

Welcome to Sysco Produce "Dining Times," where you will find some of the freshest news in the restaurant and produce industries. In this monthly newsletter, you'll find "trends" in the produce and restaurant industries, the most useful up-to-date news, recipes, as well as helpful tips and fun facts about the produce you eat and serve.

## Feature of the Month



## KUMQUATS

### The Golden Orange

Kumquats resemble tiny oval-shaped oranges. The entire fruit is edible with a sweet skin and juicy, somewhat tart flesh. It's flavor is similar to that of the orange with hints of tangerine. Since the entire fruit can be eaten including the skin, raw kumquats are easy to add to salads or use as garnish. However, they are usually candied, pickled or used in preserves and marmalades. Kumquats are good sources of Potassium and vitamins A and C. The Kumquat is often crossed with other citrus fruits, such as the lime (Limequat), the lemon (Lemonquat), the orange (Orangequat), and the Mandarin orange (Calamondin).

(Continued on next page)



## Dining Times NEWS update



### HEAT UP WINTER RECIPES

As chefs roll out their winter menus, they are looking at homemade spice blends to warm things up. Dishes heavy in spice such as Indian-inspired curries and Moroccan-style stews are heating things up on menus across the country.

Utilizing spices like cinnamon, aleppo pepper and nutmeg are transforming ordinary dishes. However, too much or too little of the spice can ruin a dish

which forces chefs to experiment heavily with their spice blends before adding them to a recipe.

But chefs aren't the only ones that can make spice blends, with a small blend of spices you can have a home cooked meal that tastes like something from a five star restaurant!

(Continued on page 3)

## STORAGE TIPS... And Other Fun Facts

**ARTICHOKEs:** Can be blistered because of cold temperatures this time of year. Store covered or enclosed to help minimize dehydration.

*By the way...* Artichokes are neither a fruit nor a vegetable. They are the flowering bud of the Mediterranean Thistle Plant.

**PEACHES:** Have come a long way to get here, all the way from Chile. Their shelf life will be a bit more limited, so use quickly. There are no natural oils on the fruit, so keep them enclosed so they don't shrivel.

*By the way...* The same great Peach varieties grown in the U.S. during the summer, are the same varieties grown in Chile.

**KIWIFRUIT:** Because they have no natural oils on the fruit, they will shrivel if left in the open air. Store them covered.

*By the way...* Kiwifruit is the most nutrient-dense fruit grown on earth. It's like a vitamin pill... with fuzz.

**BROCCOLI:** Will dehydrate if kept in line of direct airflow from the walk-in fan. Keep covered.

*By the way...* At the turn of the century, the USDA took a look at Broccoli, and determined that "...broccoli has no commercial importance." An Italian farmer named Andy D'Arrigo, with seed direct from Italy, was the first to commercially grow Broccoli in the U.S., and since, has proved the USDA's assessment to be wrong.

**JICAMA:** Could dehydrate quickly in the walk-in. Should be kept in a cool, dark place in your back room.

*By the way...* Jicama is nature's thirst quencher. It is grown in the southern desert of Mexico and requires 190 days of 100+ degree temperatures in order to grow and cure properly.

## Features... (continued)

# TIPS & FACTS

When picking kumquats look for fruit that are firm without blemishes.

Refrigerate them in a plastic bag. They can be kept this way for up to a month.

They blend well with fish and are particularly good as an accompaniment to poultry, duck or lamb.

The word Kumquat comes from the Cantonese kin ku, meaning "golden orange".

It is grown in many parts of the world including California, Florida, the Mediterranean countries, Japan, China, Indochina, Indonesia, Israel, Peru and Brazil.

The Kumquat tastes best if it is gently rolled between the fingers before being eaten, as this releases the essential oils in the rind.



## DID YOU KNOW THAT:

There are four varieties of kumquats, two varieties being the most common: **Nagami** and **Meiwa**.

The **Nagami** is oval-shaped and the **Meiwa** is more rounded. Meiwa is considered to be the sweeter of the two, yet Nagami is most commonly grown as it is a more vigorous and hardy.

**Kumquats** used to be classified as a citrus up until 1915 when they were given their own Genus, *Fortunella*, named after horticulturist, Robert Fortune, who introduced the kumquat to Europe in 1846.

Before eating the entire **Kumquat**, consider saving the seeds, as they are a source of natural pectin.

The **Kumquat's** arrival in America was in the late 1880's, though it was planted primarily for ornamental purposes until a rise in Asian populations created a market for the kumquat fruit.

The peel is rich in many essential oils, anti-oxidants, and fiber.

The **Kumquat** peel contains essential oils in it including limonene, pinene, bergamotene, caryophyllene, humulene, and muurolene. Together these compounds impart special citrus aroma to the fruit.

## RECIPE OF THE MONTH

### CANDIED KUMQUATS

#### Ingredients

- 4 cups of chopped kumquats
- 1 cup of water
- 2 cups of sugar

#### Directions:

1. With a paring knife roughly chop the kumquats.
2. Heat the water and sugar over high heat until comes to a boil. Simmer for 4 minutes. Add the kumquats and simmer for 10 minutes.
3. Drain the kumquats through a sieve over a bowl. Return the syrup to the pan and simmer for 5 minutes to reduce. Combine kumquats and syrup together.
4. Serve or jar and refrigerate. Can be stored for up to two weeks.



## NEWS update (continued)

### POP UP: PREVIEW TO SUCCESS

With the extremely high cost coupled with the hardship of competition, opening a restaurant is always high risk. However, restaurateurs have found an easier way to ensure their new restaurant's popularity.

They are constructing "pop up" restaurants, temporary establishments as a means of test driving the local market and gauging customer demand.

The pop-up trend is literally popping up everywhere, from New York to Los Angeles and now New Orleans. One restaurant owner explained, "I didn't know how my idea for my latest restaurant would pan out, so it's good to see how the community is going to take it first before I make a commitment."

### 2012 FOOD TRENDS

#### Southern comfort

Fried chicken is leading the surge in iconic Southern foods on menus, but that's just the beginning. From Pimento Mac & Cheese to Grilled Shrimp with Grits and fried green tomatoes hip chefs are tapping into Southern dishes and reinterpreting them with modern twists.



#### Year of the potato

The potato is making a major reappearance on menus, and will continue to do so in 2012. Carb bashing is over, with French fry menus, custom chips dusted with signature spice blends and mix-ins for mashed potatoes showing up all over.



#### Preservation techniques

Smoking, pickling and fermenting will continue to be strong in 2012, both as ways to extend the shelf life of seasonal produce and as a method for infusing flavor. Some of the strong contenders will be pickled beets, cauliflower, peppers and other vegetables as appetizers, sides, condiments on sandwiches.



### TIRED OF SAME OLD OPTIONS

Chefs seem to be growing tired of the same old red meat options which had led to the growing use of goat meat in restaurants. Goat is not only hearty and flavorful but has about one-third of the calories beef has.

Goat meat is very easy to work and can be prepared as beef or lamb would be. One chef described it by saying, "It's like a cross between dark-meat turkey and pork. It's more savory and has a richness and deep complexity."

Here is a goat recipe worth trying:

#### INGREDIENTS:

- ½ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 8 whole garlic cloves
- 5 sprigs fresh rosemary
- Pinch crushed red pepper flakes
- 1 baby goat leg and shoulder, about 5 pounds
- Kosher salt, to taste Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 6-8 cups chicken broth

#### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Fill a large, sealable plastic bag with olive oil, 6 garlic cloves, 3 rosemary sprigs, red pepper flakes and goat. Press out all the air, seal, and refrigerate for 24 hours.
2. The next day, brush marinade off meat. Lightly season meat with salt and pepper.

## Produce Puzzzler

Each month, there will be a fun and entertaining question about the produce you buy every day. It will test your Produce smarts. Do you really know about the produce you buy and serve, or sell?

**What produce item was the original pacifier for babies?**

ANSWER to last month's Produce Puzzzler:

**How many seeds are on a Strawberry?**

*Dr. Victor Voth is known as "Mr. Strawberry" around the world. Dr. Voth spent over 40 years tinkering around the chromosomes of Strawberries. He helped take the California strawberry industry from \$30 million a year in the 1970s to \$1.5 billion a year in 2010. Dr. Voth worked in Strawberry research through the UC Davis extension. Before he retired, you would find him in the research fields in Irvine, just off I-5. Asked once about how many seeds are on a Strawberry, without hesitation, Dr. Voth said, "Around 200."*





## Sysco Fresh Promotions **MARCH**

Each month, Sysco Produce will provide you with events that will be in the news, making these ideas very timely for your menu, promotions or specials development.

American Red Cross Month

First Day of Spring, March 20

National Agriculture Day

National Celery Month

National Nutrition Month

National Women's History Month

St. Patrick's Day, March 17

Poison Prevention Month

Irish-American Heritage Month

## The Sysco Produce Team

All of us at Sysco Produce are committed to one goal: **Your Success...** by making produce the very least of your worries! Here is a helpful list of important contacts. Please feel free to contact us with any question or concern. We believe that "a problem shared... is a problem already half solved."



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