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NEW JERSEY PEACHES ARE 'JUST PEACHY' & ABUNDANT THIS SUMMER

Trenton, NJ (August 8, 2005) --New Jersey's record summer temperatures are peachy keen for "Jersey Fresh" peaches, which are now at their peak of ripeness and will be abundant through mid- to late September, according to The New Jersey Farm Bureau and research compiled by the New Jersey Farm Bureau and the Rutgers University Peach Promotion Council.

"Updating projections from the US Department of Agriculture in late June, New Jersey peaches are enjoying optimum growing and ripening conditions -- dry, hot, sunny weather," says Richard Nieuwenhuis, president of the New Jersey Farm Bureau. "Our farmers are looking at very healthy yields and a good season, as long as the prices hold up."

Sunny Valley Inc, the state's largest peach packing and distributing company, reports that this year's crop is exactly what retail buyers want -- good size and firmness, vibrant color and strong fragrance. "People think this year's crop is late because last year's was so early," says Philip Neary, Sunny Valley's director of operations and grower relations. "But it's right on time." Sunny Valley ships peaches to stores throughout the eastern US and Canada and is beginning to penetrate Caribbean markets. With southern state peach crops lagging, New Jersey is looking at very good wholesale sales, as well as healthy sales from pick-your-own farms, farm stands and community farmers markets.

The Peach Promotion Council estimates that this year's shipments will be 60-70 million pounds with an estimated wholesale cash value of \$30-35-million. New Jersey is currently the fourth largest peach producer in the country, and growing. This year's wholesale cash value of \$30-35-million will exceed last year's \$24-million by about 20%. The New Jersey Farm Bureau projects that, with the sophisticated research being done by the state's farmers and Rutgers Extension into higher yields and new varieties, New Jersey is well on its way to hitting the top three of peach-producing states.

For consumers, just-picked, Jersey-grown peaches are great for immediate eating, but also will last longer in the fruit bowl. What to look for? According to Jerry Frecon of the Peach Promotion Council, size is of little concern--ripeness is what counts. "Yellow peaches should have strong yellow or yellowish-red under colors, with patchy red over colors. White peaches, which are growing in popularity, should have creamy or white undercolors with the same patchy red over colors. Green undercolors mean the peaches aren't yet ripe. Fragrance is very important.--good healthy peaches smell strongly sweet. The final requisite is firmness --

they should be firm, but not hard and not mushy. Look for names like *Red Havens, Flaming Fury, John Boy, Encore, Laurol, Jersey Queen and Cresthaven.*"

Some 7,000 of New Jersey's nearly 806,000 acres of farmland are devoted to growing at least 40 different peach varieties in 150 orchards throughout the state, with the largest commercial growers concentrated in south Jersey's Atlantic, Camden, Gloucester and Salem Counties and a couple in Hunterdon. Ninety percent of the peaches are yellow, with 10% of those being nectarines, and an additional 10% are white. According to Frecon, demand for whites is increasing, with improved quality.

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The New Jersey Farm Bureau is a member organization of more than 19,000 farmers and farm-related entities within the Garden State. It is the only organization solely dedicated to representing the grass- roots interests and directives of its members in educating all levels of government and the public on the farm community's policies and positions. The Farm Bureau also takes a lead in seeking out initiatives, activities and ventures to enhance the profitability of producer members and ensure the viability of agriculture in New Jersey -- *the Garden State for Good Reason -- our farms.*

For further information, contact the New Jersey Farm Bureau, at The Farmhouse, 168 West State Street, Trenton, NJ 08608. Phone 609-393-7163; fax 609-393-7072; email mail@njfb.org; website www.njfb.org

Nutrition Facts, from USDA:

The Good

This food is very low in Saturated Fat, Cholesterol and Sodium. It is also a good source of Dietary Fiber, Vitamin A, Niacin and Potassium, and a very good source of Vitamin C.

The Bad

A large portion of the calories in this food come from sugars.

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 cup slices (170g)	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 66	Calories from Fat 4
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 0g	1%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 0mg	0%
Total Carbohydrate 16g	5%
Dietary Fiber 3g	10%
Sugars 14g	
Protein 2g	
Vitamin A 11%	• Vitamin C 19%
Calcium 1%	• Iron 2%
<small>*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.</small>	
NutritionData.com	