

# HILLTOP

™ Issue #8 Spring/Summer 2015

meet Skylar Rae® cherries  
recipe for cooling cherries  
face-to-face with Dale Goldy  
sustainable lighting





— SINCE 1964 —

Three ripe, dark red cherries are the central focus of the image. They are arranged in a cluster, with one cherry in the foreground and two slightly behind it. Each cherry has a long, green stem and a single, large, vibrant green leaf attached. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green and yellow, suggesting a natural orchard setting.

**BEST LOCALES  
FAMILY  
GROWN**

**WORLD  
FAMOUS  
TOP VARIETIES**



## OUR STORIES

A century of farming experience and a deep passion for delivering a dessert eating experience set Stemilt cherries apart.

Learn the story of our World Famous Cherries at:

[www.stemilt.com/ourstories](http://www.stemilt.com/ourstories)

Dear Readers,



The summer season is quickly approaching and our countdown is on to the start of the 2015 cherry season. As I write this letter, it's still too early to start predicting the cherry crops, but we have high hopes that Mother Nature will deliver us high-quality crops in both California and Washington.

Inside this issue, you'll find a story on our California cherry program and the significant growth and technology adoption going on there in order to deliver World Famous early season Stemilt cherries. You'll also get acquainted with the newest cherry variety at Stemilt, called Skylar Rae®, and the special story of its discovery and the unique eating experience it delivers.

The technology story for this issue focuses on our cold-chain process for cherries, and specifically the addition of six new jet coolers that have been engineered to quickly and effectively cool cherries prior to shipment. We are eager to use this impressive technology in both California and Washington this year in order to continue working towards our goal of delivering the freshest cherries possible to your stores each and every day.

All in all, it's shaping up to be an exciting season for cherries and summer fruits from Stemilt. We're ready to get our first fruits picked, packed, and off to your stores in order to begin an entire summer of great consumer experiences and sales that elevate your entire department. We can't thank you enough for your business and in partnering with Stemilt on this journey. Let's make it a great summer season!

Onward,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "West Mathison".

West Mathison  
President  
Stemilt Growers

# HILLTOP

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Hilltop is a bi-annual publication dedicated to fresh fruit growing, packing, marketing, and merchandising.

Subscriptions: Free to qualified subscribers around the world.

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## onthecover



Skylar Rae© cherries in morning light ready for harvest.



A large, ripe peach with a gradient of orange and red hues is the central focus of the image. It is surrounded by several vibrant green leaves, some of which are in sharp focus while others are blurred in the background, creating a sense of depth. The overall lighting is bright and natural, highlighting the texture of the peach's skin and the veins on the leaves.

**FLAVORFUL  
ORGANIC  
TREE RIPENED**



## OUR STORIES

Stemilt's entire crop of peaches and nectarines is grown and certified organic. Learn the story of our Artisan Organics summer fruits at:

[www.stemilt.com/ourstories](http://www.stemilt.com/ourstories)



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# a recipe for cooling cherries

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The jet coolers have brought our packed box cooling time down from 12 hours in 2011 to 2 hours today.

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**E**very hour a cherry spends over 40 degrees equals one day of retail shelf life lost.

Since 2011, Stemilt has been researching, testing, and implementing different tactics in order to decrease the amount of time any Stemilt cherry spends over the critical 40 degree threshold.

According to Paul Esvelt, Stemilt distribution manager, the company's production and shipping teams had an assumption in 2011 that better insight and knowledge of cooling cherries could create better results. The mission was simple – develop a recipe for cooling cherries in order to consistently deliver fresh, firm, and high-quality cherries to destinations and consumers worldwide.







The path to achieve the mission was filled with unknowns, but began with a look at packaging, and how it performed during the tunneling process that is used to cool packed and palletized cherries just before shipment.

"We quickly learned that we weren't pulling air through the boxes very well. Tunneling involves the process of forced air cooling, which is the ability to move cold air over a warm surface. Without the ability to pull that cool air through the box, it's difficult to achieve consistent cooling of cherries," said Esvelt.



**CoolFast**

In 2012, Stemilt introduced the CoolFast™ cherry box, which was engineered with increased headroom that cut the time to cool packed boxes in half.

A big crop of cherries in 2013 unveiled another area where cooling could be improved.

"Despite having a consistent box and pallet alignment in each tunnel, there was still variability and inconsistencies in the amount of time it took to cool cherries during tunneling," said Esvelt. "So, we started looking at our equipment, and specifically the 5 horsepower condenser fans we used to cool cherries."

Research in the off-season led Stemilt to demo jet coolers that are specifically engineered for forced air cooling. The technology, from Global Cooling in Pennsylvania, is well-known and used by banana and avocado producers, but had not been tested on tree fruit.

Stemilt demoed a portable jet cooler in the 2014 cherry season and conducted many trials in hopes of achieving the right recipe for cooling. Each jet cooler has twin, 10 horsepower Baldor motors controlled by variable frequency drive and engineered fan blades. Figuring out the right mix of power, speed, and static pressure was essential in consistently cooling every box and every piece of fruit to bring them out at the same temperature (33 degrees) every time.

"Post-harvest cooling is a direct reflection of fruit respiration. If we keep the fruit under 40 degrees, we can achieve a drop in respiration. The jet coolers have brought





our packed box cooling time down from 12 hours in 2011 to 2 hours today. Most importantly, they help us put shelf life back in the retailer's pocket and deliver a better product for consumers to enjoy," said Esvelt.

Stemilt will have 6 portable jet coolers in use for the 2015 cherry season. The portability of each unit means the equipment and technology can be shared between the company's California and Washington operations, and every Stemilt cherry will benefit. Though no calculations have been made yet, the variable frequency drive system on the jet coolers and the fact that fewer cold rooms will be in use to cool cherries will combine to significantly reduce energy use.

The jet cooler technology and Stemilt's "strict and secret" recipe for tunneling cherries has also eliminated the need to use temperature probes to determine the temperature of fruit inside the box. Human error is gone from the cooling process, and what remains is a proven technology to complete Stemilt's industry-leading cold chain process for cherries. For now, that is.

"The journey to deliver the freshest product possible is never over," said Esvelt. "Whether it's in the field with early morning harvest or on-farm hydrocooling, on the packing line with in-line hydrocoolers, or in the tunneling process with jet coolers, the work to keep cherries consistently cool is critical in our ability to maintain fruit freshness, firmness, and flavors. Delivering the best product is what keeps consumers coming back for more, and what we strive to do every day here at Stemilt."



Jet coolers are also being used to cool stone fruit and summer pears at Stemilt. Douglas Fruit has invested in jet coolers to consistently cool its mostly-organic apricots, and all-organic peaches and nectarines. The recipe for cooling is different for each fruit, but the goal to cool fruit quickly and effectively is the same.







# sustainability SHINES at Euclid

Steve Frodsham knows much more about industrial lighting – and specifically LED’s – than he ever thought possible. Last summer, Stemilt’s electrical administrator oversaw the installation of 1,400 light fixtures at the company’s Euclid Street facility in Wenatchee, WA, many of which were energy-efficient LED fixtures on motion sensors.







“  
We expect to save 2.9  
million kilowatt hours  
annually, which is enough  
to power 145 homes.  
”



The capital project was part of Stemilt's ongoing partnership with Chelan County PUD and their ResourceSmart program that offsets energy-efficiency projects for major energy users like Stemilt in order to conserve energy in the form of kilowatt hours.

“We've participated in the program before, and the Euclid lighting project is similar to one that we completed at Olds Station in 2013,” said Frodsham. “However, the big difference this time around was the use of LED lighting, which we found to perform better in cold rooms where forklift traffic is heavy.”

Prior to starting the project, heavy traffic areas were monitored by sensors to see how they would respond to different types of lighting. It was apparent that fluorescent bulbs in controlled atmosphere (CA) rooms where fruit is kept took too long to warm up, and the forklift driver would be long gone before getting the amount of light needed to pick up a bin or pallet of fruit.

“LED's were the answer. They provided a lot more light and took less time to warm up. Motion sensors would help us control the length of time the lights were on, which contributed to greater energy conservation and cost savings,” said Frodsham.

New lighting extended into the fruit packing areas of Euclid Street, where larger fluorescent lights replaced saucer-style lighting to brighten the work environment for employees.

It took just two months to complete the capital project, which included installing LED lights in over 100 CA rooms, and retrofitting or replacing 1,400 lights total, but the positive sustainability impacts are longer lasting.

“We expect to save 2.9 million kilowatt hours annually, which is enough to power 145 homes. We'll see significant energy cost savings each year from the Euclid lighting project, with little to no maintenance costs expected for some time,” said Frodsham. “Another huge benefit that isn't measurable, but very important, is how these lighting upgrades have enhanced the environment our employees work under.”

Stemilt's Responsible Choice program, now in its 26th year, is focused on initiatives that offer environmental, economical, or social benefits. The Euclid lighting project covers all of those bases. Frodsham feels that conservation projects like these are extremely important for companies and individuals to participate in.

“It's a way we can help the next generation,” he said. “In fact, after learning about and seeing the performance, energy efficiency, and lifespan of LED lights, I started replacing old bulbs at my home with LED lights. Even the smallest changes can add up to make a positive and sustainable impact.”









# Stemilt cherries: California style

Welcome to California, the Golden State known for sunshine, Hollywood glitz and glamour, and unique climate conditions that lend well to growing a variety of different crops throughout the year.

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Our success is directly related to the consumer experience. We're working hard every day to grow, pack, and ship cherries from California with world famous qualities. After all, that's the Stemilt way.

”









Among those crops, are sweet California cherries, and each May the Golden State turns its attention to harvesting the red and purple-hued fruits and then shipping them to retail destinations around the world. The start of the California cherry season also marks the start of Stemilt's cherry season, and has since 2003, when the company acquired Chinchiole Fruit Company of Stockton, CA, to become the largest sweet cherry supplier in the nation.

Fast-forward 12 years and as you'd expect, much has changed. New varieties, orchards, and packing technology have all come to fruition over the past decade, and are guiding Chinchiole Stemilt California (CSC) forward as it looks to grow even more high-quality, early season cherries from California in the years to come.

According to CSC's Erick Stonebarger, the company is anticipating to increase cherry volumes by 30% over the next five years. Orchard development is occurring in every growing district – from Bakersfield in the south, to Patterson in the center of the state, and Stockton in the well-known northern cherry growing district – in order to best match up with market demand throughout the season.

The focus is on smaller trees and higher-density plantings of modern varieties. Coral, a low-acid and very sweet red cherry variety is among the varieties that Stemilt is continuing to establish in California, along with Bing, a traditional yet high-quality cherry for California.

"We're among the leading shippers of Coral, which starts in early May and runs through Memorial Day. It's a firm cherry that grows large in size with high dessert flavors, the exact qualities that we are after when looking for varieties to grow," said Stonebarger.

In the field, horticultural practices are driven by quality and overcoming any challenges that a growing district might face. For instance, CSC uses cooling methods in southern district orchards during the summer months in order to create a better environment for the tree to get ample rest and chill during winter.

"Pruning is a major focus in all districts," said Stonebarger. "Since we can't control Mother Nature, it's the single biggest factor that helps us set a crop with fruit in large size profiles. Larger sized fruit goes hand in hand with dessert flavors, and dessert flavors result in consumer satisfaction and repeat sales."

The quality-first focus continues at CSC with the use of mobile hydrocoolers near farming sites to immediately cool cherries following harvest. Modern technology is also abundant at their state-of-the-art facility in Stockton that packs and ships Stemilt cherries from late April to mid-June.

Last year, CSC unveiled a new primary packing line for red cherries equipped with the latest electronic sizing and sorting technology from Unitec. Every cherry that passes







through the optic sizer/grader gets a series of photos taken of its internal and external qualities by high-speed cameras. The photos are routed to a computer, which analyzes and then sizes and sorts the cherry into the pack type that best fits its qualities. Soft, bruised or unmarketable cherries are discarded by the technology, something that is more difficult to do consistently with manual sorting. According to Stonebarger, the new optical technology is all about delivering a consistent, high-quality pack.

“We have 40 lanes to electronically size and sort cherries, and anticipate all of our red cherries to be packed on this line in 2015. The line is efficient and does an exceptional job of delivering both quality and consistency in every finished box,” he said.



Leading up to the 2015 California cherry season, CSC is enhancing Line 1 once again by expanding its capacity to pack clamshells in order to continue providing consumers with convenient, grab-and-go packs that also ring easily at the cash register.

Whether in the field or at the packing facility, the mission for CSC in delivering early season Stemilt cherries from California is clear – consistently deliver a great eating experience to the consumer by producing large, fresh, and firm cherries with dessert flavors.

“Our success is directly related to the consumer experience. We’re working hard every day to grow, pack, and ship cherries from California with world famous qualities. After all, that’s the Stemilt way,” said Stonebarger.





# red, white & blue sweet cherry bites

*Patriotic sweet cherry bites that are easy to prep and perfect for July 4th celebrations.*



Serves: 12 (makes approximately 3 dozen bites, 3 bites per person)

### **Ingredients**

1 pound fresh Stemilt cherries, pitted  
6 ounces mini white chocolate baking chips (about 1 cup)  
2 tablespoons vegetable shortening  
1/3 cup dark blue sanding sugar (candy sprinkles, nonpareil candy, crystal sugar all work)

### **Procedure**

Heat white chocolate and vegetable shortening in a double boiler over medium high heat. (Create a double boiler by placing a glass bowl over a pot filled with 1 to 2 inches of water. The water, once boiling, should not touch the bottom of the glass bowl.) Using a wooden spoon, stir chocolate and shortening intermittently, until chocolate melts completely and is fully incorporated with shortening. Set aside to cool to room temp.

Meanwhile, pit cherries (if preferred). Pour blue sugar crystal candy into a low rimmed bowl. Working with one cherry at a time, hold cherry by the stem and dip into white chocolate, covering 3/4 of the fruit. Lift from chocolate and dip a second time. Hold fruit up over bowl for a few seconds to allow excess chocolate to drip away. Transfer fruit to sugar crystals and tip bottom of cherry a few times, until nicely coated. Place on a wax paper- or parchment-lined baking sheet to set. Continue with remaining cherries. Serve immediately.

(Pitted cherries should be served once prepped; non-pitted cherries will keep nicely in the fridge for a few hours.)

Note: Recipe assumes approximately 40 cherries in one pound (whole, unpitted)

### **Nutritional Information:**

Per Serving: Calories 133.3 (40.5% from fat); Fat 6g (sat 3g, poly 0g, mono 0g); Protein 0.5g; Carbohydrates 12.0g; Fiber 0.5g; Sugar 18.2g; Cholesterol 0mg; Potassium 35.0mg; Sodium 10.0mg.



# meet Skylar Rae® Cherries

“There’s a rainbow at the end of every storm.” These well-known lyrics by singer-songwriter Marty Stuart hold special meaning around the story of how Skylar Rae® brand Tip Top cultivar cherries came to be.

Skylar Rae® is the brand name for a new bi-colored cherry variety that will be packed and marketed exclusively by Stemilt in North America.

With unique DNA, Skylar Rae® cherries are truly special. In 2002, the cherry was discovered growing by chance on a tree at the Toftness family’s Tip Top Orchards located up Halverson Canyon in Wenatchee, WA. A rarity in nature, the chance variety with unknown parentage produced a beautiful red-orange over yellow bi-colored cherry with incredible firmness levels and the highest sugars of any known sweet cherry variety.







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People often compare  
the sweetness of  
Skylar Rae® cherries  
to candy.

”



"Given that Skylar Rae® is a bi-colored cherry, we were amazed by its exceptional firmness levels. It's the firmest and sweetest cherry variety that we pack, and those two characteristics usually don't go hand-in-hand. With sugar, or Brix, levels ranging between 23-25, it's the sweetest cherry you'll ever eat," said West Mathison, Stemilt president.

The discovery of the new cherry came shortly after Troy and Kim Toftness had suffered the unimaginable loss of their infant daughter, Skylar Rae Toftness. Skylar Rae's grandpa, Jack Toftness, was working in the family orchard one rainy day and looked up to the sky teary-eyed to see a beautiful rainbow come down over the hill. The rainbow was a source of healing for him, and became a symbol for the family to find comfort that Skylar Rae was always with them.

A little while later, the family discovered a tree growing a very different looking cherry in their orchard. Usually, new cherry varieties found in nature by chance are not viable for commercial production, but after further testing, unique genetics and characteristics would make this special cherry a rare exception.

The Toftness family patented the new cherry variety and developed a trademark name for it.

"We truly believe the discovery of this new cherry variety was a gift from nature meant to honor our daughter," said Kim Toftness. "When it came time to give this cherry a brand name, the entire family – including our children, Brock and Brylee, unanimously agreed it should be called Skylar Rae®."

Aside from the special story behind the discovery of Skylar Rae® cherries, flavor and firmness are what makes this new cherry stand out from the crowd.

"People often compare the sweetness of Skylar Rae® cherries to candy," said Mathison. "They have a crisp bite and incredible dessert flavors, which combines to deliver a truly unique and gourmet eating experience."

Like any rare treat, Skylar Rae® cherries are only in season for a limited time each year. Harvest begins in Mattawa, WA in mid-June and wraps up in the high-elevations of Wenatchee by mid or late July. Though crop volumes will remain limited in 2015, Stemilt has hundreds of acres in the ground in Washington State, and expects Skylar Rae® volumes to rival that of its Rainier cherries by 2020.





“We see Skylar Rae® as the next big cherry variety at Stemilt, and couldn’t be more excited about bringing more and more to market in the coming years,” said Mathison.

Beginning in 2015, Skylar Rae® cherries will be sold under a unique PLU number (3448) to become a third SKU in the cherry category (dark-sweet and Rainier make up the remaining SKU’s). Stemilt has two pack styles for Skylar Rae® - a glossy, high-graphic, 1.25 pound pouch bag, and a new dome-style 1-pound clamshell.

“The new clamshell has a similar look to those used for cherry tomatoes,” said Roger Pepperl, Stemilt marketing director. “It was designed to elevate the product on display, while maintaining stackability and fruit quality. Every Skylar Rae® package has the tagline ‘The Sweetest Cherry You’ll Ever Eat™’ prominently placed so that consumers know what makes this premium item so special, and what to expect when they bite into each one.”

Just like the colors of a rainbow set against blue skies, the future is definitely bright for Skylar Rae®, the special cherry with a very special story.





# face-to-face with Dale Goldy



**In this second edition of Face-to-Face, I sat down with Dale Goldy, Assistant General Manager for Stemilt Ag Services, to talk orchard management, new varieties, and the question that he asks himself each time he tastes a new apple.**

**Brianna:** When did you start working in the fruit business and in what capacity?

**Dale:** My Dad was an orchard fieldman and I grew up living and working in our family's small orchard. At age 12, I started working for a neighbor and completed lots of different orchard jobs – from blossom thinning nectarines to pruning little trees. I remember one spring break, he showed me a pile of PVC pipe and trenches that had been dug and told me to put the water system together. I explained to him that I didn't know how, and his reply was simple: "By the time you are done, you'll know how." That learn-as-you-go mentality served me very well when I leased my first cherry orchard my senior year of high school.

**Brianna:** Wow, an orchard manager before you even graduated high school! Where did that take you?

**Dale:** After 3 years of leasing the orchard, it was time to go to college. I went to Central Washington University in Ellensburg, WA to study accounting and finance.

**Brianna:** Following college, did you put your degree to use?

**Dale:** Not exactly. I was asked to lease the same cherry orchard again my senior year of college, and so I did that. That led to me purchasing my first orchard in 1989. Accounting and finance skills are helpful when managing a business, but day-to-day the horticultural skills were the ones I needed the most.

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**Brianna:** What did you grow in your orchard?

**Dale:** The orchard I purchased was in need of replanting and I was intrigued by high-density plantings that weren't common in the U.S. yet. I fell in love with Fuji apples, and planted those, among other new varieties. This led me to start growing my own trees (bench grafts) in the shop. This was around 1996, and my high-density orchards had about 1800 trees per acre.

**Brianna:** How did you get involved with Stemilt?

**Dale:** I started bringing my fruit to Stemilt as an independent grower in 1996. In 2001, I sold off my orchards and began managing Andy Gale's (now Stemilt VP of Grower Relations) orchards. I rolled in much of what I had been doing as an independent grower and by 2006, became involved in Stemilt's variety testing program. I joined the Stemilt team as Assistant General Manager of Stemilt Ag Services in 2007.





“  
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drive our decisions  
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”

**Brianna:** What are you focused on today at Stemilt Ag Services?

**Dale:** It varies day-to-day, but I spend a lot of time during harvest looking at the fruit coming in from our company-managed orchards to see how we are progressing on maturity. We have to get the right fruit picked at the right time and want to maximize the fruit's ability to be in season-long storage. There is a lot of strategy involved in harvest management that I guide our area managers on. We can't sacrifice fruit quality as consumers won't be satisfied with marginal fruit, and so our goal every day is to deliver a high-quality eating experience.

**Brianna:** You are also very involved with Stemilt's new variety development program. What are you looking for when researching and testing new varieties to potentially bring to market?

**Dale:** There are many great apples being bred, but the challenge with each one is that we have to take them from a breeding environment to one where we grow them commercially. They don't come with an operator's manual, and so we have to write a few chapters of that during our testing process. Our experiences formulate our new variety testing program. We capture as much data on new varieties and work to understand their growth characteristics before we decide to farm the fruit commercially. Testing takes time, but it's important because we get a better idea of how a variety will perform in our growing environment. We learn how we can shorten its juvenile window, when fruit maturity is difficult to predict. We get a better idea of how to plant and care for it.

**Brianna:** Is it safe to say that new variety development is your favorite part of the job?

**Dale:** Definitely. Bringing a new variety to market is exciting and challenging. I ask myself daily, "what does it take to gain attention over Honeycrisp?" Consumers love that apple, and for us, it's the new bar we compare new apple varieties to. We have to find varieties that are different enough to generate consumer interest, and that we feel confident are better than Honeycrisp.

**Brianna:** What are you most excited about when it comes to the future of Stemilt?

**Dale:** I'm most excited about where our varietal mix is heading, and who is guiding the process. We don't have an expectation of what it will be. We are letting consumers drive our decisions on what to plant. The expectations they have for fruit flavor and quality are what we plan to grow.

**Brianna:** What is your favorite Stemilt fruit?

**Dale:** Cherries. From April to August, I leave my house, located at 3,500 feet in elevation outside of Wenatchee, and over the course of the day, I see the entire cherry season. You have to love cherries with the amount of time and work spent to grow them.

**Brianna:** When you step into an orchard, what's the first thing you look at?

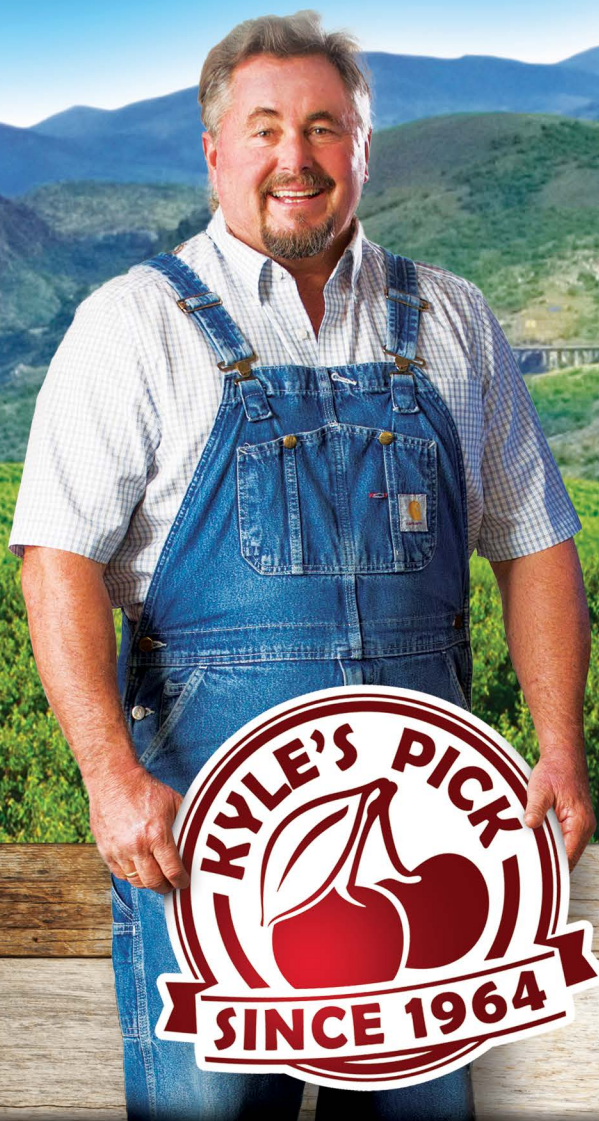
**Dale:** The crop load on the tree. It drives predictability around the quality of fruit we will get. We work hard to have consistent cropping on balanced trees, as that's the key to achieving the best quality in storage and on the shelf. There's no better feeling than a great consumer response to a piece of fruit you grew.





# KYLE'S PICK™ CHERRIES

STEMILT'S  
PROGRAM  
FOR PREMIUM  
CHERRIES



WHAT ARE  
**KYLE'S PICK™**  
CHERRIES?



Kyle's Pick is a Stemilt signature program for premium cherries. We reserve our **top cherry varieties** and **largest-sized** fruits with **dessert flavors** for specially marked Kyle's Pick packs during July and early August.

After all, those are the exact qualities that fourth generation Stemilt cherry grower Kyle Mathison strives to grow and harvest at his own orchards on the legendary Stemilt Hill in Wenatchee, WA.



# Fresh Blenders™

## tap into juicing and smoothie trend





# THE NATURAL START TO ANY JUICE OR SMOOTHIE!

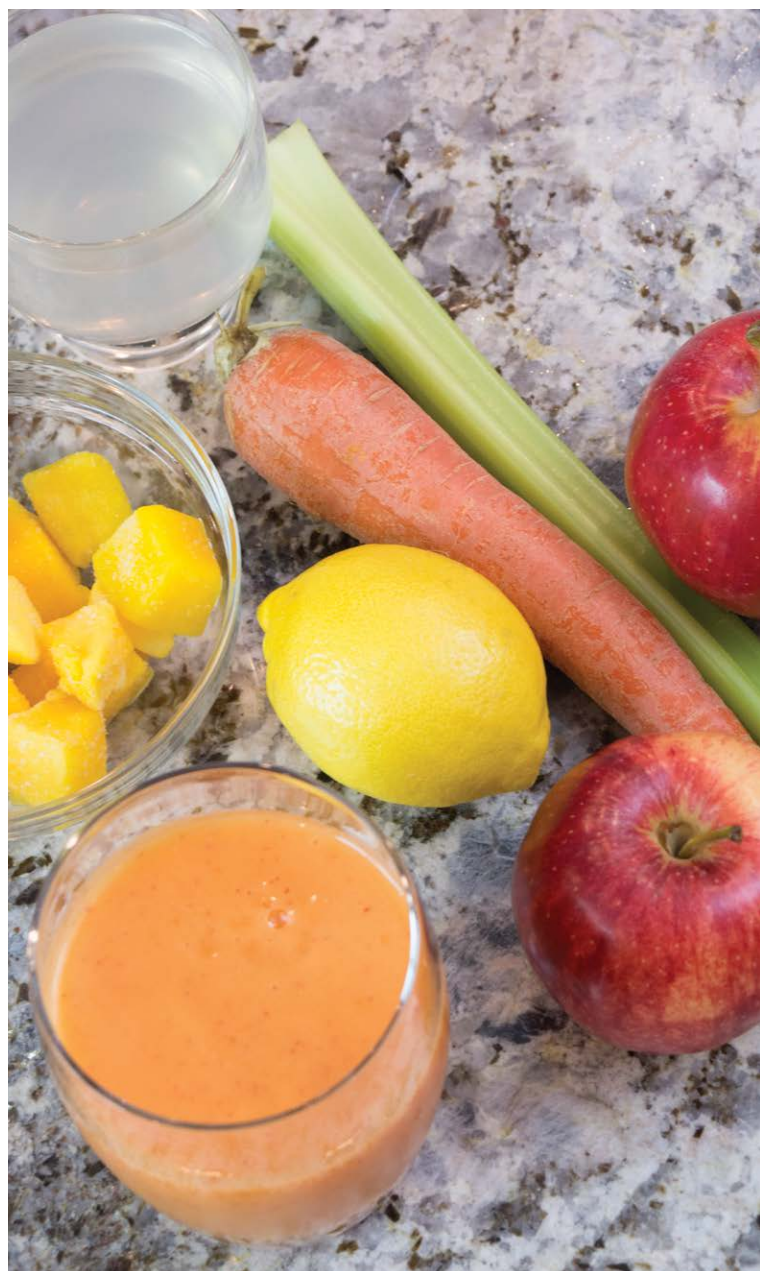
The sweet and tart flavors of Stemilt apples are adding a nutritious bite to smoothies and juice blends made at home, thanks to the company's latest new product line, Fresh Blenders™. Launched this past October, Fresh Blenders™ are 5lb. blender-shaped pouch bags of apples specifically targeted to the growing number of consumers that juice or blend fruits and vegetables.

According to NPD Group data, blenders, juicers, and food processors are the top-growing small kitchen appliance category, with blenders and juicers contributing to more than \$1 billion in sales in 2013. Making fresh-pressed juice or smoothies at home is a budget-friendly way to get several servings of fruits and vegetables at once and reap the many nutritional benefits each one provides. Apples fit in well for both juicing and blending smoothies because they contain sugars and acids for balanced flavors, fiber and essential nutrients, and have a unique flesh that breaks apart and adds a frothy consistency to the beverage.

"As one of the healthiest foods in the grocery store, apples are the perfect base ingredient for any juice or smoothie creation," said Roger Pepperl, Stemilt marketing director. "Fresh Blenders™ directly market to those who blend and juice by delivering a convenient, grab-and-go pack at a value price."

The Fresh Blenders™ package is different from any five-pound bag of apples on the market today. The resealable pouch bag is long and narrow – just like a blender – and designed to stand up vertically for easy display at retail and in the refrigerator at home. The bright color of both the sweet and tart bags catch the eye, while the tagline "the natural start to any juice or smoothie," and a large illustrated blender filled with apples and other popular blending items tell the consumer exactly how to use the fruit inside the bag at home. The bags are shipped in a Fresh Blenders™ display-ready carton with a lid that pops off easily.

"The packaging is bright and fun, and the case it ships in self-stacks for building a quick display at retail. Fresh Blenders™ are ideal for refrigerated endcap displays, and can be easily promoted alongside other key smoothie and juice items like kale and carrots in order to make a juicing destination in the produce department. Smoothie and juice makers are your very best customers because they have to purchase a lot of fruits and vegetables each week in order to create a daily blend. Catering to them through great merchandising is the way to build cross-category sales," said Pepperl.





Stemilt packs Fresh Blenders™ in both sweet and tart flavors. The varieties available for sweet are: Gala, Fuji, Red Delicious, and Golden Delicious. The varieties available for tart are: Braeburn, Granny Smith, and Pink Lady® brand apples. On the back of every bag, Stemilt includes a recipe that fits the flavor profile of the fruit inside, including the “ABC Smoothie” with apples, bananas, and carrots. Every package features the Mathison family, who own and operate Stemilt, and the message “from our orchards to you” in order to tie the consumer back to the farm these fruits came from.

The varieties packed in Fresh Blenders™ bags makes this a year-round product line, which Pepperl believes, has greater appeal as the weather warms.

“Spring and summer are great seasons to promote Fresh Blenders™ because warmer temperatures cause more consumers to have making a smoothie or juice blend on their minds,” said Pepperl. “Promoting Fresh Blenders™ drives tonnage and sales for the apple category, and will certainly benefit summer fruit categories as consumers look to create healthy blends with a variety of different fruits and veggies.”

Stemilt has many merchandising tactics that retailers can deploy to introduce Fresh Blenders™ at their stores, including the potential to bring a “Blender Bike” into select stores so that customers can test the product in a fun and unique way.

“Though the packaging markets directly to an already established crowd, we think promoting Fresh Blenders™ in stores will also attract new people to juice or to making smoothies at home. From social media to contests and more, we have all the tools to help make Fresh Blenders™ a success at your stores,” said Pepperl.

Fresh Blenders™ have even earned praise from Jonah Berger, the New York Times best-selling author of the book *Contagious*, for the product’s ability to resonate with today’s health-conscious consumers.

“As a smoothie maker myself, I think Fresh Blenders™ is a great idea. It taps into the growing trend of blending and juicing with a healthy, fresh, and easy to use ingredient like apples,” said Berger.



For more information about Fresh Blenders™, contact your Stemilt Representative or visit [www.stemilt.com/freshblenders](http://www.stemilt.com/freshblenders)





## Premium High-Altitude Cherries

*A half-mile closer to the moon*



# WHAT ARE MOON CHERRIES?

Moon cherries are the **last premium Stemilt cherries of the season** and are **harvested fresh daily** from mid-August through Labor Day by fourth generation Stemilt cherry grower Kyle Mathison. These cherries come from unique locales like **Amigos Orchards** in Wenatchee, WA, a dream high-altitude growing site located between 2,500 and 3,200 feet above sea level — **literally a half mile closer to the moon!**

Moon cherries are the result of Kyle's horticultural expertise that focuses on everything from **compost** to **lunar cycles** and a deep **passion** for growing cherries with **world famous qualities**.



# fresh peach cake

*Delight your guests with a dessert that brings peach flavor front and center.*

*Serves 6 to 8*

## Ingredients

4 to 5 large Stemilt Artisan Organic peaches (or nectarines), peeled, pitted, cut into ½" slices  
 ½ cup firmly packed brown sugar, plus 2 tablespoons  
 ¼ teaspoon freshly squeezed lemon juice, divided  
 1 ½ sticks unsalted butter (or vegan buttery sticks), softened, divided  
 ½ cup plain Greek yogurt (or plain coconut milk, non-dairy "yogurt"), divided  
 2 eggs  
 ½ teaspoon lemon extract  
 ½ teaspoon vanilla extract  
 1 ½ cups all-purpose flour  
 ¾ cup granulated sugar  
 ¼ teaspoon baking soda  
 ½ teaspoon baking powder  
 ½ teaspoon kosher salt  
 2 tablespoons apricot jam  
 1 tablespoon water

## For peachy cream whipped topping:

1 large Stemilt Arisan Organic peach, peeled, pitted, quartered  
 1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice  
 1 pint heavy whipping cream (about 2 ½ cups)  
 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract  
 1/3 cup powdered sugar

## Procedure

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.

Sprinkle 2 tablespoons brown sugar in the bottom of a 9" round cake pan. Set aside.

In a large pan set over medium heat, combine remaining ½ cup brown sugar, ½ stick softened butter, 1/8 teaspoon of fresh lemon juice. Cook, stirring intermittently, until sugar has completely dissolved and mixture has reduced just a bit, about 1 minute. Add sliced peaches to pan and mix through gently to coat with sugar mixture. Remove from heat and set aside to cool.

Meanwhile, whisk ¼ cup yogurt, remaining 1/8 teaspoon fresh lemon juice, 2 eggs, lemon extract, and vanilla extract in a bowl to combine. Set aside.

In another bowl, beat flour, granulated sugar, baking soda, baking powder, salt, remaining ¼ cup yogurt, and remaining stick of butter, until fully combined. Add egg mixture and continue beating until fully incorporated. Set aside.

Arrange cooled peaches in bottom of brown-sugar sprinkled baking pan, slightly overlapping slices (in a swirl pattern beginning from center of pan; concentric circles; or, as preferred); drizzle any remaining juices otop. Then top peaches with batter, carefully spreading to cover fruit and "seal" to edge of pan. Bake for 30 to 35 minutes, until golden and toothpick inserted in center removes clean. Remove from oven and set on rack to cool for 15 to 20 minutes. Then run a butter knife carefully around perimeter of cake to loosen sides, if necessary. Place a flat plate on top of baking pan and carefully invert cake onto pan. Carefully pull baking pan off cake to allow cake to gently transfer to plate. Set aside to continue cooling.





Meanwhile, heat apricot jam and water in a small pot over medium heat, stirring intermittently, until jam completely dissolves. Continue cooking to reduce some; about 30 -60 seconds, until it resembles a loose glaze. Remove from heat to cool. Once cooled to room temp, use a pastry brush to lightly brush top of cake (this will give your fruit a nice glistened appearance). Serve cake with peachy cream whipped topping, if desired.

**Recipe for peachy cream whipped topping:**

Blend quartered peach and lemon juice in pitcher of high speed blender, until completely puréed. Set aside.

Meanwhile, pour whipping cream into a deep bowl and beat on high until cream just begins to form soft peaks. Add powdered sugar and extract and continue to beat until stiff peaks form. Gently fold in peach purée. Serve immediately or cover and refrigerate (up to 24 hours, but always best served after whipping).

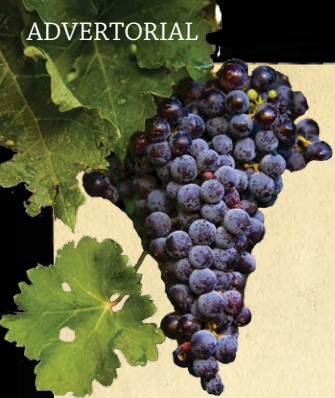
**Nutritional Information (based on 10 servings)\*:**

Per Serving: Calories 304.3 (20.1% from fat); Fat 6.8g (sat 3.0g, poly 0.5g, mono 0.4g); Protein 9.4g; Carbohydrates 53.4g; Fiber 3.8g; Sugar 19.8g; Cholesterol 0.0mg; Potassium 376.7mg; Sodium 83.2mg.

\* not including whipped topping.







# 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. Full of electricity and pizzazz, it 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.





# all eyes on video

2015 has been dubbed as “The Year of Video Marketing” as more companies work to **show** their story instead of telling it. According to Cisco, video is becoming so popular that it's expected to account for 74% of all internet traffic by 2017. There are more than 100 hours of video uploaded to YouTube every minute, and perhaps most importantly, the average U.S. consumer spends a whopping 24 minutes a day watching online video, which is more time than any other digital media activity except social media and email.

In a world where creating original content is vital to marketing success, **creating original video content is now king**. So, how does a produce department respond to the growing use of video to market its products? With an array of brightly colored, fresh, and healthy foods to promote, the options are endless.

## 7 Tips For Createing Engaging Videos in the Produce Department

- 1. Make sure video is part of your social strategy.** Smartphones make capturing video easier than ever, yet without a good strategic plan in place around video, chances are greater to have a mish-mash of videos, rather than a consistent and authentic storytelling piece.
- 2. Show shoppers the unknown.** Content marketing is all about sharing your expertise with your audience, and video marketing should be no different. The good news is that the produce department has a great story to show. Use video to tell shoppers about the attributes of a new apple variety, or how to select and prep an exotic produce item. The knowledge you instill in shoppers could translate to more sales!
- 3. Keep the video short.** Statistics show that 65% of video viewers watch more than ¾ of a video. But lengthy videos deter people from watching videos altogether. It's best to keep every video short and to the point.
- 4. Share it on your blog, on social networks, and even in email marketing.** Simply using the word video in email subject lines has been found to boost open rates by 18.5%. Video is a great tactic to use with your email marketing campaigns, and should also be shared on any social platform you are on.
- 5. Make sure your videos are casual.** Avoid making your produce manager “suit up” to film a video segment. Instead, focus on keeping the people and environment shown in your video as natural and casual as possible. Casual equals authentic in the eyes of consumers.
- 6. Create video with mobile users in mind.** This probably goes without saying, but with 1/3 of web traffic now coming from smartphones/tablets, be sure to keep mobile devices in mind as you create a new video.
- 7. Have fun!** You're promoting the freshest, healthiest products in the supermarket. Have fun creating videos with upbeat music, modern graphics, and if you use a spokesperson, someone that is comfortable on film and excited about the vision of your video.



# Social Media



## Expand Your Consumer Outreach with PBH's Social Media Channels!

Read our daily PBH Facebook posts for the latest news, tips, and information about fruit and veggies (232,000+ likes).

Join our Twitter parties on the first Wednesday of each month for seasonal fruit and vegetable information and ideas.

Follow us on Twitter for healthy recipes and menu planning.

Let PBH retweet your fruit and vegetable tips and recipes (35,200+ Twitter followers).

Post fruit and veggie tips, images, and videos on our Pinterest board (6,000+ users).

To find out more about how we can assist you in your own social media outreach, contact PBH at [CorpComm@PBHFoundation.org](mailto:CorpComm@PBHFoundation.org).





# parting shot

Peach heaven.







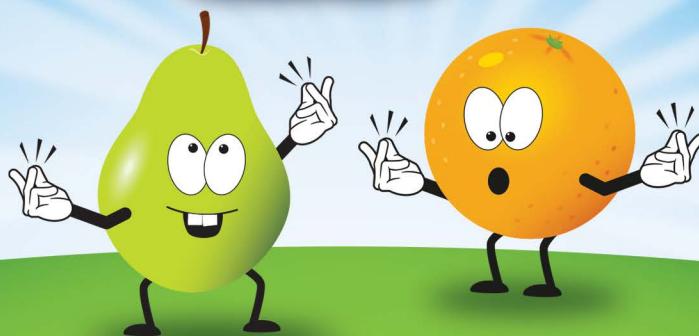
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# Lil Snappers™

kid size fruit



## Tasty, snappy, and perfectly sized for the lil ones in your life



### Two great companies, one great brand!

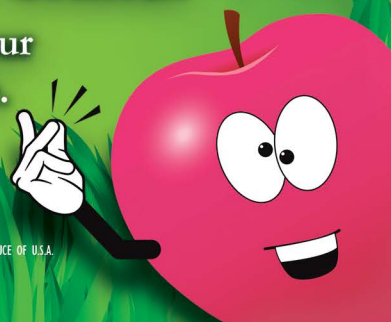
For additional information, please contact your  
local Stemilt or Sunkist sales representative.

— APPLES, PEARS & CITRUS —



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