Outlook

**Kentucky State Fruit Letter**

**From** Matt Menegotto <gotto@kentuckypawpaw.com>
**Date** Tue 6/30/2026 1:21 PM
**To** Pomper, Kirk <kirk.pomper@kysu.edu>

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June 30, 2026

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Matt Menegotto, and I am the owner of Hang Loose Pawpaw Patch in Wilmore, KY. I am writing to express my strong support for designating the pawpaw as the official State Fruit of Kentucky.

The pawpaw is more than just another fruit; it is a truly unique part of Kentucky's natural heritage. As the largest native fruit in North America, the pawpaw has been growing wild throughout the forests, creek bottoms, and hillsides of Kentucky for centuries. Long before grocery stores and commercial orchards, generations of Kentuckians and Native Americans enjoyed this remarkable fruit as a natural part of the landscape.

Kentucky provides an ideal environment for pawpaw trees. They thrive naturally across much of the Commonwealth, making the fruit a true symbol of our state's rich biodiversity and fertile land. Few fruits can claim such a deep connection to Kentucky's forests and history.

Beyond its history, the pawpaw is an incredible fruit. Its rich, tropical flavor; often compared to a blend of banana, mango, and custard, makes it unlike anything else grown in North America. As interest in locally grown foods and native agriculture continues to grow, the pawpaw has become a source of pride for farmers, orchard owners, chefs, and consumers throughout Kentucky.

Recognizing the pawpaw as Kentucky's official state fruit would celebrate not only an iconic native species but also the people working to preserve and promote it. It would encourage education about our state's natural resources, support Kentucky agriculture, and bring greater awareness to one of the Commonwealth's most remarkable native fruit trees.

Kentucky has long been known for horses, bourbon, and bluegrass. The pawpaw deserves to stand alongside those symbols as another uniquely Kentucky treasure. It represents our history, our natural beauty, and our agricultural future.

I respectfully encourage you to support legislation making the pawpaw the official State Fruit of Kentucky. I believe it is a well-deserved recognition for a fruit that has been part of Kentucky's identity for generations.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

**Matt Menegotto**
Owner
Hang Loose Pawpaw Patch

Stay Pawpaw Positive!!

Matt “Gotto” Menegotto
Hang Loose Pawpaw Patch
Wilmore, KY
317-750-5370
Kentuckypawpaw.com
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