



Inset: Each bunch of grapes has a tracing label. — Wang Jiajun



A girl and her mom enjoy picking grapes at Jiabei Country Park. — Zhou Yulin

It's scorching outside, but juicy fruits are worth the effort

Staff Reporters

Despite a red alert for temperatures that exceeded 40 degrees Celsius during the latest heatwave, residents continue to venture outside and pick fresh fruits from the orchard in Jiading.

Grapes, great summer fruit

Chinese people have a long love affair with grapes.

"The basket is full of round and solid beads, tasting sweet and cold like jade," goes an ode by Chinese poet Zheng Yunduan in the Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368).

The Shanghai Malu Grape Festival raised its curtain early this month. It is the best time to taste the renowned, juicy and sweet fruit after the plum rain season.

The quality is higher than last year's, and the output at the Malu Grape Park and the entire Malu Town has reached 250,000 and 4.5 million kilograms respectively, with more than 60 varieties including 16 early maturing ones now out in the market.

"The grapes are delicious, and there are more options than last year," said a resident surnamed Sun.

In ancient times, people said grapes couldn't survive south of the Yangtze River. But Malu Town has become a weathervane for the entire grape industry throughout China. The development of the sector has become a key part of the integration of urban and rural development.

This year, a digital cloud platform

is set up to improve the influence of the Malu Grape.

The platform has a label-tracing system, with one code for each bunch, to prevent counterfeiters.

The code shows the exact source of each bunch and who grew it. By scanning the code, customers can also see test reports and authentication certificates linked to some of the new varieties.

So far, 28 companies and cooperatives, comprising 175 growers, have applied for over 2.2 million tracing labels to guarantee the quality and origin of their grapes.

During this year's grape festival, the Malu Grape Flagship Store officially went online, with 25 companies and cooperatives selling their popular varieties, including the Jufeng, Sunshine Rose and Giant Rose, through Weidian (micro store).

Products are specially packed for transport to ensure they arrive intact and fresh.

Grapes are guaranteed to arrive at homes within the city the same day they were picked, and the next day for other provinces.

To help farmers use the online platform, Malu Town's agricultural village service center has asked sales companies to host training courses, such as how to start an online store, how to reach out to the customers and how to manage the after-sales service.

The service center also helps farmers take the best pictures of grapes and edit websites.

In 2021, grape fields in suburban Shanghai covered more than 35,000 *mu* (2,333 hectares) with a total value

of output reaching 627 million yuan (US\$93.3 million).

Although the planting area of Malu grapes accounts only for 12.8 percent of Shanghai, the economic benefit it brings in totals 17.3 percent of the city's revenue, with an average output value per *mu* 7,000 yuan higher than that of the city's.

Where to pick

• Shanghai Malu Grape Park

Tel: 5951-1816
Address: 29 Dazhi Rd
大治路29号

• Shanghai Hongtai Garden Vegetables and Fruit Cooperatives

Tel: 5910-2389, 13916596273
Address: 3425 Liuxiang Highway
浏翔公路3425号

• Shanghai Puguan Ecological Agricultural Company

Tel: 13386258996
Address: 168 Taxin Rd E.
塔新东路168号

Honey peaches ready to pluck

Farmers are also busy picking honey peaches in Binchao Orchard, where large, round fruits hang heavy on the trees in Anting Town. Thirty *mu* of honey peaches are planted in the orchard, and the output is estimated to reach 75 tons.

"Compared to the year before, the output decreased a little due to the heat, but the taste and quality has not changed," said one farmer.

"All the peaches are picked before they are fully ripe, so when they are delivered to the door, people can enjoy the tender flesh just in time."

An average ripe honey peach weighs around 250 grams, but some can reach 400 grams.

The orchard also provides picking activities in July and August.

Binchao Orchard

Tel: 13616689987, 13611657311
Address: 926 Yingyang Rd
迎阳路926号

Cool down with a Cuiguan pear

In such scorching weather, another good way to quench your thirst and cool down is to take a bite of a sweet and crisp Cuiguan pear.

In Lin's Orchard in the Jiading Industrial Zone, local Cuiguan pears on the branch are ripe for picking.

"Cuiguan pears have thin skin, crispy flesh, a small core and lots of juice," said Wang Xiyong, a salesman at Lin's. "It tastes more delicious after keeping them in the fridge."

Covering 22 *mu*, the orchard produces about 1,500 kilograms of Cuiguan pears per *mu*. In addition to retail and group purchases, the orchard welcomes people to hand pick the perfect fruit to take home with them. Each adult can take one child under 14 years old.

To meet the demands of pandemic prevention and control measures, making an appointment by phone at least a day in advance is a must. Visitors are required to scan the venue code and produce a negative PCR test result valid for 72 hours.

Lin's Orchard

Tel: 18969699393
Address: Danian Rd
大碾路(丰巢快递柜向南100米)