

Pick-your-own blueberries now abound in state

Blueberry patches or blueberry pickers to Michigan's 10 "pick-your-own" blueberry farms should find plenty of the berries to satisfy their wildest craving, according to Assembly Club of Michigan.

At least one of the "pick-your-own" blueberry farms—Dowd Orchards near Hartford—is a commercial farm established in 1964. Some farms give tours of their mechanical harvesting and automated picking systems. Others have farm stands for the youngsters to pick and eat over.

Ken-Ed-Lee Farm near Grand Junction has a fish pond and adventure: "Feel free to bring your fishing pole along or even stay overnight in our lovely woods—all free. We have 300 acres of land and we will share its country beauty with you. You only pay for the berries."

Michigan's blueberry season runs from the second week of July to mid-September. The fruit is sold by the pound with the price set by prevailing market conditions. Last year, the average price for "pick-your-own" blueberries was 25 cents a pound. Most farms provide picking pails but you are expected to bring your own container to carry the fruit home.

CLASPELL'S Blueberry Berry Farm and Nursery near Freeland advertises that along with the picking pails, "tools are available for the bottom of the bush."

The "pick-your-own" blueberry farms listed by Auto Club range in size from one to 185 acres. They are among 300 blueberry farms in the state whose total 1975 production of 21.1 million pounds ranked Michigan first in the nation.

Nearly two-thirds of the state's 1975 blueberry crop—20.8 million pounds—was sold for processing. The remaining 1.3 million pounds were sold for fresh market, including those blueberries from pick-your-own operations and roadside stands.

MANY OF THE "pick-your-own" operations offer visitors more than just berries. Some have door prizes, antique shops, other fresh produce, jams and jellies. At many there are picnic tables, pop machines, snack bars, rest rooms and space for trail or parking.

Green Thumb Blueberries near Sandusky advertises it has a "pop machine with five flavors in cans" but adds there also is an "excellent deep well with very cold, clean, pure drinking water." And visitors are advised that "people wagons" will take them directly to the area being picked that day.

Smith Haven is billed as Blueberry Capital of the World and every year during the first week of July, there are festivities in honor of the bountiful berries. The year's

National Blueberry Festival had a red-white and blueberry bicentennial theme.

Recipes for pies, pancakes and any number of good-tasting treats are included in a booklet published by the Michigan Blueberry Growers Association of Grand Junction. The booklet lists members with pick-your-own operations and gives 24 delicious blueberry recipes, including one for blueberry grout. It follows:

Blueberry Grout
2 cans (15 oz.) blueberries, packed in water
1/4 cup sugar
1 1/4 cups flour
2 tsp. baking powder
2 tsp. grated orange rind
1/4 cup ground nutmeg
1/4 cup salt
1/4 cup milk
Pour blueberries and their juice into skillet. Stir in sugar. Cook blueberries until juice starts to bubble. Lower heat. Mix flour, baking powder, orange rind, nutmeg and salt. Stir in milk until dry particles are just moistened. Drop dough by spoonfuls (8 dumplings) on top of simmering blueberries. Cover skillet and cook for 10 to 15 minutes or until dough is puffed. Serve dumplings with sauce in skillet. Serve with thick cream if desired. Yield: 8 servings.

Jewish family service needs more help

More volunteers are needed to assist in the work done by Jewish Family Service 1123 Greenfield, Southfield. Joseph Garson, president of JFS, said the need is increasing because "the mobility of our society has left many elderly persons bereft of family and friends at a time in life when it is becoming increasingly difficult for them to get around."

"They find themselves needing help to provide for their daily necessities such as shopping, getting to medical appointments and getting to a bank," he added. "For many lack of transportation makes them virtually prisoners in their own homes."

Mrs. Betty Rosenhaus heads the volunteer services committee, and volunteers may be assigned to individuals in nursing homes or in their private residences, and in either case they provide stimulation to combat isolation.

Another special need involves families who recently arrived from the Soviet Union.

"These Jewish families need the help of volunteers who can speak Russian or Yiddish in order to overcome the culture shock they experience," Garson said.

"Strangers in a strange land without a language with which to communicate feel alone and lost. A concerned, caring volunteer makes a difference."

Those interested in this kind of volunteer work may call Fayga Dornbey or Elaine Dorneman at Jewish Family Services, 508-1588.

Parent group will hold picnic

The Cleft Lip and Palate Parents Group will hold its second annual family picnic beginning at 10 a.m. Sunday, Aug. 1, at Rouge Park in Dearborn Heights.

Those attending should watch for CLPG signs along Hines Drive between Ford Road and Cedar Drive. More information is available by calling Oakland County March of Dimes, 851-8000.

Fashions will be shown at poolside

Members of Pioneer Women, Israel chapter, will hold a poolside luncheon and fashion show at noon Saturday, July 31, at the home of Mrs. Ruth Miller, 136 Lake Park Drive, Birmingham.

Tickets for members and guests are \$1.25, with proceeds going to day care centers in Israel. Reservations must be made in advance by calling Fay Dorneman, 688-5337, or Mary Koretz, 396-1388.

The day's activities will include a swim, so those attending are invited to bring bathing suits in case of rain. The event will be postponed to Aug. 7.

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