

Editor [Dan Abendschein](#) dan.abendschein@patch.com

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An Update on RIPE Altadena, Our Local, Backyard Produce Exchange

Good food, good times, good neighbors

By [Karin Bugge](#) [Email the author](#) February 26, 2012

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The idea behind RIPE Altadena, a grassroots organization of local organic produce gardeners, is simple: Grow a successful backyard crop, and sometimes the fruits of your labor will exceed your wildest expectations.

So let's swap.

For example, some of us are up to our neck in citrus this season (can anyone say Meyer lemon?), others are drowning in lettuce. So let's trade – my lemons for your lettuce -- at a monthly get-together in Farnsworth Park. And let's have some fun at the same time.

The brainchild of Altadena resident Gail Murphy, RIPE Altadena continues to grow -- in membership and concept.

In addition to the monthly produce swaps, RIPE Altadena offers some homespun classes – canning, fruit tree grafting, herbal remedies, just to name a few. Murphy is also helping kick start RIPE "communities" in adjacent towns and cities.

Check out the [RIPE Altadena website](#) for membership information. If you have homegrown organic produce you'd like to swap this Sunday, stop by Farnsworth Park on February 26th, at 4 p.m., and meet some neighbors. It's likely you'll find assorted greens, chard, herbs, kale, lettuce, grapefruit, sprouts, granola.

And if you need lemons, I've got lemons.

Email me updates about this story.

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Dickinson

8:40 am on Sunday, February 26, 2012

When someone shows up with produce how ever can you verify that it's organic?

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Karin Bugge

9:00 am on Sunday, February 26, 2012

We trust each other.

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Lori A. Webster

9:25 am on Sunday, February 26, 2012

We have a standing agreement with RIPE Altadena that they can use our store when the weather is bad and they took us up on that one Sunday late last year. Scott and I were thrilled to have them and we haven't met a nicer bunch of folks!

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Nina Malone

9:35 am on Sunday, February 26, 2012

I joined RIPE several years ago when it was in its infancy and was still called by it's other name (COFEA). I was grateful to find a way to get rid of my mini-plums. My tree drops over 100 lbs most years in a matter of weeks and over half of that would go in the trash (they are delicious, incredibly sweet but they go bad in a matter of days and you can only eat and deliver so many). It was heartbreaking. I was so happy to find Gail and RIPE. Most years I give out over 40 bags to members each season (the funny thing is, my tree always times its drop between swaps, I've yet to make a delivery to the swap) and another RIPE member last year helped me jam a giant batch...yes, we've got a great thing going here. Thanks Gail--and all you other RIPE members.

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Gail Murphy

1:29 pm on Sunday, February 26, 2012

Karin - you can always bring your lemons to the swap, we will make table space for you!

Lori, Altadena must just be filled with nice people, because you are right, RIPE is full of them, but then YOU are the best letting us bombard your store with wet backyard produce!

Nina - I drool when ever I think of your plums. OK, this year I PROMISE we will change the swap day, or add an additional one in, so it is timed right for your plums. Really. OK?

Anyone want some Grapefruit? :)

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Gail Murphy

1:45 pm on Sunday, February 26, 2012

PS I have several new requests to join RIPE which I won't be able to get to today, but you are free to join us at the swap (Sunday at 4 p.m. North Side of Farnsworth park picnic tables) without having to be a member. Just show up with your backyard goodies. I'll be bringing parsley and lettuce, and if anyone wants grapefruit, that too.

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Lori A. Webster

5:32 pm on Sunday, February 26, 2012

Gail, thanks - RIPE is always welcome at WFS! And I hope you guys are still up at the park after 5:45, I want a grapefruit, please. And don't Nina's plums sound fabulous?

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Nina Malone

5:38 pm on Sunday, February 26, 2012



Lori, I'll be sure to drop you off a bag this year :-)

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Lori A. Webster

9:59 pm on Sunday, February 26, 2012

Thanks, Nina, we'd love that!

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