

Two great documentaries about fruit are screening next week

By Russ
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Next week is going to be a good one for lovers of documentaries and fruit. No, that's not a misprint.

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"[Fear No Fruit](#)," a film about Southern California fruit pioneer Frieda Caplan — you might know her as the kiwi queen — is playing at the Newport Beach Film Festival on Wednesday.

Caplan, who turns 92 this summer, is a legend among food purveyors for the company Frieda's Inc. (formerly Frieda's Finest) she runs with her daughters Karen and Jackie.

[12 recipes for California's strawberry season, now hitting its sweet spot](#)

She got her start in the 1950s, selling the then-exotic brown mushroom. Then in 1962 she discovered the Chinese gooseberry and renamed it the kiwi fruit, eventually turning it into a marketing sensation and launching 1,000 nouvelle cuisine desserts.

Jicama, dragon fruit, spaghetti squash, "Champagne" grapes, seedless watermelons and habanero peppers are just a few of the exotics she has introduced.

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The screening is at 12:45 p.m. at the Island Cinema, 999 Newport Center Drive, in Newport Beach. [Tickets are \\$14](#) and include a post-film conversation with the indefatigable Caplan.

Also next week, a documentary about Central Valley peach grower/author Mas Masumoto and his family farm will be screening at the Japanese American National Museum as part of the Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival.

"[Changing Season](#)" documents the life of this busy second-generation farmer as he and daughter Nikiko negotiate the tricky businesses of family and farming in the 21st century.

Masumoto's 1995 book "Epitaph for a Peach" described his feelings about taking over the farm from his own father and the struggle to keep the family tradition alive. It turned his Suncrest peach into a cult favorite, even winning it a place on Slow Food's Ark of Taste.

He has written six other books, is a regular columnist for the Fresno and Sacramento Bee newspapers and serves on the National Council on the Arts.

[Screenings of the documentary](#) are at the museum, 100 N. Central Ave. in downtown Los Angeles, Tuesday at 4:30 p.m. and Wednesday at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$12.

Also, Masumoto will be in conversation at the Aquarium of the Pacific in Long Beach on May 7 as part of [the Future of Food series](#), discussing the joys and pains of being a family farmer. Tickets for that discussion will be \$10, \$8 for aquarium members.

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