

# Gadget on market to ripen fruit

LYNN HERSHEY  
 Delaware Extension Service  
 WARK, Del. - Do you  
 any room left on your  
 counter? Are you  
 with your newest toys  
 maker, hot dogger,  
 broiler, food  
 or, fry baby)? Well,

shove everything aside and  
 make room for a brand new  
 plaything. It's called a fruit  
 ripener. Yes indeed, now  
 there is a handy little item  
 you buy just for ripening  
 fruit. No well-dressed home  
 should be without one.  
 Go ahead and laugh. I did,

because somehow a fruit  
 ripener represents the  
 ultimate in civilized  
 nonsense. We pick fruit rock-  
 hard and green, then buy  
 something to make it edible.  
 It's sort of like melting ice to  
 get water to make ice cubes.

the ethylene gas naturally  
 given off by the fruit to  
 produce ripening.

Marguerite Krackhardt,  
 Delaware Extension food  
 and nutrition specialist, says  
 a F.R. is O.K. for ripening  
 green pears, apples,  
 bananas, mangoes,  
 avocados, tomatoes, plums,  
 nectarines, apricots,  
 peaches, some citrus fruits,  
 and melons (except  
 watermelons). She does not  
 recommend it for use with  
 fruits grown locally or in your  
 own garden, since these are  
 normally picked at the peak  
 of ripeness.

But hang on, maybe the  
 inventor isn't so crazy after  
 all. When supermarkets  
 offer tomatoes resembling  
 green golf balls, and peaches  
 you can't slice, perhaps it's  
 time for the best fed nation in  
 the world to market fruit  
 ripeners. In fact, the F.R.  
 could be displayed in  
 supermarkets right next to  
 the underripe produce. I'm  
 surprised they haven't  
 thought of that already.

In case you are seriously  
 interested in this latest  
 merchandising marvel, look  
 in larger department stores  
 and specialty shops. The  
 F.R. is about 15 inches high  
 and 15 inches in diameter,  
 with a clear acrylic lid  
 appropriately pear shaped.  
 Vent holes permit air  
 circulation but concentrate

the ethylene gas naturally  
 given off by the fruit to  
 produce ripening. Because the ripener works  
 quickly, it requires careful  
 watching lest the fruit  
 becomes overripe. For  
 example, green bananas  
 placed inside the F.R. in the  
 morning will be ready to eat  
 by evening. If you  
 forget and leave them there  
 all night, you can  
 conveniently throw them out  
 next day.

The F.R. is supposed to  
 work better than the old-  
 fashioned brown paper bag.

But I'll stick to the old way,  
 thank you. Maybe you think  
 it's stubbornness. Or thrift.  
 But it's not. It's just the  
 principle of the thing.

And in case you're

wondering, I don't own a  
 crepe maker either - or a hot  
 dogger, a food processor, a  
 fry baby, a bacon broiler,  
 etc., etc., etc.

## Ag trade called peace factor

TOKYO, Japan - Secretary  
 of Agriculture Bob Bergland  
 said here recently that "a  
 continued and growing  
 friendship between the  
 people of the United States  
 and the people of Japan"  
 remains "a key factor" in  
 the maintenance of world  
 peace and that "trade is the  
 cornerstone of our mutual  
 friendship and cooperation."

To illustrate the  
 importance of the Japanese  
 market to the American  
 farmer, Bergland noted that  
 the United States trade with  
 Japan is "double that of any  
 single western European  
 country" and "equal to more  
 than a third of our total  
 trade with all European  
 nations, including the Soviet  
 Union."

The Secretary also  
 emphasized that the  
 domestic agricultural  
 policies of the United States  
 "are geared toward  
 expanding foreign trade."

"We have proposed a  
 system of reserves and  
 commodity loans which  
 provide economic protection


for farmers, supply  
 protection for foreign and  
 domestic buyers and support  
 prices which which keep  
 American grain competitive  
 in world markets," the  
 secretary said.

"We firmly believe,"  
 Bergland continued, "that  
 the importing and exporting  
 nations of the world must  
 agree to establish grain  
 reserves as an emergency  
 supply and to dampen the  
 wide price swings which  
 trouble both consuming and  
 producing countries."

After two days of meeting  
 with Japanese and American  
 agriculture, trade and  
 government leaders,  
 Bergland toured agricultural  
 areas in rural Japan before  
 departing for Hong Kong, the  
 second stop in his six-nation  
 tour.

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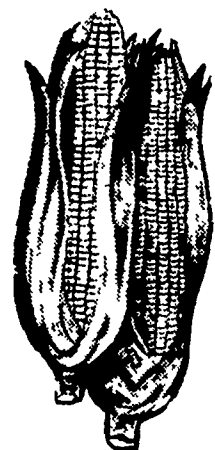
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