

Amazing Avocados  
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Mexico claims the distinction as the birthplace of the avocado, but California jumped right in around 1871 with the first imported avocado trees planted in Santa Barbara. Since then, this luscious fruit, usually used as a vegetable, has made its way onto many menus throughout the state.

The University of Florida IFSA Extension provides information on avocados. According to the Extension, avocados ripen best at temperatures between 60° to 75°F as this range keeps the fruit ripening evenly. Choose fruits that yield to gentle pressure, neither too firm nor too soft. As recommended with all fruits and vegetables, wash the avocado under cool, running water for at least 15 seconds, rubbing gently to dislodge any dirt and to help clean it better before cutting into the tough outer shell to reveal the beautiful green interior. Avocados brown when exposed to air, so use immediately in a recipe or put lemon or lime juice on the exposed surfaces to keep the bright green color. Heat causes the avocado to become bitter, so add to hot foods at the last minute and do not cook at high temperatures or for a prolonged period.

The UFIFSA information sheet on avocados gives a wonderful recommendation for serving fancy looking avocado rings. It says “Avocado rings look impressive and are easy to make: Cut avocado crosswise. Turn halves in opposite directions to separate, lift out seed, then peel and slice crosswise.”

Freezing avocados for future use could not be easier. Simply mash the ripe avocado and add one tablespoon of lemon juice for every two avocados. Pack into a freezer container and, leaving headspace, freeze. Of course, many people have a favorite recipe for that most famous avocado dish, guacamole, but try the recipe below for an unusual twist.

#### Krome Guacamole

2 cups avocado, diced  
3 teaspoons lime juice  
½ oz. blue cheese  
3 squirts tabasco sauce, or salsa, to taste  
½ teaspoons salt

Make a paste of blue cheese, seasoning, and a small amount of the avocado. Add the diced avocado to the paste mixture, mashing with a fork. It's best if mashed together with a fork, since a blender or food processor would leave the mixture watery. Serve as a dip for chips, as a sandwich filling, or as a salad dressing.

University of Florida, IFAS Extension -Original recipe from William Krome, Homestead, Florida.

For questions about safe home food preservation, or to schedule a speaker for organizations or clubs on the topics of food safety or food preservation, call the Master Food Preservers at (530)

621-5506. For more information, be sure to go to the Master Food Preserver website at [http://cecentralsierra.ucanr.org/Master\\_Food\\_Preservers/](http://cecentralsierra.ucanr.org/Master_Food_Preservers/). Sign up to receive our new Master Food Preservers E-Newsletter at <http://ucanr.org/mfpnews/>.