

# CHESTNUTS: A NEW CROP FOR THE U.S.

from the University of Missouri Center for Agroforestry, [www.centerforagroforestry.org](http://www.centerforagroforestry.org)

*Chestnuts are a great product! Chestnuts are nostalgic for some buyers and new for others, but are a versatile product for all - from roasting on an open fire to adding a nutty crunch to Thanksgiving stuffing. Chestnuts are the unNut - they have less fat than other nuts, such as walnuts and pecans, which makes them a healthy and delicious fall treat. This also means they have a higher moisture content and need to be stored very differently from these other nuts.*

## INTERVIEWING GROWERS

Ask chestnut growers the following questions before agreeing to sell their product. The answer to every question should be "Yes."

- Were chestnuts picked up promptly?
- Were chestnuts stored in refrigerator immediately after harvest?
- Were chestnuts floated to remove defective nuts?
- Are your chestnuts cleaned and sterilized?

## SELECTING QUALITY NUTS

- Larger nuts are preferred for fresh consumption
- Select even-sized nuts which feel heavy for their size, with undamaged and firm shells, brown uniform color, shiny
- Select nuts free from internal defects such as soft rot, weevils, brown kernel; and external defects such as bruising, cracking, sprouting and decay
- Chestnuts should have a fine texture, sweet and nutty flavor

## STORING CHESTNUTS

- If not stored properly, fresh chestnuts are prone to molding and/or drying out. When presented for sale, chestnuts should be

displayed in the refrigerated section adjacent to other fruits and vegetables

- Although chestnuts can deteriorate rapidly under less than ideal conditions, with proper storage they can remain in good condition for several weeks

- At home, chestnuts will keep for a couple of months if they remain in the crisper drawer of the refrigerator. Store in a plastic bag or double bag in paper bags

## BUY LOCAL!

- Fresher taste
- Shorter shipping distances
- Supports local farms, connects growers directly with customers



*Top: High-quality chestnuts are shiny,*

*solid, dark brown, clean and free of splits and bruising. Bottom: Do not purchase chestnuts that are dirty, cracked or molding. Inset: These chestnuts "give" when pressed. This means they have been allowed to dry or "cure" and will not keep for more than a few days.*