

Berry Good

Eating local never tasted so good

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The Stayton Mail
July 12

Berries are quite possibly Mother Nature's summer gift.

Naturally sweet and rich in vitamins and minerals, the miniature orbs are some of the most versatile fruits available; delicious in jams, pies, pastries, juices, dietary supplements and sauces, and tasty frozen or raw.

And during the summer months, these delicious fruits are ubiquitous in the Pacific Northwest, making the consumption of in-season local produce easier than ever.

The most common varieties of berries grown commercially in the Northwest are "caneberries," such as the blackberry, Loganberry, Boysenberry, Marionberry, red and black raspberry, and other berries like the strawberry and blueberry, according to the Oregon Berry Commission. Most of these varieties are available directly from the grower or at local farmers markets in the area.

Nearby Fresh to You Produce of Stayton, offers customers a wide variety of these local goodies during the summer harvest months. The family business grows and sells their own strawberries, blueberries, Marionberries, Boysenberries, Loganberries, Kotata blackberries and Triple Crown blackberries, raspberries, and gooseberries.

While Fresh to You Produce does not offer You-Pick berries, they will pick to order. "We also grow all of the berries we use for our own line of jams and syrups," said Nancy Hendricks.



Photo by Kathleen Ellyn

Alison Rickman, 9, and her sisters, Nicole and Paige, really get into their Monkey Bread. The sisters opted to make Red Monkey Bread with berries from Fresh to You Produce and their own garden. They decided to "hand puree" the berries because the texture was "cool and ooey gooey."

What's good about Fresh to You produce is right there in the name, Hendricks said. Unlike most grocery store produce, which is picked green and ripened on trucks, farm-fresh berries are "picked the day you buy them," Hendricks said.