

Attention Chestnut Growers:

Prairie Grove Nut Growers Cooperative will be buying chestnuts from growers again this year. Prices paid will be as follows:

Extra Large (greater than 1 1/8" diameter)	\$2.45/pound
Large (less than 1 1/8" but greater than 1")	\$2.10/pound
Medium (less than 1" but greater than 7/8")	\$1.50/pound
Small (less than 7/8")	\$0.75

We will be able to buy small and medium sized nuts just as long as customers keep buying them.

Once again, please remember all chestnuts must meet quality standards. Batches with over 2% frozen, dry, dirty, moldy, or otherwise damaged nuts will be discounted or rejected. Batches mixed with excessive debris will be discounted. You can easily clean grass, leaves, twigs, and burs from your nuts by pouring them through the air stream from a powerful fan. If we have to do it for you, your nuts will be discounted by 10¢ per pound.

To insure quality standards are maintained, please observe the following list of "Do's and Don'ts."

"Do's:

- Harvest nuts promptly, preferably the same day they fall from the tree.
- If you miss a day or two of harvesting and some nuts dry out, harvest all nuts and set them aside, rather than mixing them with "good" nuts. Batches with dried nuts may still be saleable at a discounted price.
- Cool them down as soon as possible. Get them into a cooler, refrigerator, root cellar or cool basement promptly after harvest.
- Keep them from drying out. ***Once they are cool***, store chestnuts in mesh or perforated polyethylene bags, in a double layer of craft paper bags, or in cardboard boxes to retard moisture loss. Chestnuts may also be stored in open trays or mesh bags in high humidity, but they may need to be sprayed with water every few days. Do not put chestnuts into plastic bags until after they have chilled for about 24 hours, or they will "sweat" and may develop exterior mold.
- Use containers holding no more than 4 – 4 ½ gallons of nuts (25 pounds) for long-term storage. Larger containers such as 32 gallon totes may be used for transporting nuts, but not for long-term storage.
- Keep them safe from animals, especially rodents.
- Get them to the Co-op promptly.

"Don'ts

- Never leave nuts on the ground more than 1 day in warm weather, or 2 days in cool, cloudy weather. They will dry out and become worthless.
- Never mix dried or otherwise damaged nuts with "good" nuts.
- Never run over nuts with mowers, garden tractors, or other equipment. Squashed nuts are worthless.

"Don'ts continued

- Never leave harvested nuts in the sun or other warm place.
- Never store more than 25 pounds of chestnuts in a single bag, box or other container. They will heat up and spoil.
- Don't "hold on" to your chestnuts too long. They begin losing weight (and value) the moment they fall from the tree!
- Never, ever, ever, ever freeze fresh chestnuts! That will ruin them for any purpose – even squirrel food!

One more thing....

For those of you who are still picking up nuts by hand, you really should try a NUT WIZARD! You can pick up 10 times more nuts in the same amount of time, and without ever having to bend over. They are very reasonably priced - available from Seeds 'n Such Inc., Toll Free @ 888-321-9445.

If you have any questions, or if you would like to schedule a delivery for nuts, you may call or email.

Hoping you have a good, profitable season,

Tom Wahl and Kathy Dice
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