



A commercial customer goes inside the truck to place her order with the Lucidos.

Wheeling in the produce

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REPORTS OF the recent cyanide injection of Chilean grapes and the controversy over apple-sprayed apples has impacted fruit sales more than hasn't seemed to hurt overall business.

"Most of our winter fruits are from Chile. We stopped carrying it until the government said it was OK to handle it," the younger Lucido says. "We handle U.S. extra-fancy delicious apples and granny smiths, with a variety of baking apples for the customers' needs. All are alf-free."

Prices for the carefully chosen fruits and vegetables are competitive with those found in grocery stores.

"Sometimes the prices are cheaper because of what the market's doing that day," Joe Lucido says. "If I get an item cheaper, the customers

are going to save in the long run, too."

Lopiccolo says they "can compete with supermarkets easily because it's a one-man operation. We don't have the overhead the stores do."

The home-delivery routes were developed through word of mouth, with no advertising except for their brightly painted trucks. The Lucidos credit much of their business expansion to dinner parties.

"Someone might say, 'Oh, my gosh, where did you get that beautiful asparagus?' or, 'That salad is so green,'" the senior Lucido says. "When our customer tells them, 'Oh, the Green Grocer brings it,' they say, 'Well, tell him to come to my house, and we do.'"

LEE SAYS SHE is glad they have been delivering to her house since the early 1960s. Going to the store to purchase produce "is one less thing I

have to do — and they bring top-quality goods," she says. "It's delightful when they come."

Both businesses carry nearly every fruit and vegetable customers could want, delivering special orders for exotic items at the clients' request. Lucido travels to neighborhoods in the Grosse Pointes as well as to the Birmingham-Bloomfield area including Franklin and to Southfield and Palmer Woods. Lopiccolo's business takes him to Birmingham, Bloomfield Hills, Southfield, Farmington, Troy, Rochester and Utica.

Individuals interested in the produce home-delivery service should write to Lucido, the Green Grocer of Fine Foods and Fresh Produce, P.O. Box 1731, Warren 48090, or call Lopiccolo at 247-5371. Their routes are not limited to the cities they currently serve.

The following recipes may tempt even fast-food addicts to try a tasty, nutritious alternative: fresh fruits and vegetables. The recipes include favorites from the Lucido family files and "The Culinary Arts Institute Cookbook."

QUICK SICILIAN GREEN BEANS

(Lucido Family Files)

- 2 pounds green beans
- 1 cup salad oil
- 1/4 cup red wine vinegar
- 1 envelope spaghetti sauce mix
- 2 cups shredded lettuce

Trim beans and cut in 1/4-inch lengths, cook 6-8 minutes. Drain and run under cold water. Combine oil, vinegar and spaghetti sauce mix. Toss with beans in large bowl. Refrigerate until near serving time. Just before serving, toss with lettuce and crumbled bacon. Serves 6.

ITALIAN ZUCCHINI CRESCENT PIE

(Lucido Family Files)

- 4 cups thinly sliced, unpeeled zucchini
- 1 cup coarsely chopped onion
- 1/2 cup margarine or butter
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh parsley or 2 teaspoons dried flakes
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon basil
- 1/2 teaspoon oregano
- 2-4 eggs, well beaten
- 2 cups shredded mozzarella or national mozzarella cheese
- 1 cup cheddar cheese (optional)
- 2 teaspoons Dijon or prepared mustard

cooking calendar

3 CHEFS SERIES

Instruction in the culinary arts is offered in "The Three Chefs Series," with classes beginning Saturday, May 27.

Chefs include Brian Polcyn of Pike Street in Pontiac, Miles Chelka of the Golden Mushroom in Southfield and Edward Janos of Chez Napoleon in Novi. The complete series of classes is \$150. To register or for further information call Naomi Walz at 258-6040.

Picking out fruits, veggies

By Kello Maple McDrise
special writer

He says it's in his blood. At the ripe young age of 27, Joe Lucido has more than 10 years' experience in handling fruits and vegetables. His 62-year-old father started selling produce when he was 7, and his grandfather began the business in the 1920s, shortly after he came to this country from Italy.

Things have changed since Grandpa Lucido pushed a handcart up and down East Grand Boulevard, peddling produce to the people of Detroit. The "fruit man" is now named "The Green Grocer of Fine Foods and Fresh Produce" and he delivers choice fruits and vegetables to families in a variety of suburbs in Oakland and Wayne counties.

But the tradition lives on. With a 72-year heritage of selecting the best breeds, the tastiest tomatoes and the most heavenly honeysdews, the Lucidos know their produce. Here's what they look for when they choose their fruits and vegetables:

Asparagus: Firm, green stalk, not seedy at the tip. Width of the stalk is a matter of preference and doesn't

impact the flavor.

Broccoli: Firm, green stalk, no yellow flowers or buds.

Carrots: Bright orange color, firm.

Cauliflower: Snow-white buds with tight flowers, green leaves on the edge.

Cucumber: Medium size, smooth, green, firm.

Eggplant: Smooth, firm skin, purple-black color, no brown spots. Slender eggplants tend to have fewer seeds and tend to be less bitter.

Lettuce: Core/riem end is very white, ensuring freshness. Leaves are bright green with minimal brown spots. Select loosely packed or firm heads, depending on preference.

Peppers: Hard, smooth skin with no soft spots, bright color.

Idaho Potatoes: Clean skin, no bad spots, uniform shape for even baking.

Tomatoes: Sacrifice flavor in the winter, no matter what the variety. Clear orange-red, firm with no brown spots.

Apples: Granny Smith — smooth, hard skin, bright green color. Red Delicious — bright red, smooth, hard skin, no bruises. McIntosh — softer apple, bruises more easily. Skin can give a little bit, but not too much.

Bananas: Can buy green to ripen at home or yellow to eat immediately. Select bananas with minimal brown spots, smooth skin.

Cantaloupe: Uniform, creamy color, sweet smell. Push in at the stem end. If melon gives a little, it will be ready to eat. If it's still hard, the melon must ripen for a few days.

Grapes: The only way to tell if they're sweet is to taste them. Green grapes are sweeter when yellow.

Honeydew: Opaque cream color, not too yellow. Rub your hands over the skin. If it's slightly sticky, it's a nice honeydew. When ripe, the skin gives a little to the touch.

Oranges: Color doesn't necessarily indicate sweetness. Valencias are excellent in the summer, navelas are sweet year-round.

Pears: Smooth skin, no blemishes or soft spots. Bartlett's yellow-green color indicates ripeness. Bosc brown, gives slightly to the touch. D'Anjou — green skin, not overripe.

Strawberries: The only way to judge flavor is to taste them. Bright red color. Size has no impact on sweetness.

Watermelon: Color doesn't indicate flavor. Thump the skin. If it sounds hollow, it's likely to be a good melon.

Growing your own gourmet garden

Continued from Page 1

few rows of Swiss chard, endive and spinach and the family salad bowl will never run dry or unexciting this summer.

The best part of planting lettuce and greens is that once cut they continue to grow. Be careful of hot, dry conditions though, which can cause the greens and lettuce to "bolt" and go to seed too early.

Add to those a row of tiny redskin potatoes (the best prices for seed po-

tatoes are at the Eastern Market in Detroit) and a small trellis for sugar snap peas and my garden will be brimming this summer.

If you are still looking for exotic edibles to plant in the garden and your local greenhouses don't have much to offer, try an exotic seed supplier such as "The Exotica Seed Company, 8033 W. Sunset Boulevard, West Hollywood, Calif. 90046. Another great source is the Rosewood City Seed Company, P.O. Box 361, Red-

wood City, Calif. 94064. Both offer an unusual assortment of gourmet garden goodies, some of which even I haven't heard of.

The best thing about simple gardening is the rewards derived. Not only will you save money and eat better, but you can involve the entire family and make it a summer project. Kids of all ages will be amazed at what a simple yard of dirt can produce. Bon appetit!

White chocolate cookies are now in vogue

AP — First there were chocolate chip cookies. Then came an oatmeal version. Now, fancy cookie shops are making the classic with white chunks or chips. Make this cookie-shop specialty at home with the following recipe.

WHITE CHIPPERS

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 cup margarine or butter
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 egg
- 2 1/2 cups rolled oats
- 1 1/2 cups coarsely chopped white baking bars with cocoa butter
- 1/2 cup finely chopped almonds

In a small mixing bowl stir together

flour and soda. Set aside. In a large mixer bowl beat margarine with an electric mixer on medium speed for 30 seconds. Add sugars; beat until fluffy. Add egg; beat well. Add flour mixture; beat until well mixed. Stir in oats, white baking bar pieces and almonds.

Drop by rounded tablespoons 3 inches apart onto an ungreased cookie sheet; flatten slightly. Bake in a 375-degree oven for 10 minutes or until done. Cool on cookie sheet for 1 minute; remove and cool on a wire rack. Makes 38 cookies.

Nutrition information per serving: 130 cal., 2 g pro., 16 g carb., 7 g fat, 18 mg chol., 75 mg sodium.

Men, if you're about to turn 18, it's time to register with Selective Service at any U.S. Post Office.

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