

FARMER IN THE FIELD



CALIFORNIA BLENHEIM APRICOTS

By Bonnie Swank

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As I drive to the farm I pass the apricot orchards of B & R Farms and watch as the fruit ripens on the trees turning from a yellow Sun kissed orange to deep orange in a matter of days. The increasing activity at the farm tells me harvest is coming and soon the shed will be full of people cutting apricots to be dried in the sun. It's not a sight you see too often now because over the years many orchards have been pulled out to make room for houses or possibly a more profitable crop. For those of us who grew up in California it sure brings back memories. I never cut apricots when I was young but I know many people whose first summer job was cutting apricots.

All this activity will last a couple of weeks and the harvest will be over. The shed will once again be quiet and what's left are acres and acres of apricots drying in the sun, a beautiful sight. These aren't ordinary apricots, B & R Farms along with a handful of family farms in San Benito County grow Blenheim apricots a variety superior to any other I've tasted. They are always a delightful treat whether fresh or dried but since June is harvest time I'll focus on the dried fruit. It bothers me that many people think of dried apricots as small pale, tasteless in my opinion, fruit that comes from another country. Mari Rossi from B & R Farms refers to their product as a "niche" market, you have to know about the fruit and seek it out. Do you know what a "slip pit" is? It's a whole apricot with the pit slipped out. That just makes me smile.

Dipped in chocolate or topped with blue cheese dried apricots can be used in just about anything you can think of from a breakfast smoothie to an evening cocktail. Sweet or savory or just as a healthy snack you can't go wrong with California Blenheim apricots.

This year B & R Farms is celebrating their 85th anniversary and is featured on California Bountiful, watch their story.

<http://www.brfarms.com/blog/http://brfarmsblog.com/b-r-farms-featured-on-california-bountiful/>

