HANDOUT Title: Apricots Item Label Handout #: 17a

Content:

Trays of Pitted Apricots, Faulkner Farm, Santa Paula c. 1915

Photograph, MVC Collection

Trays of pitted apricots were set in the sun to dry in the early 1900s. William W. Sparks planted the first commercial apricot orchard in the county in Saticoy in 1877, and apricots remained a major county crop for many years.

When the apricot crop was ripe it was "all hands on deck" to get the fruit off the trees and onto the frying trays. Children were released from school to help.

Chunk #1
Copy of page from an 1879 report on all the farms in Ventura County. It shows a drawing of the Faulkner ranch and a written description of what crops and animals were on the farm.

Chunk #2
Local Ventura newspaper article from Oct. 21, 1921 explaining the evolution of the apricot drying process including the discovery that apricots could be sundried near the coast.

Chunk #3
An excerpt from a newspaper article from the *Ventura Free Press,* October 6, 1899 that talks about the hand pitting of apricots, the drying trays, and the fact that young children were paid $1 per day to pit apricots during the picking season.