



MEDIA RELEASE

TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
MARKET DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

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

PICK A PECK OF LOCAL APPLES, GET EIGHT QUARTS OF FALL FUN WITH NEW WEBSITE CHART

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – Tennessee’s burgeoning apple crop is expected to weigh in at about 8.5 million pounds, up a million pounds from last year. So how many bushels do you want?

This is could be a disconcerting question for apple lovers who like the idea of buying local, but have never thought beyond ounces and pounds. Fortunately, the Pick Tennessee Products website, www.picktnproducts.org, now features an equivalency chart for many of Tennessee’s most popular fruits and vegetables.

Most farm-direct fresh products are still allotted the way they were when Johnny Appleseed was handing out future orchards by the scoopful. Go to any farmers market, and you’ll see baskets of fresh, local produce divvied up into baskets and bags that no longer have meaning for most Americans.

Newbie localvores may have trouble figuring out how many baskets of a product they’ll need to satisfy what their applesauce recipes require or fill the number jars they need in their pantries. Further, a bushel of apples will be heavier than a bushel of green beans, which weighs less than a bushel of potatoes, and so forth.

A typical bushel of apples weighs about 48 lbs. That means a half bushel would be about 24 lbs. That half bushel is made up of two pecks, and since there are 4 pecks in a bushel, a peck equals 12 lbs.

“Once you’ve divided down to a peck, you’re probably in familiar territory,” says Pamela Bartholomew, agritourism specialist with the Tennessee Department of Agriculture. “There are 8 quarts in a peck, and quarts and gallons are kitchen measurements we all understand.”

“Our new website chart goes all the way from bushels down to a ‘pinch,’ though, just in case,” says Bartholomew. “The chart starts with an approximate weight for a bushel of a particular fruit or vegetable. From there a cook can keep dividing down the chart until those familiar recipe measures appear.”

“Go to the Pick Tennessee Products home page,” says the specialist, “then click on ‘Food’ at the left hand side of the page. From the ‘Food’ page, click on ‘Fruits and Vegetables’ to find the handy measures conversion guide.” Pick Tennessee Products, a Tennessee Department of Agriculture promotion, is currently celebrating its 25th year. The service was developed to help 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.

“A beautiful October day is a good enough reason to head out to a local orchard,” says Bartholomew, “but we want to make it easy for people to get the most use out of these fresh, local apples, too. This new chart on our website lets customers come to the orchard confident they’ll be able to use everything they buy.”

Apples are ready for picking across the state and will be available through Oct. Many Tennessee orchards offer pre-picked apples as well as homemade goods made with apples, including fruit pies, jellies, jams and fresh cider. Find Tennessee apple orchards and farmers markets with Tennessee apples at www.picktnproducts.org and follow Pick Tennessee Products on Facebook and Twitter.

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