

2024



THE CHERRY CONSUMER

Understanding the cherry consumer, an online survey
by Stemilt + Category Partners

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OVERVIEW

In June 2024, Stemilt and Category Partners conducted an online survey of 2,001 U.S. consumers who confirmed they purchased cherries during the summer cherry season. The goal of the study was to learn consumer perceptions, preferences and behaviors regarding cherry purchases.

KEY FINDINGS

PRICE, QUALITY AND FLAVOR ARE THE TOP PURCHASING DECISIONS FOR CHERRY CONSUMERS.

Consumers rate flavor as the #1 attribute they look at when deciding to buy cherries, but health benefits are also a key factor for most cherry shoppers.

CHERRIES ARE AN IMPULSE PURCHASE

Cherries are bought on impulse by 58% of shoppers, however heavy cherry buyers are more likely to plan their cherry purchase.

CHERRY SHOPPERS START PURCHASING EARLY IN THE SEASON

Nearly 2/3 of cherry shoppers start buying cherries by early June, and nearly all start buying cherries by early July.

CHERRY SHOPPERS KEEP BUYING IN THE LATE SEASON

54% of cherry shoppers buy through the end of August. Only 16% stop buying cherries before August.

PRICE IS A CHERRY PURCHASING BARRIER BUT PRICING TOO LOW REDUCES LIKELINESS TO BUY

High price is the #1 barrier to purchasing cherries BUT pricing cherries too low makes consumers question the quality and flavor of the cherries.

CHERRY CONSUMERS ARE LOYAL, BUT WHEN UNAVAILABLE THEY WILL WAIT, VISIT OTHER STORES, OR SWITCH TO ANOTHER FRUIT.

When cherries are out of stock, half of respondents wait until the next shopping trip to buy, 25% go to another store to buy, and 33% switch to another fruit.

RAINIER/YELLOW CHERRIES HAVE OPPORTUNITY GAPS ACROSS THE U.S.

Approximately 26% of survey respondents buy Rainier/Yellow cherries and 13% state these are their favorite type of cherry. However, Rainier/Yellow only make up 6% of cherry volumes across the U.S. in June/July each season. Demand for Rainier/Yellow cherries is strong, and retailers should look to carry them consistently and fill this gap when supplies are available to do so.

STEMILT'S TIPS FOR CHERRY SUCCESS

- 1** Focus your program on quality and flavor as that will drive impulse sales, and consistently delight heavy cherry users.
- 2** Position cherries from California's start to Washington's end. Cherry shoppers buy at all points of the season so carry cherries every week possible.
- 3** Keep cherries in prominent locations within the produce department. Cherry shoppers expect cherries to be in produce and large, easy-to-find displays will help capture the impulse shopper's attention.
- 4** Don't run out of stock! Cherry shoppers switch stores, fruits, or simply wait to make a purchase taking dollars away from your category when cherries aren't available.

THE SHOPPER

PURCHASE & EATING FREQUENCY

During the summer cherry season, about how frequently do you purchase cherries?



Nearly **7 out of 10** cherry shoppers buy every 2 weeks

During the summer cherry season, how frequently do you or others in your household **eat cherries**?

64% A FEW TIMES PER WEEK

CHERRY SEASON

When do you typically start buying cherries?



6 OUT OF 10 CHERRY CONSUMERS ARE BUYING THE FRUIT BY EARLY JUNE

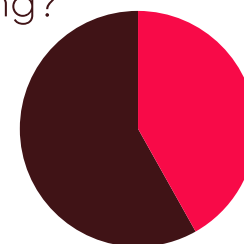
When do you typically **STOP BUYING** cherries?

54% BUY THROUGH LATE AUGUST!

PLANNED VS IMPULSE PURCHASES

Do you more often plan your cherry purchases before you begin shopping or decide to buy them while shopping?

58% Decide to buy while I am shopping



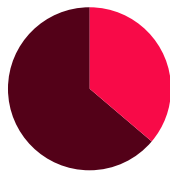
42% Decide to buy before I shop

SHOPPER PREFERENCES

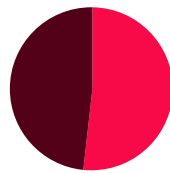
SELECTION DECISION

Outside of quality and price, consumers rate color, variety and fruit size as important selection factors.

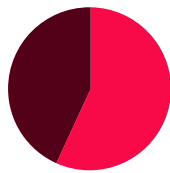
(Please rate each on a scale from 1 to 7, 7 is extremely important and 1 is not at all important)



64%
CHERRY
COLOR



48%
VARIETY/TYPE
of CHERRIES



43%
CHERRY
SIZE

CHERRY CONSUMERS MAY SWITCH CATEGORIES

If you decide to buy cherries, but they are not in stock at your store, what do you do?

41%

Wait until the next shopping trip to buy cherries

34%

Buy a different type of fruit

24%

Go to another store to buy cherries

PURCHASE BARRIERS & MOTIVATIONS

Price, quality, and availability were barriers to purchase mentioned among all respondents.

IMPULSE SHOPPER



SHOPPING LIST SHOPPER

What would get you to buy more cherries?



If I saw them at the store more often

What keeps you from buying more cherries?



Not always available at my store

If you had planned to buy cherries, what would make you NOT buy?



Did not have my preferred type/variety



Cherries were not available/out of stock

VARIETY PREFERENCES

What variety/type of cherry is your favorite?

87%

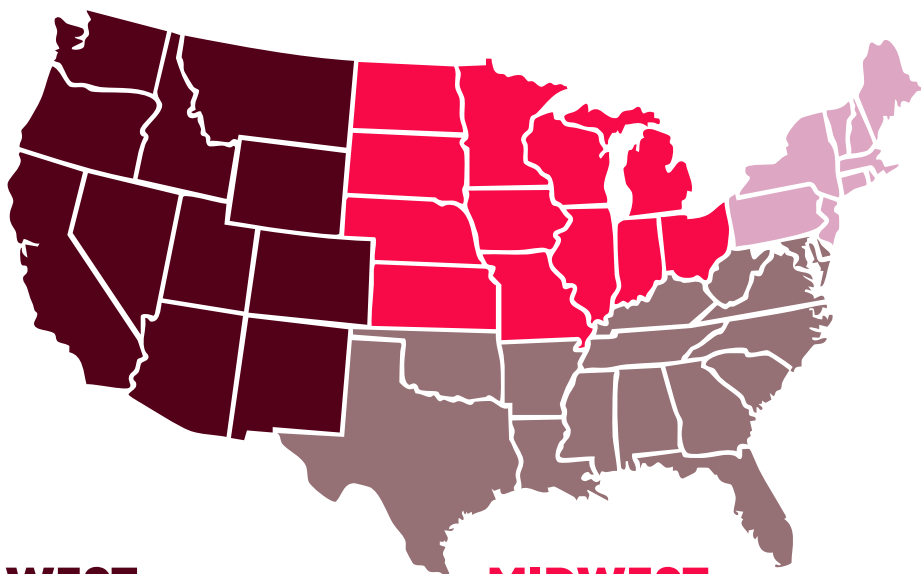
DARK CHERRIES

13%

YELLOW CHERRIES

SHOPPER PREFERENCES

FAVORITE VARIETY BY REGION



WEST

● DARK **78%**
● YELLOW **21%**

Only **9%** of cherry category volume is yellow/Rainier

SOUTH

● DARK **88%**
● YELLOW **12%**

Only **5%** of cherry category volume is yellow/Rainier

MIDWEST

● DARK **89%**
● YELLOW **11%**

Only **6%** of cherry category volume is yellow/Rainier

NORTHEAST

● DARK **92%**
● YELLOW **8%**

Only **3.8%** of cherry category volume is yellow/Rainier

PRICE AND QUALITY

Consumers are more likely to purchase **Dark Sweet** cherries at **\$2.99/lb** than **\$0.99/lb**

88% are very likely + likely to purchase

\$2.99/lb

66%

22%

10%

79% are very likely + likely to purchase

\$0.99/lb

65%

14%

10%

■ Very Likely ■ Likely ■ Neither Likely nor Unlikely ■ Unlikely ■ Very Unlikely

PRICE vs EXPECTATIONS

What would you expect the quality and flavor of **Dark Cherries** to be priced at:

\$0.99/lb 23% 21% 18%

\$2.99/lb 30% 36% 25%

\$4.99/lb 43% 39% 15%

\$6.99/lb 59% 28% 8%

■ Excellent ■ Very Good ■ Good ■ Fair ■ Poor