

# HILLTOP

Issue #2 Spring/Summer 2012

elevating  
**the cherry season**

**new tech for world famous cherries**  
**growing organically for flavor**



# World Famous Farming *from* World Famous Places



**Mathisons  
Amigos Orchards  
Stemilt Hill, WA**



Dear Readers,



The spring and summer seasons bring a lot of excitement to Stemilt. As I write this letter, we are monitoring the bloom for our 2012 cherry crop and making the final preparations in the field and warehouses to efficiently harvest, pack, and ship this crop. We look forward to harvesting the first Stemilt cherries of 2012 in southern California in late April, and then continuing cherry harvest in Washington through the end of August.

Along with cherries, stone fruit is another focus at Stemilt during the summer months. As most of you know, Stemilt's entire crop of peaches and nectarines is grown and certified as organic. We feel that organic farming methods deliver a premium eating experience for these summer fruits, as well as a truly unique program to offer consumers at retail.

From social media and cherry nutrition to high-elevation orchards, there are a number of exciting features in this first-ever Spring & Summer issue of Hilltop. I hope this issue brings value to your organization and look forward to introducing our apples, and pear issue in the fall. Until then, make it a great cherry and stone fruit season!

Onward,

West Mathison  
President  
Stemilt Growers

# HILLTOP

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## onthecover



Dark-sweet cherries on Stemilt hill photographed just before harvest.



# World Famous Farming — from — World Famous Places



**Mathisons  
Dreamland Orchards  
Stemilt Hill, WA**



## contents

Issue #2 Spring/Summer 2012

### letter from the editor 1

### lifestyle

- elevating the cherry season 6
- growing organically for flavor 12
- social media and the farm 22
- the health of the cherry 28

### technology

- new technology drives packing cherries 18

### sustainability

- health in the workplace 4

### merchandising

- 5 ways to boost your cherry program 34

### recipes

- cherry clafouti 16
- grilled chicken with cherry & nectarine 26



6



18



12



4

# health in the workplace



Stemilt employees with a lingering cold or work-related injury don't have to go far for quality health care. The Stemilt Employee Health Clinic, located at the company's Olds Station facility in Wenatchee, Washington, provides employees with access to free, professional care thanks to a unique partnership with local occupational medicine company, ANOVAWorks.

ANOVAWorks approached Stemilt back in 2009 with the idea of an on-site health clinic. As one of the largest employers in the Wenatchee area, Stemilt quickly realized the benefits a clinic could provide its employees.

The clinic opened its doors back in March 2010 and has gone beyond Stemilt's expectations.

"The clinic has been a positive change at Stemilt as more employees are seeking medical attention due to its availability," said Lee Layman, Stemilt's safety manager. "Rather than going undetected or untreated, serious medical problems are being identified. Additionally, early treatment of other ailments results in less discomfort, stress, and strain on employees."

The nature of most jobs at Stemilt require employees to work in close contact with one another, which means illnesses can spread quickly. The availability of the health clinic helps catch contagious diseases early, resulting in fewer missed days of work across the company and a healthier workplace overall, Layman said.

The clinic is staffed by two advanced nurse practitioners and certified occupational health nurse specialists, while a doctor oversees the clinic service. Initially, the plan was to have a clinic open to employees three days each week, but with high demand for appointments, the clinic quickly expanded its hours. Today, it's open five days a week for eight hours a day. The flexible schedule allows clinic staff to see both day and night shift employees.



In addition to providing employees with free, quality medical care and advice, the staff of the clinic provides wellness screening services, customized health programs, and education on a variety of health issues. They also oversee Stemilt's voluntary employee wellness program called A Healthier Life for You, which provides education and support to employees on a variety of issues, including obesity and smoking cessation.

Both the clinic and Stemilt's wellness program are recent additions to the company's sustainability and social responsibility program, called Responsible Choice. The program was established by Stemilt founder Tom Mathison back in 1989 and today encompasses all aspects of the business – from efficiencies on the farm and at the packing facilities to the well-being of employees and the greater Wenatchee community.

"Growing, packing, and shipping fruit is a hands-on job, and we couldn't accomplish what we do each day without our hard-working employees. We feel strongly about giving back to our employees through programs like the health clinic that benefit them every day," said West Mathison, Stemilt president.

Since the clinic opened, Stemilt has realized medical cost savings due to fewer health claims and lower work-related injury costs.

"The clinic staff acts as a first responder for any on-the-job injuries. Having access to this immediate care is key when it comes to the recovery of our employees," said Layman.

Between January and December 2011, the clinic saw an average of 173 employees per month. Approximately 21 percent of these visits were classified as work-related. After factoring in the cost to have ANOVAWorks operate the clinic, Stemilt sees an average cost savings of \$43,065 per month.

"The cost savings are great for the company as it allowed us to improve our health care benefits package without raising premiums. Most importantly, the clinic is providing employees with access to free, quality care that they may otherwise not seek out if the clinic wasn't available. It's convenient, reliable, and proving to be a real benefit for our employees," said Layman.



# elevating the cherry season

Growing cherries has always been Kyle Mathison's passion. The fourth generation cherry grower was born and raised working on his family's farm where cherry harvest was the highlight of every summer. Many of his odd jobs had him working alongside his father and Stemilt founder, Tom Mathison. Over the years, Kyle Mathison picked up on the art of growing cherries, as well as his father's vision for getting the best cherries into as many hands around the world as possible. It's that same vision that has kept Mathison farming cherries for nearly 40 years, and also driven him into his latest venture – growing cherries at high elevations.

"My dream is to be able to provide consumers with world famous Stemilt cherries as long as possible," he said.

The long-time Stemilt Hill grower began seeing this dream through after planting orchards in California, Chile, and the higher elevations of Stemilt Hill near Wenatchee, WA.

"My family always jokes that rather than taking a real vacation during the winter, I managed to find a warm place (Chile) to harvest cherries. I just love growing cherries, especially in a new or challenging location," Mathison said.

One of these challenging locations, the Amigos ranch in Washington state, is extending Stemilt's cherry season into September. Most Washington growers, even those that farm on high elevations, are done harvesting cherries by the middle of August. The same cannot be said of Mathison.

Named after the Spanish word for friends, the Amigos ranch sits between 3,000 and 3,500 feet above sea level, not too far from the Mathison family's original homestead on Stemilt Hill. The lush soil and plentiful water supply from the nearby Columbia River creates a welcome environment for cherry trees. Additionally, the high elevation location remains cooler during the hot summer which protects delicate cherries from heat stress, allowing them to grow into firm, large-sized fruits with a deep flavor profile.

"Amigos is a cherry grower's dream locale," said Mathison. "It has a wide temperature range between day and night which is important for cherries. The warm days build sugar levels and the size of the fruits, while cool nights reenergize trees to do it all over again the next day."



In the cherry world, any orchard planted above 1,800 feet is considered high elevation. Having already surpassed this height with his orchards on Stemilt Hill, Mathison began planting cherries at even higher elevations back in 2002.





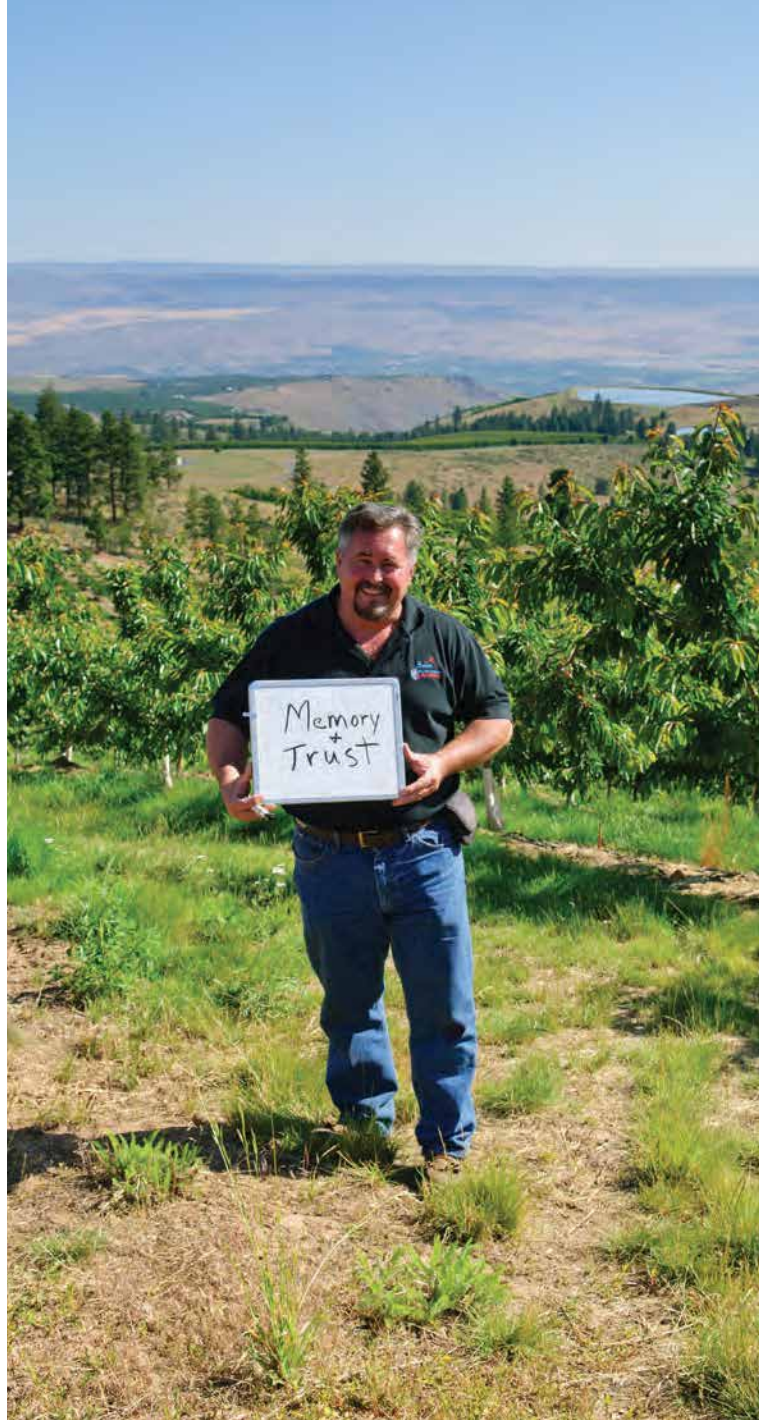
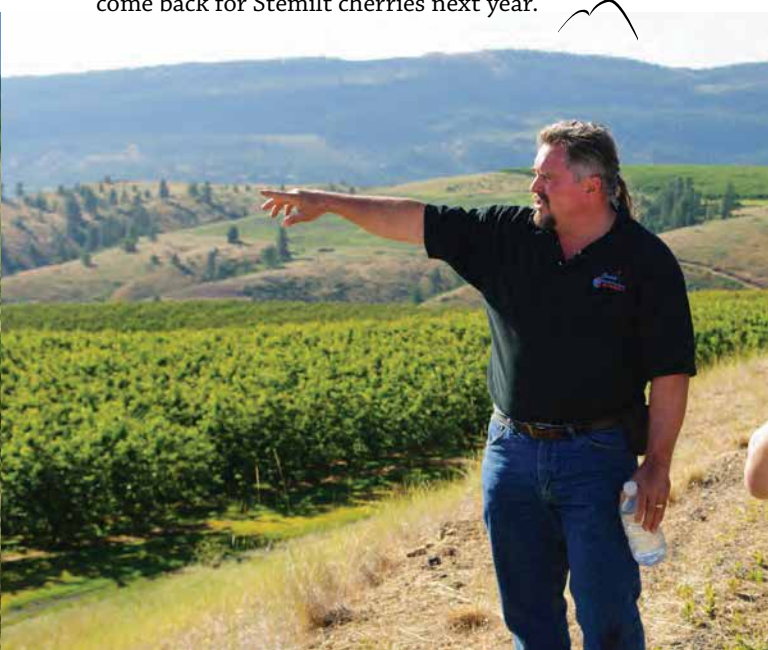
Though it seems like growing cherries on Amigos would be a piece of cake, the high elevations make it a risky venture. According to Mathison, Amigos sees much colder winters than orchards at lower elevations, making it more susceptible to winter kill.

"Snow is a welcome sight for any cherry grower because it insulates trees. My grandfather always said, 'the deeper the snow, the better the cherries.' Long periods of extreme cold can damage or kill trees and the buds that have already formed to create the next cherry crop," said Mathison. "It's a risk growing cherries at such high elevations, but if it gets cherries into consumers' hands longer than before, it's a risk I'm willing to take."

Once past the hurdle of winter and long after other cherry trees in the other Washington state growing regions blossom, the Amigos orchard awakes from its dormant stage and gradually moves into full bloom. According to Mathison, cherries generally bloom (and are subsequently picked) one day later for every 100 feet gained in vertical elevation. That makes Amigos the latest cherry block to be harvested in Washington state.

Though the exact timing varies from year to year, cherry harvest traditionally starts at Amigos around August 10th. Mathison harvests three main varieties on Amigos – Skeena, Sweetheart, and Staccato. All three are dark-sweet cherry varieties that originated in British Columbia and thrive in an environment like Amigos.

"The three varieties grown on Amigos are my three loves," said Mathison. "Each cherry has its own unique characteristics, but they all consistently deliver a dessert eating experience. A positive eating experience builds memory and trust with the consumer, ensuring that they'll come back for Stemilt cherries next year."



The cherries in this box are grown over a half mile above sea level in Washington state with horticultural expertise that focuses on everything from compost to lunar cycles, as well as a passion for growing large and firm cherries with true dessert flavors. Taste the difference with these World Famous Stemilt Cherries!



# World Famous Farming — from — World Famous Places



Premium high-altitude cherries from Stemilt Growers arrive in mid-August and continue into early September. Grown by fourth generation cherry grower Kyle Mathison.

**Kyle Mathison**  
High Elevation Orchards  
Stemilt Hill, WA



Elevate your knowledge.



### **Compost being applied**

In the last issue of Hilltop, you learned about fourth generation grower Kyle Mathison's passion for making World Famous Compost. This photo, captured in November 2011 by Stemilt's lead designer Landon Michaelson, shows the finished product being applied to apple trees atop Stemilt Hill near Wenatchee, WA. Kyle applies the nutrient-rich fertilizer to his trees just before the leaves drop and trees go dormant for the winter.



# growing organically for flavor



**I**t was six years ago when the Douglas family of Pasco, Washington decided to transition their entire peach and nectarine crop to organic production. They saw the move to organic as a way to fill a niche in the produce department and deliver an eating experience that was second-to-none.

As they prepare for another harvest this summer, the Douglas's can literally see the difference organic production has brought to their orchards. Beneficial predator insects, like ladybugs, thrive in the orchard in order to help control known stone fruit pests. Meanwhile, compost is being used as a natural fertilizer to enrich the soil with the desired nutrients for the variety of peach or nectarine that is being grown. These efforts have brought everything from the soil to the limbs of the trees into balance.

"The transition to organic has built rich organic matter into the soil and brought orchards into balance from a horticultural standpoint. For us, farming organically is all about delivering the summer flavors that consumers desire when purchasing peaches and nectarines," said David Douglas, fourth generation grower and field services manager at Douglas Fruit, the family's fruit packing company which partners with Stemilt.

Like many family farms, the Douglas's rely on years of knowledge from generations before them to produce high-quality crops year after year. Their family farming history dates back to the 1890's, and they've been growing fruit in eastern Washington since the 1920's. Brothers John and Bill Douglas founded Douglas Fruit, a fruit growing and packing company, back in 1984. Today, the fourth generation leads the family business. John's daughter, Jill Douglas, is the general manager at Douglas Fruit, while Bill's sons, David, John, and Peter work in either farming or the marketing sides of the business. And just like generations before them, the Douglas family remains focused on growing and packing premium quality stone fruits, which are eventually sold under the Stemilt or Artisan Organics brand.



The Douglas family certified their crop of peaches and nectarines as organic in 2009 after completing the required three-year transition phase. The upcoming stone fruit season, which begins in July and runs through September, will be the fourth year their entire crop of peaches and nectarines will be certified and marketed as organic. Additionally, 60 percent of the apricots grown by Stemilt and Douglas Fruit are organic.

“Our orchards have responded extremely well to the move to organic,” said Jill Douglas. “Peaches and nectarines are coming off the tree with higher Brix (or sugar) levels and beautiful, vibrant colors which delivers a unique eating experience for the consumer.”

Beyond farming organically, the Douglas family greatly benefits from the location of their peach and nectarine orchards, which are primarily found in eastern Washington’s Columbia Basin region. This arid region known as the Tri Cities is located at the confluence of three rivers – the Snake, the Yakima, and the mighty Columbia – making it an ideal place for growing fruit with the right flavors and size profiles. Additionally, the Douglas’s plant trees in small variety blocks to help manage harvest and ensure that only mature, ripe fruit is picked from the tree.

“Peaches and nectarines need warm temperatures during the day to develop sugars, but cooler temperatures at night to reenergize the tree. We get just that with our long, hot summer days and significant temperature drop at night. It’s the ideal environment that makes growing organically a bit less challenging,” said David Douglas.

As the Douglas family embarks on yet another summer harvest, you can count on flavor coming first with every peach and nectarine picked from their trees.

“Farming organically has its own challenges and is certainly a commitment, but the complex flavors that natural growing methods deliver make it worthwhile,” said Jill Douglas.





“ Peaches and nectarines need warm temperatures during the day to develop sugars, but cooler temperatures at night to reenergize the tree. ”

# Cherry Clafouti

## Ingredients

2 cups cherries, pitted  
1 tablespoon sugar  
2 large eggs  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  cup sugar  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  cup light cream  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  cup flour  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon salt  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

## Procedure

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Generously butter a 10 inch pie dish. In a small bowl, mix the pitted cherries with the 1 tablespoon of sugar. Stir to coat. In another bowl, beat the eggs with a rotary beater. Then add the milk, cream, flour, salt, remaining sugar, and vanilla and beat until smooth (but not too long). Pour batter into pie dish. Carefully add the cherries. Put the dish in the warm oven and bake until puffy and lightly brown, about 45 minutes. Serve warm with whipped cream or ice cream.

## Nutrition Information

*Per Serving: 167 calories; 3 g protein; 22 g carbohydrate; 8 g fat; 5 g saturated fat; 51 mg cholesterol; 89 mg sodium; 1 g dietary fiber; 11 g sugar*

**Serves 6-8**





# new technologies drive packing of world famous cherries

**I**t's not quite cherry season, but Stemilt's production and operation teams are already busy upgrading the company's cherry packing lines in both Washington and California. The trend of staying at the forefront of new technologies is one that seems to repeat itself before cherry season every year, and certainly something that has been ingrained in the culture at Stemilt since the company began packing cherries five decades ago.

"We're not changing things just for the sake of changing, but are committed to being on the leading edge of cherry packing technologies," said Todd George, Stemilt's Vice President of Production. "With new equipment and technology coming out all the time, it's important that the technologies we choose to implement make sense for our business and help us with our goal of delivering a premium cherry pack to stores worldwide."



Last spring, Stemilt was busy completing the first phase of construction on an upgraded red cherry line at its largest facility, Olds Station in Wenatchee. This spring, phase two is underway at Olds Station and the company is also rebuilding a cherry line at its Stockton, California facility in order to increase capacity and throughput.

Stemilt recently purchased an Optyx® sorter and plans to use this piece of equipment to pack cherries in California and Washington this year. Stemilt is the first company to install the Optyx sorter in the Washington cherry industry. According to Key Technologies, the company who introduced Optyx for cherry packing, Optyx electronically sorts red cherries to remove defects in order to reduce the amount of manual sorting needed further down the line. It uses color cameras and lasers to inspect each cherry's size, shape, color, and properties and then automatically removes fruit with defects like wind rub, scars, old splits, doubles, spurs, rot, and soft fruit.

With a piece of equipment as valuable to the overall quality of cherries as Optyx is, Stemilt will be transporting Optyx and a second dumper down to California prior to the start of cherry harvest there in order to use it with their newly upgraded cherry line. The company will then bring the equipment back to Washington in June to use for cherry packing there.

“The idea of sharing equipment between the two states we produce cherries in is something we’ve been considering for some time. It’s exciting to bring it to reality this season,” said George.

With California cherry harvest set to begin for Stemilt in late April, the company is putting the finishing touches on a major upgrade of the “B” line at its packing facility in Stockton. This line has been the secondary cherry line for many years, but will become the main line this year with the addition of new equipment and upgrades. Stemilt expects to increase daily packing capacity by 25 percent on this line with double the capacity to manually sort cherries.



“Cherry volumes in California are growing each year and this new line will allow us to efficiently handle the increased tonnage while simultaneously delivering a high-quality pack,” said George.

Back in Washington, Stemilt will finish construction on the second phase of its red cherry line upgrade by the start of harvest in June. The large capital project – valued at \$3 million – included a complete redesign of the line’s front end last year, and this year focuses on the back end. Stemilt will add a second dumper to increase capacity on that line by 60 percent. They also expanded hydrocooling capacity on the line by 60 percent in order to handle increased tonnage and maintain the all-important cold chain. A filling station will be added to the back end to help with packaging cherries. Finally, Stemilt has rerouted its resizer in order to have the ability to accurately size medium and small fruit, in addition to resizing large fruit, if needed.

Though the primary focus on packing line upgrades are centered in Stockton and at Olds Station, Stemilt is also enhancing handling at its Stemilt Hill facility in order to reduce impact points for fruit and increase the potential for delivering a high quality pack to export markets. The company is also increasing clamshell packaging capacity on its Miller Street Rainier cherry line, and modifying procedures for tunneling cherries based on extensive research trials in order to cool fruit faster and improve shelf life.

“All of these cherry packing technologies and upgrades are working towards the common goal of delivering the highest quality cherry pack in the most efficient manner. The capacity increases in Stockton and at Olds Station allow us to pack cherries at a comfortable pace with accurate defect sorting and a strong focus on the cold chain in order to improve stem quality, luster, and shelf life at the store level,” George said. “We want consumers to experience the best eating experience when they taste our cherries and these packing technologies will certainly help us in delivering that experience this season and beyond.”





# social media and the farm

There's no denying that social media has become a powerful marketing tool in recent years due to its popularity among people of all ages. According to Online Schools, Facebook is now used by 1 in every 13 people on Earth with more than half of these people logging in every day. Similar statistics from Ad Age Blog highlight the popularity of Twitter and YouTube. There are 100 million active Twitter users, while 3 billion videos are viewed on YouTube daily.

With impressive statistics like these, it's no wonder why companies like Stemilt are looking to social media as an important platform for marketing direct to consumers.

Stemilt first stepped into social media back in 2009 just as Facebook pages started taking off. The company created a unique page for its exclusive apple variety, Piñata, in order to inform people about the apple's availability, as well as engage with fans of the apple. What started as a trial program has evolved into a gathering place for Piñata apple fans to share their thoughts on the fruit with one another. Today, the Piñata apple Facebook page is liked by more than 4,700 people from all across the world. The page has become a "mini website" of sorts for the apple by containing information on the apple, crop, and availability. More importantly, it allows Stemilt to interact with fans on a regular basis.

"Beyond the page being an information hub for Piñata, it allows us to dialogue directly with fans. We can answer their questions quickly and comment back about their experiences with the apple," said Stemilt marketing director Roger Pepperl. "It's always amazing to see the excitement over Piñata apples on Facebook when the apple becomes available each winter."

A year after launching the Piñata apple Facebook page, the company decided to expand its social marketing efforts and created a Facebook page and Twitter account for the brand its fruits are commonly known by, Stemilt. They began posting regularly about each Stemilt fruit when it was in season in order to connect the fruit back to the land. Stemilt promoted the Facebook page on their website and all marketing materials to start garnering a fan base.



Today, Stemilt's Facebook page has more than 7,000 likes while its Twitter account has nearly 900 followers. Social marketing has allowed Stemilt to connect consumers to the farms where their apples, pears, cherries, and stone fruits grow, as well as with the people who grow them.

"People want to know where their food is coming from and how it is grown," said Pepperl. "Social media has provided us with an outlet to share that information directly with shoppers. We'll post a picture of cherries being harvested one day and let people know that these will be packed fresh and shipped off to their stores the next day. This glimpse into the farm really resonates with people and gets them excited about the fresh fruits coming to their grocery store."

In addition to highlighting the everyday happenings on the farm, Stemilt uses social media to educate people about the health benefits of fresh fruit. They also feature recipes, storage and serving tips, and have a weekly trivia question called the Stemilt Stumper that relates to a fruit that's in season.

"We want to be an information source on fresh fruits for our fans and believe that incorporating a variety of fruit related posts on Facebook and Twitter is a great way to do that," said Pepperl.

In the coming months, Stemilt will focus its social media efforts on cherries and stone fruit. The company will highlight these fruits to not only remind people of their great qualities, but also of their availability in grocery stores.

"The spring and summer seasons always bring excitement to Stemilt. People spend a lot of their free time on social media sites, and we look forward to sharing this year's harvest with this growing social community," said Pepperl.



facebook.com/Stemilt



twitter.com/Stemilt



blog.stemilt.com



youtube.com/user/Stemilt



### **Kestrel houses in the orchard**

One of the biggest threats to cherries is birds, as they view cherries as a tasty snack just like people do. In order to deter small birds from entering the orchard, several Stemilt growers have put up Kestrel houses. These simple wood houses attract Kestrel families, which are small falcons native to the Northwest. The presence of Kestrels in the orchard deters smaller birds from causing damage to cherries. It's a natural way to control bird populations and ensure only the best cherries are sent to your stores.



# World Famous Farming — from — World Famous Places



**Douglas Family  
Organic Orchards  
Pasco, WA**

# Grilled Chicken

with **Cherry** and

# Nectarine Salsa

**Ingredients**

2 fresh nectarines  
1 cup fresh cherries  
2 tablespoons fresh cilantro  
1 tablespoon lime juice  
Salt, to taste  
4 chicken breasts

**Procedure**

Peel and dice nectarines into small pieces and place in a mixing bowl. Pit and chop cherries into small pieces and add to nectarines pieces. Chop cilantro fine and add to fruit. Add lime juice and salt, stirring until all the fruit is coated with the lime juice. Let sit at room temperature until the chicken is finished cooking. Grill the chicken breasts until done through, put on plates, and serve topped with the salsa.

**Nutrition Information per serving:**

186 Calories; 28 g Protein; 2 g fat; 0 g saturated fat; 68 mg cholesterol; 101 mg sodium; 2 g dietary fiber; 11 g sugar

**Serves 4**



# the superfood powers of sweet cherries

Cherries are well-known for having dessert-like flavors and people can't seem to get enough of this ruby colored fruit when it's in season during the spring and summer months. One thing that is not common knowledge about cherries is that they are packed with nutrients which make them a powerful superfood. One cup of sweet cherries has just 90 calories and is a good source of fiber and vitamin C. In this article, we'll go into detail about the various health benefits and research on sweet cherries. Sweet cherries aren't just a delectable snack, but also a great food to include in a healthy diet.

## Antioxidants

According to WebMD, sweet cherries are among the top 20 antioxidant rich food sources. Cherries come in at #15 on the list with the capacity to hold 4,873 antioxidants in a standard one cup serving. Antioxidants are molecules found naturally in foods that may protect cells from damage during oxidation, a chemical reaction in the body that can produce free radicals. These radicals start a chain reaction and if that reaction occurs in a cell, it can severely damage or kill the cell. Oxidative stress is the cause of many diseases and the antioxidants found in foods are a great way to combat the stress.

Cherries contain several different antioxidants, including: melatonin, phenols, quercetin, and a flavonoid called anthocyanin. Anthocyanins give cherries that deep red to purple skin and flesh. Research suggests that anthocyanins may protect against cancer, aging and neurological diseases, inflammation, diabetes, bacterial infections, and fibrocystic breast disease.



## Melatonin

Melatonin is a natural hormone made by the pineal gland in your brain that helps regulate sleep. During the day, the pineal gland is inactive but as it turns dark outside at night, it is turned on and begins to produce melatonin. Melatonin is released into the blood and a person starts to feel less alert, or sleepy. The melatonin levels remain elevated in the blood for about 12 hours, allowing for the body to rest and rejuvenate for the next day.

Cherries are one of just a few food sources that naturally contain melatonin. Because melatonin affects sleep, there are some instances in life where adding melatonin to the diet may be helpful. For instance, research suggests that sleep may be improved when facing issues like jet lag or shift work if melatonin is consumed about 30 minutes before trying to sleep.

Melatonin further aids health when it performs the duties of antioxidants in order to reduce or prevent oxidation from occurring in the body's cells. Research suggests that the melatonin in foods may help maintain optimum brain functioning and could even help deter the onset of age-related chronic diseases like Alzheimer's.

## Vitamin C

A one cup serving of cherries has 16% of the recommended daily dose of vitamin C, a water-soluble vitamin that is essential to keep the body functioning normally and driver in maintaining a healthy immune system. Vitamin C is also a highly effective antioxidant, which means it may help prevent the onset of several chronic diseases.





### Fiber

One cup of cherries contains 3 grams of dietary fiber, an essential ingredient in a healthy diet. It is recommended that adults consume between 20 and 30 grams of fiber each day. Research suggests that a high-fiber diet can prevent constipation, lower the risk for developing digestive disorders, lower cholesterol, control blood sugar, and aid in weight loss.

### Potassium

Cherries are a good source of the nutrient potassium, with approximately 260 milligrams in a one cup serving. The recommended daily dose of potassium for adults is 3,400 milligrams. Potassium is a main electrolyte that keeps the body functioning properly and plays an important role in muscle, heart, kidney, and nerve cell functions. It also works with another electrolyte, sodium, to balance water levels throughout the body.

### Arthritis Relief

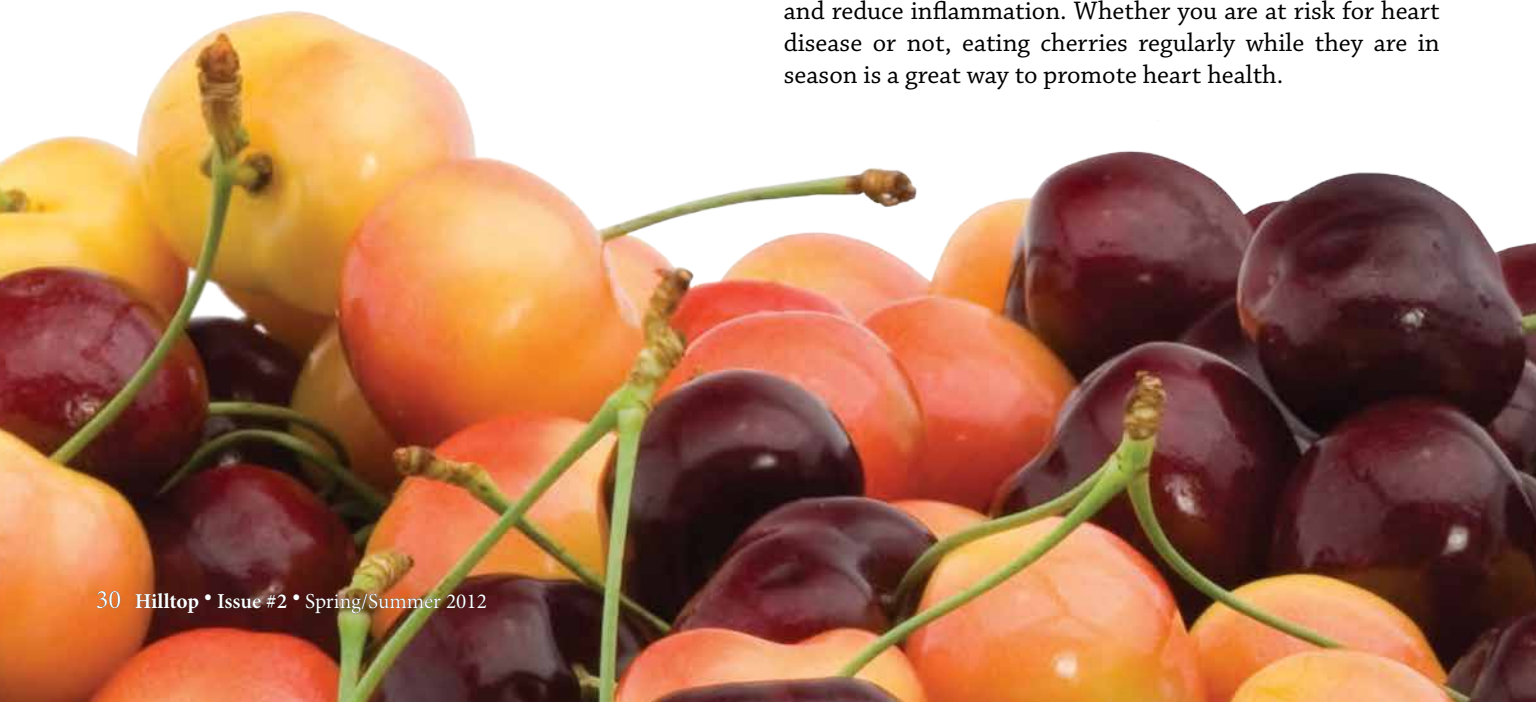
Research suggests that a bowl of cherries may help alleviate pain and inflammation associated with arthritis and gout, the most severe form of arthritis. A gout attack occurs when excessive amounts of uric acid, or waste product found in the blood, accumulates in the joints, thereby causing inflammation and pain.

In 2004, researchers at the Agriculture Research Service and University of California-Davis teamed up to study the effects consuming cherries could have on reducing gout or arthritis pains. They found that participants who ate 45 sweet cherries during breakfast significantly decreased their blood plasma levels while simultaneously increasing the amount of uric acid removed through urine. These two changes are signs of a healthy immune system fighting inflammation.



### Heart Health

We've all heard the statistics – cardiovascular (heart) disease is the single leading cause of death in America. In 2008, heart disease caused almost one in every four deaths in the United States. Cherries contain powerful antioxidants called anthocyanins that protect the cells from damage during an interaction with antioxidants. This also serves to protect the heart and surrounding tissue, inhibit plaque formation, and reduce inflammation. Whether you are at risk for heart disease or not, eating cherries regularly while they are in season is a great way to promote heart health.





### **Bone Health**

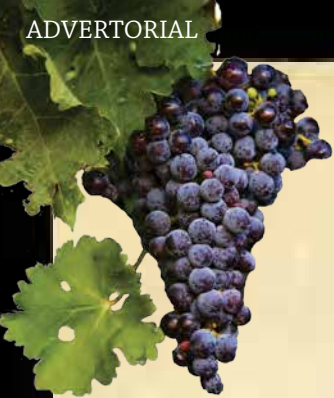
Finally, cherries contain boron, a mineral that helps maintain calcium balance and promotes bone health. Some research suggests that boron may play a role in preventing osteoporosis, a disease in which bones become fragile and more likely to break. The level of boron needed in the diet is not known, but many nutritionists suggest consuming between 3 and 5 milligrams of boron each day. In addition to sweet cherries, boron is found in many other common fruits, leafy vegetables, and legumes.



### **Merchandising Tip:**

This summer, talk about the health benefits of sweet cherries in your stores, while simultaneously featuring the recognizable Fruits & Veggies – More Matters logo. Stemilt is a proud supporter of PBH and their More Matters campaign which encourages Americans to eat more servings of fruits and vegetables. Ask your Stemilt Sales or Marketing Representative how to incorporate health messaging in an upcoming cherry promotion!





# Stemilt Creek Winery

**We love our Wine Club Members!**



Jan and Kyle Mathison reserve the very best of their wines and hospitality for the members of Stemilt Creek Winery Wine Club. Join us as a wine club member and celebrate the joy of fine wine, good friends, and passion for life! As a member for our wine club you receive the following:

- A generous 30% Savings on each Wine Club Release
- 6 bottles of wine shipped 2 times per year (Spring and Fall Wine Club Release)
- 20% off case purchases throughout the year
- 10% off wine purchases throughout the year
- Only wine club members can order from our Library Selection Wines
- Wine Club Members get first rights on available new releases
- Monthly Newsletter
- Invitation to Wine Club Party for Fall Release
- To sign up for the Stemilt Creek Winery Wine club contact:

**[winery@stemiltcreekwinery.com](mailto:winery@stemiltcreekwinery.com)\***

\*Due to Shipping Laws, not all states are open for shipping wine.

Please contact us at [winery@stemiltcreekwinery.com](mailto:winery@stemiltcreekwinery.com) for availability in your state.





It is with great pride that we honor the pioneers who came before us through our wines at Stemilt Creek Winery. Our site-specific wines are harvested near the land planted in the late 1800's by homestead pioneer, Thomas Cyle Mathison. Jan Mathison, our winemaker, lovingly crafts the wines using grapes that Kyle Mathison grows on the same land that his

family has cultivated for over a century. The winemaking style tends to build the wine with brawny tannins to shoulder earthy flavors evident in the unique terrain of Stemilt Hill including the use of Kyle's World Famous Compost. Collectively, Stemilt Creek wines exude brawny characteristics consistently in a coherent full-bodied and lasting flavor much like the intriguing story of the Mathison family legacy.



**A Day's Work - Honors Scottish Pioneer, Thomas Cyle Mathison** - A Day's Work's flavor, structure, and finish can be summed up in the powerful story behind homestead pioneer, Thomas Cyle Mathison. Seizing opportunity to own land, he declared in a strong Scottish accent, "That I cometh to this land with nothing but a days work in me hans." These mighty hands dug ditches, mined for gold, and ultimately planted the seeds for the one of the largest fruit companies in the world. His robust spirit harmonizes with the boldness of this Bordeaux style blend with sturdy structure and a black cherry finish!

**Boss Lady - AJ Mathison** - Spectacular spice balances with a mouthful of black-strap molasses which is held up by a mineral note resembling flint - this wine is dazzling. All full of electricity and pizzazz which dances across the tongue for a long, satisfying finish sure to leave a lasting impression. Don't let all the fun fool you. AJ Mathison, known as Boss Lady, had a fiery fortitude and passion for family and the land. There is a serious side to this 2nd vintage of "Boss Lady" with sturdy tannins, toasted oak, and full flavor finish. Enjoy a sip and let your taste buds tango.

**Caring Passion - TK Mathison** - Passionate. Caring. Focused. Anyone who ever met TK instantly recognized his genuine personality. He introduced himself with confident honesty and finesse - never hiding a thing - he never had to. He knew who he was. His crew and their families knew he cared about them as much as the work and the land. This 2nd vintage of "Caring Passion" resembles that trait introducing itself with pure Merlot characteristics: soft tannins, ripe red cherry, coffee bean, and cassis with a hint of vanilla oak backing up the fruit. Just what a Merlot should be - comfortable - just like TK. Sit with it a while and enjoy.

# 5 ways to boost your cherry category

Fresh cherries are coming to produce departments everywhere soon. Not only do consumers get excited about the availability of these fruits, but cherries are also a welcome item by retailers. That because, on average, cherries make up 4 percent of all produce dollars throughout the United States, even though the fruit is only in season for a short time. This summer, make the most out of your cherry category with these important tips:



**1) Start Early with California Cherries:** Diversity in growing locales means that Stemilt cherries are available in early May from California, and then from Washington through late August. This year, there are more opportunities for California cherries in May than ever before. Capitalize on promotions for high-quality Corals and Bing cherries from Stemilt to start building your category early. Let your Stemilt Sales Rep. steer you in the right timeframe.



**2) Make Rainiers Count for 10% of your Cherry Sales:** Best-in-class retailers focus on this growth item in order to boost their cherry category. The unique Rainier cherry offers consumers a premium eating experience, making it a big ring item that is bound to bring extra dollars to the produce department. Plan a minimum of two ads on Rainiers – one around National Rainier Cherry Day (July 11th) and the other later in July. Round out your Rainier promotions with in-store sales when opportunities arise.



**3) Run a 4 lb. Clamshell Promotion on Dark Sweet Cherries:** Use a large consumer pack to drive extra sales in your category. Running a 4 lb. clamshell promotion with dark sweet cherries during the last two weeks of July is a great way to help shoppers feed a crowd during summer activities. Set the promotion up in a satellite location, away from your typical cherry display, and watch your sales spike!



**4) Plan a Higher Priced Retail Ad in Early August:** Traditionally, the late cherry season begins when the upper Stemilt Hill region starts harvesting cherries in late July and early August. Planning a higher priced retail ad for early August is a great way to capture return purchases with your cherry customers. Large, high-quality Sweetheart, Skeena, and Staccato cherries deliver a truly premium eating experience for the consumer, which goes a long way in building your cherry category.

**5) Leave a Lasting Impression with High Elevation Cherries:** Cherry season at Stemilt doesn't end in mid-August. Kyle Mathison's unique Amigos orchard, located between 3,000 and 3,500 feet above sea level near Wenatchee, WA, extends cherry harvest for Stemilt into late August. Not only is cherry quality from these orchards outstanding, but the fruit also comes in its own box to signify the unique high altitude locale it comes from. Share Kyle's passion for growing cherries with your shoppers in order to leave them with a lasting impression that will help you start cherry season strong next year.



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