



A Blitz of Blazing Blueberries Part 1 MP3

Gary Crawford [00:00:00] And now from the sweltering Agriculture Department Farmers Market in Washington D.C. in the even more sweltering Veg-U-cation tent of the pinnacle of higher learning good ol' VegU we present, Mystery Theater. In which very complex high-class academic questions are answered by the very complex high-class academics of VegU you namely Rachel Schoenian and Chantel Oyi. And, on the phone with our mystery question is a listener from dismal seepage Ohio. It says here, Ed Brainfeeble. Did I pronounce that right?

Ed Brainfeeble [00:00:31] Yes that's right.

Gary Crawford [00:00:32] Yeah, well what is your question Ed?

Ed Brainfeeble [00:00:35] Well I'm standing here at the frozen fairway section by a local soap rocketeer. For some reason, I don't know why, they've taken the little signs off of there, so I can't tell which one of these berries are blueberries. There's no signs on these things.

Gary Crawford [00:00:47] Okay no signs. I got that. So, we have blueberry expert Chantel Oyi here. So how can you tell if you're looking at blueberries? What is the main clue?

Chantel Oyi [00:00:55] They're blue.

Gary Crawford [00:00:56] Oh right. Saved by science. Although, Chantel, over here there are a few of these blueberries that you have. They look more reddish.

Chantel Oyi [00:01:04] Reddish berries aren't quite ripe and will probably taste tart. Whereas, the firm dark blue, the purple color, when smooth and plump, will actually be sweeter.

Gary Crawford [00:01:15] Ah, so those are the ones that most of the shoppers who go to one by dry plump, smooth, skinned, blue. So, I guess in reverse...

Chantel Oyi [00:01:22] You should avoid soft shriveled fruit or any signs of mold.

Gary Crawford [00:01:26] Yeah but on some of these I see what looks like could be mold. I guess it's a whitish powdery thing or a white coating. What is that?

Chantel Oyi [00:01:35] It's a natural occurring substance called Bloom which helps protect the fruit.

Gary Crawford [00:01:39] Bloom that's perfectly safe. So, we pick out then some good-looking blueberries. How do we handle them at home.?

Chantel Oyi [00:01:45] Soon as you get them home you need to refrigerate them in a original plastic pack or covered in a bowl or storage container.

Gary Crawford [00:01:52] Oh yeah and it says here, don't rinse them first that just shortens the shelf life. I know a lot of berries don't last more than two or three days before going downhill. What about the blueberries?

Chantel Oyi [00:02:02] This does have one of the longest shelf lives with 10 days.

Chantel Oyi [00:02:05] Wow. And oh Rachel Schoenian, you're waving your hand like crazy, letting us know you got vital blueberry information for us.

Rachel Schoenian [00:02:13] If all the blueberries grown in North America in one year were spread out in a single layer, they would cover a four-lane highway from New York to Chicago.

Gary Crawford [00:02:21] But who would want to do that, actually? It could be very slick and dangerous. Yeah. So, our experts say don't put blueberries on the highways. Very bad. Put them in your mouths. And if we do Chantel, then what do we get nutritionally?

Chantel Oyi [00:02:36] One cup of blueberries is actually about twenty three percent of your daily recommended intake for vitamin K, C, and fiber. They are high in antioxidants which I know is associated with a reduced risk of cancer.

Gary Crawford [00:02:47] And there's more but we don't have time to outline it all. Next time we are going to solve the mystery of what to do with blueberries. In Washington, Gary Crawford for the U.S. Department of Agriculture.