



- Advertisement -

Stand out with crisp, juicy, flavorful cherries

July 12, 2023

Make grocery store shelves shine this season with [Stemilt](#) cherries. Led by generations of experience and a wealth of knowledge behind the production of cherries, Stemilt grows cherries for consistent top flavor, size and quality so retailers can see success this summer as volumes increase.



Brianna Shales

“Stemilt is a leader in cherries because we provide consistent quality to keep people shopping for them all season long,” said Brianna Shales, marketing director. “Size, flavor and firmness are very important in a high-quality cherry, and we’re obsessive about picking cherries at the optimal times. Cherries don’t get sweeter after picking, so it’s important to pick fruit when it’s ready, even if that means multiple picks to get the best sizes and flavors.”

From the farm to the packingline, there’s a short amount of time to keep cherries fresh. Cherries do not have stored carbohydrates, so Stemilt uses a cold chain from the orchard to the packing line to maximize freshness for the retailer. This process helps put the shelf life back into the hands of retailers and consumers.

“We have one of the largest networks of on-farm mobile hydrocoolers that allow us to bring the internal temperature of cherries way down quickly after harvest,” said Shales. “First, they’re picked from the tree, placed in bins and covered by an icy cold cloth. Then, we take the bins through the mobile hydrocoolers at or very near the farm. Lastly, we transfer cherries in refrigerated trucks to the packing line where in-line hydrocooling helps us pack them fresh.”

Starting the cold chain early and doing it right means retailers have fresh cherries to sell that will help improve the cherry eating experience. There are many elements that go into Stemilt's cherry program that focus on quality specifically to help drive repeat purchases at the point-of-sale.

"We're very particular about the varieties we grow and focus on selecting the best sites for growing special varieties like Rainier, Skylar Rae, Kyle's Pick and A Half Mile Closer to the Moon cherries."

Rainier, Skylar Rae and Kyle's Pick cherries will all be available in July, and A Half Mile Closer to the Moon cherries in August. Retailers can utilize Stemilt's branding and merchandising to help set fruit apart and offer shoppers quality-consistent cherries all season long. Adding displays to the category will help draw people to cherries this summer, said Shales.

"Packaging is a great tool to use to distinguish the different varieties," said Shales. "Bags are the primary packaging vehicles for cherries, and clamshells or top seal are other great options for organics and specialty items. With an increase in cherry volume this year, there's traction with three-pound clamshells and top seal to increase purchase sizes of dark-sweet cherries."

With more volume as a whole in the industry this year, there's more opportunities for retailers with cherries. A combination of best harvest practices, optimal locations and a multi-step cold chain helps Stemilt produce quality cherries for the entirety of the season.

"Stemilt's attention to detail and mission to delight consumers with fruit that meets World Famous standards is what helps us maintain leadership in cherries," said Shales. "We want to see retailers have success this season with great tasting cherries with sweet, crisp flavors that keeps shoppers coming back for more."

[Print](#)