Avocado Adventures

Gary Crawford: This maybe fall but we are so topical today and to prove it here's a love song to a nice tropical food. [Music Plays]

Laura Popielski: Love the Avocado. And what do we need to know about avocados. Avocados are a fruit.

Gary Crawford: Amazing, amazing.

Laura Popielski: Have I blown your mind yet.

Gary Crawford: Oh yeah. Yeah pretty much we are here. The Agriculture Department's Farmer's Market in Washington. The Veg-U-cation tent with Chief Veg-U-cator Laura Popielski. So is that really all we need to know? The avocado is a fruit?

Laura Popielski: Oh no goodness.

Gary Crawford: I hope not or this will be a very short segment. Now there are many of us who just haven't had that much experience with avocados except in the guacamole so Laura if we want to try something with this fruit at the store. How do we choose the best ones?

Laura Popielski: If you're looking to eat that avocado today and maybe make guacamole or put it in your salsa or use it as a spread on a sandwich you probably want a softer avocado. So you're going to just give them a little squeeze and if they're just a little soft that's what you're looking for.

Gary Crawford: But if I really don't have immediate plans for that avocado what then.

Laura Popielski: You could buy one it's a little harder and you can ripen it on your countertop for about three to five days. Ripen it even faster if you put it in a brown paper bag with an apple. And if they're at just the right ripeness for you can store them in your fridge for about five days.

Gary Crawford: But she's been telling people here that if we're going to cook with the avocado probably the best to have one that's a little more firm.

Laura Popielski: It'll be easier to cut.

Gary Crawford: Yes speaking of cutting them though and getting them ready for use Laura is a wielding a chef's knife there. She's got the avocado down on the cutting board she's moving the avocado around that knife cutting it lengthwise wise from top to bottom. And now what do you do?

Laura Popielski: Split those two halves. And. There's lots of different ways to get that pit out of the middle. But if you put your avocado cut side up and whack that pit with a knife it will stick in it give it a little gentle twist and the pit will come right out. There you go it'll come right out.

Gary Crawford: Yeah. I'll show you a little electric roaster out here you're slicing little wedges of avocado and what's next with that.
Laura Popielski: [00:02:07] We're going to drizzle a little bit of olive oil, salt and pepper and garlic a little lime juice and roast them at 400 degrees for about 15 minutes.

Gary Crawford: [00:02:15] And then what do you do with them?

Laura Popielski: [00:02:17] Eat them.

Gary Crawford: [00:02:17] Oh that's a novelty of course. A lot of people use avocados for you know smoothies or a substitute spread on a sandwich.

Laura Popielski: [00:02:24] You could also blend avocado cocoa powder and a little bit of sweetener and you can make avocado chocolate mousse.

Gary Crawford: [00:02:32] You got this green avocado stuff and you got the chocolate and it's hard to describe the color of this thing though you know?

Laura Popielski: [00:02:39] It's not a very attractive shade of brown but it tastes great.

Gary Crawford: [00:02:43] OK. For more recipes, using avocados go online to watch cooking at USDA. So let's eat this mousse before somebody sees it.

Laura Popielski: [00:02:52] Sure!

Gary Crawford: [00:02:54] in Washington Gary Crawford the U.S. Department of Agriculture. It doesn't taste bad any way.