



The legend of boysenberries is a California tale.

Farmer in the Field

Boysenberries: Where Did They Come From?

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I have written for *Out & About Magazine* for several years and it's rare to come across something that actually originated in California. Usually a fruit, vegetable or nut has a rich history dating back centuries, traveling through many lands before settling in California. The boysenberry is one of those rare fruits, born and bred right here in California by horticulturist Rudolph Boysen. Boysen, a farmer in Napa during the 1920s, worked on creating this hybrid berry by crossing different varieties of blackberries, raspberries and loganberries. After Boysen sold the farm in Napa, he took a few plants with him to Southern

California where he planted them on his father-in-law's property. Unfortunately, Boysen was never able to make his new berry a commercial success.

George M. Darrow, who worked for the USDA, started researching reports of a large, reddish-purple berry that had been grown on Boysen's farm. Darrow consulted known berry expert Walter Knott to help him in his search. Knott had never heard of the new berry but agreed to help. The men traveled to Napa, where they found several abandoned frail vines choked by weeds. The men dug up the vines and took them back to Southern California, where Knott transplanted them on his

berry farm. In 1932, after nursing the vines back to fruit-bearing health, Knott began selling the berries at his fruit stand, naming the large tasty boysenberries after their originator: Rudolph Boysen. It wasn't long before the boysenberry grew in popularity and Mrs. Knott was selling homemade preserves and pies. I'm sure by now many of you have figured out the little fruit stand selling boysenberries back in 1932 grew into Knott's Berry Farm in Buena Park, a true agritourist success story. The berry has become so popular that Knott's Berry Farm even has a Boysenberry Festival in the spring. California boysenberry season runs June through July, so visit your farmer's market and stock up!

Boysenberry Cobbler Recipe

Courtesy of Food.com

INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 4 cups boysenberries
- 1/8 cup water
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- Batter topping
- 1 cup flour
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons soft butter
- 1 egg, slightly beaten
- 3 tablespoons milk

PREPARATION

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. In a saucepan mix cornstarch, sugar, and water. Add berries and cook on medium to medium high heat until mixture is thickened, about 15 minutes. Add butter and lemon juice. Pour into an 8-inch baking dish.
3. Prepare the batter by mixing all of the batter ingredients and beating with a spoon until the batter is smooth.
4. Drop the batter over the berry mixture. Bake 25-30 minutes at 350°F.

Let cool. Serve with whipped cream or ice cream.