

Editor's note: The print version of this story contain incorrect hours of operation for Thunderbird Berry Farm. The story has been corrected. It's still a couple of weeks until the blueberries at Endicott Farm in Mounds will be ripe enough for harvesting.

But Betsy Endicott is already fielding calls from people eager to get out into the fields. "This year, it seems like there is a larger than usual interest from people," said Betsy Endicott. "We're hearing the same thing from other farmers in the area. I think part of it is that, what with all the social distancing and things being shut down, people are just anxious to get outdoors, and they're looking for something to do in a relatively safe environment," she said. "And I think there's been a real shift among people to get their produce and other foods from local sources, rather than just whatever shows up at a grocery store." Memorial Day traditionally marks the beginning of berry-picking season, with a number of farms in the area opening their gates to allow visitors to pick their own blueberries and blackberries. The strawberry season began weeks earlier, and Joe's Farm in Bixby, which is known for its organically grown strawberries, has been inundated with prospective pickers.

"You would not believe how busy it's been around here," said Cindy Abeck, an employee at the farm. Because of the interest, as well as out of concerns about the spread of coronavirus, those wishing to harvest their own strawberries from Joe's Farm need to reserve specific times. "If people just show up and want to pick strawberries, we're going to have to turn them away and have them reserve a time," Abeck said. "Of course, they can shop at our market, where we have lettuces, radishes, onions, beets and lots of other things." Abeck said it's likely that the farm will have strawberries last through the end of May. Joe's Farm will be offering pick-your-own zinnias in June, and later this year plans to allow visitors to pick their own sweet potatoes. Those looking for something a bit out of the ordinary to harvest themselves might consider a trip out to Osage County.

The Lodge at Taylor Ranch may be best known for its disc golf courses, camping facilities and wilderness trails, but the resort also offers pick-your-own blackberries and sand plums. Sand plums, also known as Chickasha or Cherokee plums, “are a little bit smaller than the plums people are used to,” said Leah Jenkins, whose family owns The Lodge at Taylor Ranch. “They’re really sweet” we like to make jelly with them.” Jenkins said the sand plums will likely be ready by mid-June, while the blackberries should be ripe for harvest closer to the first of July. The hard freeze that hit northeastern Oklahoma in April negatively affected most blackberry farmers. “We’ll have blackberries,” Endicott said. “We’re just not going to have as much as we have had in other years.” John Firey of Rock Creek Farms in Sand Springs said he’s not offering you-pick services this year because of the damage done to his crop. “We think we’re going to have enough to be able to sell pre-picked quarts of berries,” he said.

CABIN CREEK BERRIES Blueberries, blackberries Opens: Second week in June 35401 S. 4405 Road, Big Cabin 918-953-9504 Hours: 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday. Call for availability.

CAL2HOMA FARM Blueberries Opens: Mid-June through mid-July 1382 Oklahoma 10, Gore 918-489-2876 Hours: 7 a.m. to noon Thursday-Saturday, 6 to 8:30 p.m. Friday.

CANYON BERRY FARMS Blueberries Opens: First week of June 20126 S. Dickerson Drive, Claremore 918-344-9191 Hours: 7 a.m. to noon Tuesday-Saturday depending on availability.

ENDICOTT FARMS Blackberries Opens: First or second week of June 211th St. South, Mounds (between Lewis and Harvard avenues south of Tulsa) 918-344-4582 Hours: 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday, Wednesday; 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. Friday-Saturday. Reservations needed for Saturday.

Strawberries, produce Now open 12811 S. Sheridan Road, Bixby 918-740-1171 Hours: 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday. Call for availability.

MEADOW BLACKBERRY FARM Blackberries Opens: Second week of June 3200 Westgreen Way, Sapulpa 918-227-1987 Hours: 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. Call for availability.

OUTBACK FARM Blueberries, blackberries, asparagus and bulk produce Opens: First or second week of June 4163 E. 470 Road, Pryor 918-519-2148 Hours: 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Monday-Sunday. Call for availability. OWASSO CHRISTMAS TREE AND BERRY FARM Blueberries, blackberries C should be ready by June 6, blackberries by June 13. Call for availability. 11039

N. 129th East Ave., Owasso 918-272-9445 Hours: 7 a.m. to noon Tuesdays and Thursdays,

7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturdays ROCK CREEK FARMS Only offering pre-picked quarts of

blackberries for sale. Call for availability. 20412 W. 61st St. South, Sand Springs 918-637-7243

THE LODGE AT TAYLOR RANCH Sand plums, blackberries Opens: Mid-June 22005 Oklahoma 99, Pawhuska.

918-694-1138 Hours: Open Monday-Sunday. Call for availability. THUNDERBIRD BERRY FARM Blueberries, black

Day South 321st East Ave., Broken Arrow (between 71st and 81st streets) 918-640-7168 Hours:

By appointment only, Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays; to reserve a time: thunderbirdberry.com Visit these popular

Grand Lake hot spots for good food, fun people James D. Watts Jr. 918-581-8478

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