MARKET DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

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Recent Cold Snaps Helped State's Strawberry Crop

NASHVILLE - Springtime cold snaps make strawberry lovers quake in their boots over the quantity and quality of the crop. Fortunately, Tennessee's strawberry growers report that, if anything, the weather so far has only benefitted the burgeoning berries.

"All fruits sweeten best in hot, sunny weather," says Pamela Bartholomew, marketing specialist with the Tennessee Department of Agriculture, "but Tennessee's cool, wet spring has actually prolonged the growing process. The cold has thinned out some strawberries, but that's actually a good thing, too, since the remaining berries will get a bigger share of their plant's nourishment. It all adds up to a great crop!"

Two Tennessee strawberry growers plan to open their patches to the public with a special Pick Tennessee Products media day during the last week of April. Visitors who come to pick strawberries that day can take home free recipe cards and have the chance to win a basket of artisan foods from Tennessee.

Bradley Kountry Acres Strawberries and Greenhouse in Sumner County, owned by Mike and Cathy Bradley, will host a strawberry picking media day on April 24. The Bradley's also offer a large selection of spring bedding plants, herbs, vegetable plants, ferns and hanging baskets grown in their own farm greenhouses. Always call a pick your own farm before visiting, since inclement weather, even from several days earlier, can impact hours of operation. Call the Bradley's at 615-325-2836.

On April 25, Pick Tennessee Products will be at Circle S Farms near Lebanon, owned by Nelson, Emmie Lou and Donnie Steed.

"If you don't fancy the idea of picking your own, we will be more than happy to pick your strawberries for you and have them waiting for your visit," says Donnie Steed. Call Circle S Farms at 615-405-6860.

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Strawberries generally are available first in West Tennessee in mid-April, then work their way across the state. Early varieties of strawberries are ready now in West and Middle Tennessee, and will continue to be available to the end of May as later varieties reach maturity. In East Tennessee, strawberries could be available as late as mid-June.

Visit the www.picktnproducts.org home page and click on the strawberries image to be directed to a statewide directory of local strawberry patches. For tips on choosing and storing fresh, local berries, click "Cook Now" and then click "Helpful Hints." For recipes using Tennessee strawberries and other seasonal or artisan farm products, click on "Cook Now."