

Last week's *Sysco ProducePuzzle* was: **Koko, Stanford University's "talking" gorilla, used sign language to describe this fruit as "red, juice, corn, seeds." What is it?** There's a story of a new chef who had recently graduated from culinary school and was in his first job as an executive chef in a white tablecloth restaurant. The owner of the restaurant wanted to make some jelly using this fruit, so the chef ordered a carton. Upon receiving the carton, the chef immediately called the produce company to inform them that the fruit was bad. "I cut one open, and it has already gone to seed." He was, as was Koko, the "talking" gorilla, referring to...Pomegranates! This week's *Sysco ProducePuzzler* is: **Is the Pumpkin a fruit or a vegetable?** See next week's *FreshTimes* for the answer.



ASPARAGUS: In the Valley of Ica, one of the world's most delicate vegetables is now being grown. The Valley of Ica is about 4 hours south of Lima, the capital of Peru. This valley has a rich history of Inca Indians. In fact, when the valley was being transformed into asparagus fields, farmers would often find remnants of the famous Inca Empire. Farmers found ancient Incan cooking utensils, pots and pans. Today, this coastal valley, with rich, sandy soil, grows some of the world's best Asparagus. Rich soil helps the crown stay healthy. Sandy soil allows the tender spears to grow straight and fast. This valley also has an average yearly rainfall of "zero." That's right. No rain, which would bring decay and disease. This valley is completely irrigated with deep well water. The well water comes from deep underground aquifers, fed by pure water from the Andes Mountains. The Valley of Ica is a somewhat isolated growing region...geographically anyway. To the north and east are the Andes Mountains. To the south is the driest desert on earth, the Atacama Desert. To the west is the Pacific Ocean. It is very difficult for disease or pest to enter this valley. Growers here, therefore are able to use less pesticides on their crops. This coastal valley also has near perfect growing temperatures, warm during the day, but cooled by the ocean breezes at night. Those cool nights, getting down to the upper 40s, help produce the very sweet spears of asparagus in Peru. Because of this very special growing region, and its very special and unique environment, growers here are able to produce 4 to 5 times more asparagus per acre than even the famed California Delta region. In 1987, the first Asparagus crowns were planted in this Valley. It was part of a U.S. anti-drug program to help Peruvians leave the cocaine drug trade and begin employment in a different trade. So they went from an illegal agricultural crop, to a very classy crop.

Tips And Other Fun

PAPAYA: If the fruit is less than half ripe, never store your Papaya in temperatures 45 degrees or below. This will stop the ripening process.
By the way...In 1992, a ringspot virus hit the Hawaiian Papaya plantations and by 1995, almost completely destroyed the Papaya industry.

Sysco Fresh Promotions OCTOBER

[ADA National Convention](#), Denver
[American Heart Walk](#)
["Andy Griffith Show" TV debut, 1960](#)
[Baseball World Series](#)
[Columbus Day](#)
[Charlie Brown, Snoopy born, 1950](#)
[Child Health Month](#)
[Disneyworld opens, 1971](#)
[Eat Better, Eat Together Month](#)
[Eat Country Ham Month](#)
Fall Back (set clocks back 1 hour)
[Family Health Month](#)
Halloween
Harvest Festivals
"I Love Lucy" TV debut, 1951
[National AIDS Awareness Month](#)
[National Apple Month](#)

[National Breast Cancer Awareness](#)
National Caramel Month
National Chili Month
[National Cookie Month](#)
[National Crime Prevention Month](#)
[National Customer Service Week](#)
[National Dental Hygiene Month](#)
National Dessert Month
Nt'l Disability Awareness Month
[Nt'l Domestic Violence Awareness](#)
[National Frozen Food Festival Month](#)
National Health Education Week
[National Medical Librarians Month](#)
Nt'l Orthodontic Health Month
[National Pasta Month](#)
[National Popcorn Poppin' Month](#)
[National Pork Month](#)

NBA season begins
NHL season begins
Octoberfest
PMA, Anaheim
[Polish American Heritage Month](#)
Pumpkin Carving Contests
[Spinach Lovers Month](#)
[Substance Abuse Prevention](#)
Vegetarian Awareness Month
[World Egg Day](#)
[Yosemite Nt'l Park established, 1890](#)
[National Roller Skating Month](#)
[National School Lunch Week](#)
[National Seafood Month](#)
[National Spinal Health Month](#)
[National Stamp Collecting Month](#)
[NBA Hall of Fame Ceremonies](#)

 **American Dietetic Association**

