

Cherry Season

Local harvest some of world's best

Thanks to great growing conditions in the Pacific Northwest, a beautiful summer harvest of cherries was better than expected, according to industry experts. A harvest of mainstream varieties, including Bing and Rainier cherries, peaked around late June, and these sweet northwestern treats will be available in stores through mid-August. Check with your local produce department for availability.

Cherries are a highly sensitive, labor-intensive fruit, and only a few places in the world have the right combination of weather and soil conditions to grow them. In the Pacific Northwest states, warm sunny days combine with cool nights and rich volcanic soil to produce some of the best cherries in the world.

More than 2,500 growers from these four states work year-round to produce the region's famous fruit.

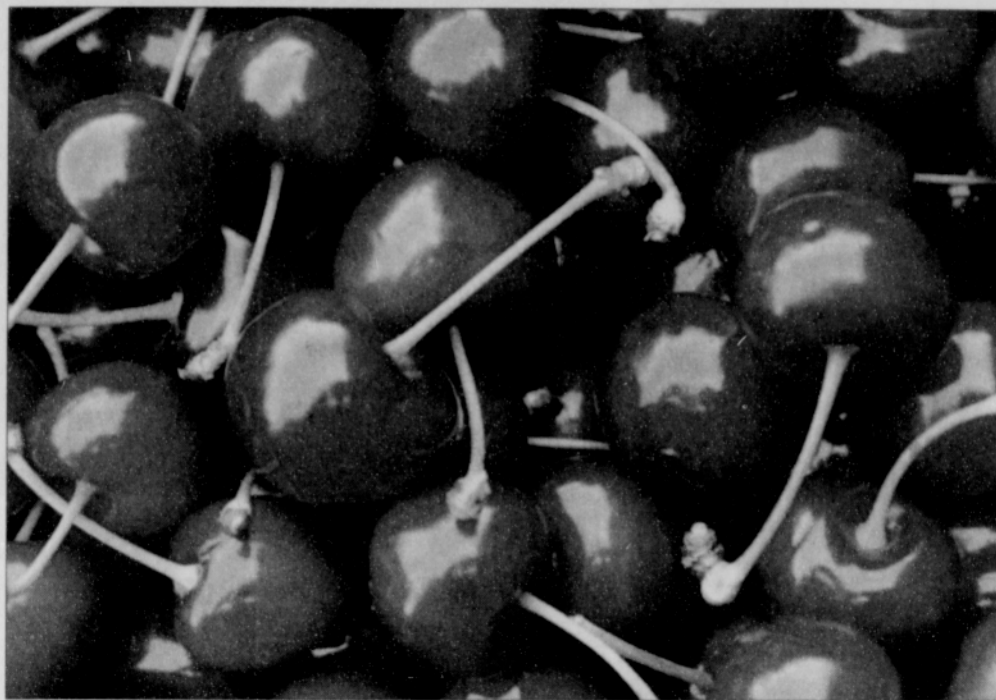
"Cherries are one of the few truly seasonal crops left," said B.J. Thurlby, President of the Washington State Fruit Commission. "So if you don't buy them during the summer, they're gone for another year. But if the weather cooperates, more cherries may be sold from the Northwest in July this year than ever before."

Selecting cherries

Choose firm, plump, shiny cherries with green stems and avoid cherries that are soft or have brown spots. Keep cherries refrigerated until consuming.

Storing cherries

To best store cherries, refrigerate immedi-



Cherries are now in season with the peak Northwest harvest underway.

ately after purchase. Cherries can be kept fresh in the refrigerator for several days, but avoid placing them in the sun or warm areas, as they soften quickly.

Freezing Cherries

Yield: three to five pounds of cherries
Work with small amounts (three to five pounds) of northwest fresh sweet cherries to allow for quick handling and freezing. Select firm, ripe Northwest sweet cherries.

Rinse and drain cherries thoroughly. Pack according to preferred method and freeze immediately.

Method 1

Whole with stems: Spread cherries with stems intact in a single layer on a baking sheet. Freeze until firm. Pack into freezer-proof containers or plastic freezer bags; remove excess air, cover or fasten tightly and freeze.

Method 2

Dry Sugar Pack: Add 1/3 cup sugar for each pint of pitted or unpitted fresh sweet cherries; toss lightly to coat cherries. Fill freezer containers or bags; shake to pack fruit. Add more cherries to fill containers or bags. Cover tightly and freeze.

Black Cherry-Yam Casserole (Yield: 6 servings)

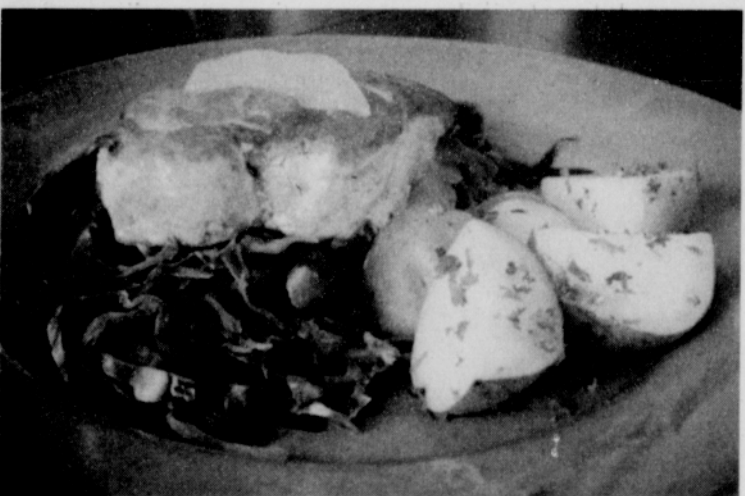
- 1 (40-ounce) can cut yams, drained
- 1/2 cup brown sugar, packed
- 2 teaspoons cornstarch
- 3/4 teaspoon finely grated orange zest
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 cup apricot nectar
- 1 (16-ounce) can pitted dark sweet cherries, drained
- 1 tablespoon margarine
- Heat oven to 375°F. Grease an 11" x 7" baking pan. Arrange yams in pan.

In a saucepan, stir brown sugar, cornstarch, orange zest, salt, cinnamon, and ginger; stir in apricot nectar until smooth. Cook, stirring constantly, until simmering; simmer 2 minutes then remove from heat. Add pitted dark sweet cherries and margarine.

Pour cherry mixture over yams. Bake, uncovered, 30 minutes at 375°F.



A black cherry-yam casserole is an easy and tasty addition to your dinner plate.



Braised Pork Chops with Cabbage and Apples

Serves 4

4 4-ounce lean pork chops without bone

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 small head red cabbage, thinly sliced
- 2 teaspoons thyme
- 3/4 cup apple cider
- 1/2 cup low-sodium chicken broth
- 2 apples, peeled and thinly sliced

1. Brown pork chops lightly in hot olive oil, about two minutes each side. Transfer to a plate, set aside.

2. Add cabbage, thyme, cider, and broth to pan. Bring to a boil.

3. Cover, reduce to simmer, stirring occasionally, 5 minutes.

4. Add apples in a single layer and top with the pork chops.

5. Cover and cook on medium heat until the pork chops are tender but not dry, about 8-10 minutes.

Per serving: 290 calories, 25 gm protein, 19 gm carbohydrate, 12 gm fat, 3 gm sat fat, 5 gm mono fat, 77 mg cholesterol, 3 gm fiber, 67 mg sodium

The secret to perfect pork chops is to start with a thicker center-cut loin chop. They are finished cooking when they are firm to the touch and their juices are slightly pink.

Root Vegetable and Potato Mash

Serves 4

- 3 parsnips, peeled
- 2 medium red potatoes
- 3 carrots, peeled
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1 teaspoon rosemary

1. Chop parsnips, potatoes, carrots, and onion into 1/2 inch cubes.

2. Cover vegetables with water, bring to a boil.

3. Reduce heat and cover pan. Simmer until vegetables are barely tender, about 10 minutes.

4. Drain, add the olive oil, garlic,

and rosemary. Mash until lumpy. Serve immediately.

Per serving: 187 calories, 5 gm protein, 37 gm carbohydrate, 4 gm fat, 6 gm sat fat, 3 gm mono fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 7 gm fiber, 35 mg sodium

Use an old-fashioned potato masher to create great texture for the vegetables.

Cook with a rainbow of fruits and vegetables because they contain phytochemicals that aid in disease prevention. The beta-carotene found in carrots and the allicin in garlic are examples of phytochemicals.

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- Data entry

In order to be considered you'll need:

- One year of solid work experience in janitorial, maintenance, mechanical, automotive, diesel or electrical work
- Current, valid Oregon or Washington driver's license and an excellent driving record for the past five years.

Service Workers receive paid training for their commercial drivers license, forklift certification, safety protocols and job specific skills upon hire. Apprenticeship programs are also available for Service Workers and include:

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HOW TO APPLY

Please visit our web site at www.trimet.org/jobs to download an application or, you may apply in person at our Human Resources Department located at 4012 SE 17th Avenue Portland, OR before 5:00 p.m. Friday July 28th. All applications must include a 5-year driving record. Those residing outside the Portland Metropolitan area or who are physically disabled may request application materials by calling 503-962-7635. TTY# 503-238-5811. Applicants needing an accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act for any part of the application process should contact TriMet Human Resources staff at 503-962-7635. A minimum of two workdays' notice is required prior to the need for accommodation.

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