



MEDIA RELEASE

TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
MARKET DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 19, 2012

CONTACT: Pamela Bartholomew
615-837-5160
Pamela.Bartholomew@TN.gov

Tennessee's Apple Crop Down – But Still Delicious – Despite Challenging Season

NASHVILLE, Tenn. -- Despite weather challenges in 2012, Tennessee apple orchards will yield about 7.5 million lbs. of apples for harvest before a hard freeze ends the season. Typically the state produces closer to 9 million lbs. of apples between June and the end of October. This is good news for lovers of local, seasonal foods, who know that apples are one of the few foods that can be stored fresh through the winter.

Apples can be picked fresh off the tree right up until frost time, then, if carefully stored, useful up to a few months after picking. Most orchards grow several varieties, and although there are scores of apple varieties, most generally fall into one of two categories: cooking apples or “eating” apples.

Keep apples fresh for as long as possible with smart selection and cold, dry air. Apples that are the most ripe or have any blemishes, including spots or bruises, should be used immediately. Eat them right away or preserve them by freezing or canning. Keep blemish-free, firm apples refrigerated and away from moisture as much as possible. Depending on refrigerator conditions, freshly picked quality apples can stay fresh for months.

Always call before visiting an orchard, even if official hours of operation are posted on the grower's website. A sudden downpour or a sudden rush of customers can temporarily close an orchard until the rows between tree lines dry out or more apples have time to ripen.

Once there, talk to the grower, who'll have valuable information about which apples hold up the longest and which are best for particular uses. Many orchards also offer homemade treats like fried pies and jellies made with fruits grown right on the farm.

The Pick Tennessee Products website features a measures equivalency chart that simplifies using produce bought home straight from an orchard, farm or farm market. The measures chart goes all the way from bushels down to a “pinch,” starting with an approximate weight for a bushel of a particular fruit or vegetable. From there a cook can keep dividing down the chart until familiar recipe measures, like quarts and cups, appear.

-MORE-

ELLINGTON AGRICULTURAL CENTER
BOX 40627, NASHVILLE, TN 37204
www.picktnproducts.org

A typical bushel of apples weighs about 48 lbs., for instance. A half bushel is about 24 lbs. That half bushel is made up of two pecks, and since there are four pecks in a bushel, a peck of apples equals 12 lbs. or eight quarts.

To access the equivalency chart from the Pick Tennessee Products home page, click on "Food" at the left hand side of the page. From "Food," click on "Fruits and Vegetables" to reveal the measures conversion guide.

Pick Tennessee Products, a Tennessee Department of Agriculture promotion, helps consumers identify and choose farm-direct, artisan and other locally made foods. The site includes lists of farms, farmers markets, seasonal recipes and seasonal on-farm activities.

Find Tennessee apple orchards and farmers markets with Tennessee apples at www.picktnproducts.org and follow Pick Tennessee Products on Facebook and Twitter.

###

Old-Time Apple Pie

Yield: 8 servings

2 pounds Granny Smith apples, peeled, cored and cut into 1/2-inch slices
2 pounds Molly's Delicious or Braeburn apples, peeled, cored, and cut into 1/2-inch slices
1/4 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 cup sugar, divided
2 tablespoons apple jelly
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1/4 teaspoon salt
Crust for a Double Pie Pastry
1 tablespoon unsalted butter, cut into small pieces
1 egg, lightly beaten

Place the apples in a large mixing bowl and set aside.

In a separate bowl, stir together the flour, 1/3 cup of the sugar, jelly, juice, cinnamon, nutmeg, and salt. Sprinkle over the apples, tossing gently to coat. Let stand 30 minutes, gently tossing every 10 minutes. Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 425°F. Place one pie pastry in the bottom of a 9-inch pie plate. Gently press the dough into place.

Spoon the apples into the pastry, pressing tightly and mounding in the center. Pour any juices over the apples and sprinkle with the remaining sugar. Dot the top with the butter.

Place the remaining pie pastry over the top of the apples. Fold the edges under, sealing to the bottom crust and crimp as desired. Brush the top of the pie and edges with the beaten egg. Cut 5 slits in the top for steam to escape.

Place the pie on a jellyroll pan and bake 15 minutes. Lower the oven temperature to 350°F and bake 35 minutes. Cover loosely with aluminum foil to prevent excessive browning. Bake 30 minutes longer. Cool on a wire rack 2 hours before serving.