



Give yourself a little love this summer with healthy and delicious sweet cherries!



As the world eagerly awaits the start of the Summer Games and the many inspiring examples of anything-but-average performance, sweet cherry growers across the Pacific Northwest are celebrating the arrival of a “perfectly average” cherry crop. It may seem counterintuitive to cheer for ordinary in a culture that worships extraordinary, but for Northwest Cherry Growers, a perfectly average year translates into a generous crop of big, juicy, dark fruit that cherry lovers around the globe look forward to each summer.

Growing sweet cherries is a labor of love that also requires good environmental and meteorological fortune. Sweet Northwest cherries are best known for their deep, dark red (almost black) color; plump physique; and sweet, juicy flavors rarely matched by cherries produced in other regions. Growing conditions have a direct impact on these qualities. When it gets too hot too early, cherry trees may become stressed. When there is too much fruit on a tree, the cherries can be smaller. With so many variables at play, a “perfectly average” crop is often a setup for a cream of the crop, cherry season.

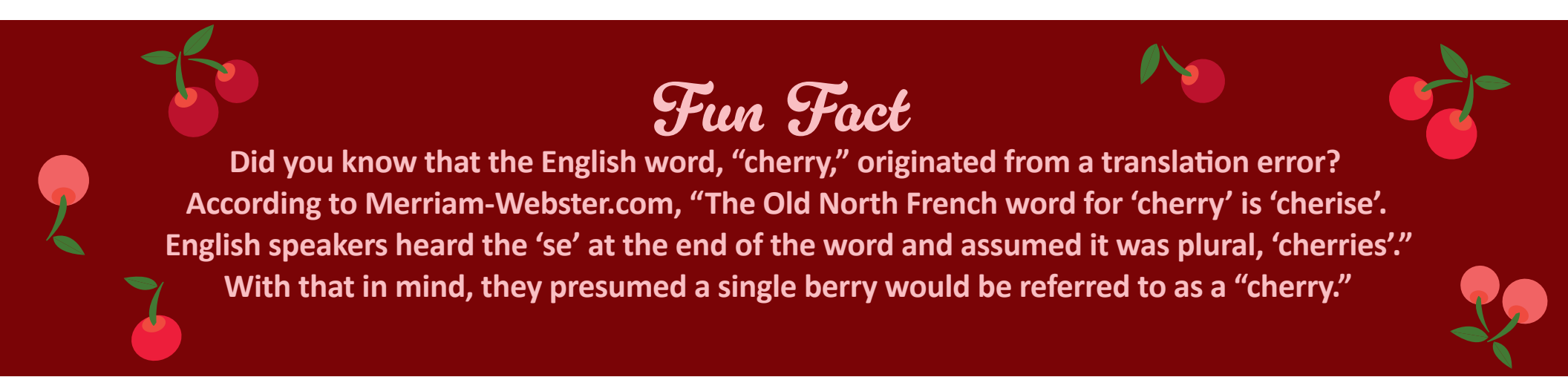
After two challenging years, Northwest sweet cherry growers are reporting that conditions in 2024 are shaping up beautifully to produce a bountiful harvest of first-rate fruit.

“Growers are calling the 2024 Northwest crop a perfectly average crop of excellent-quality cherries,” said B.J. Thurlby, president of Northwest Cherry Growers. “We are seeing cherries well spread throughout the tree canopy, with fewer large clusters than we saw in 2023. And with the warm weather, volumes are ramping up. Historically, these types of fruit sets have led to big, beautiful cherries and excellent shelf quality.”

The Northwest sweet cherry season runs from mid-June through August. Healthy and delicious fresh cherries can be found now in grocers across the country.



“The size and deep dark color of the cherries have been outstanding this season. This summer, be sure to enjoy these deliciously dark-red, high-quality cherries!”
Pat Sullivan, Northwest Cherry Grower



Fun Fact

Did you know that the English word, “cherry,” originated from a translation error? According to Merriam-Webster.com, “The Old North French word for ‘cherry’ is ‘cherise’. English speakers heard the ‘se’ at the end of the word and assumed it was plural, ‘cherries’.” With that in mind, they presumed a single berry would be referred to as a “cherry.”



Tres Bon! Cherry Bruschetta

This mouthwatering twist on a summer bruschetta is a fresh, French inspired favorite. Whether you’re preparing a light lunch or an afternoon hors d’oeuvre, this cherry bruschetta will add a colorful twist to your table while delighting your diners.

Ingredients

- 18 slices (1/2-inch thick) small baguette
- 1 tbsp olive oil, divided
- 1 1/2 cups pitted Northwest fresh sweet cherries, coarsely chopped
- 1/4 cup chopped cilantro
- 1/4 cup diced yellow sweet pepper
- 2 tbsp finely chopped green onions
- 2 tbsp lime juice
- 1 tsp grated lime peel
- 1/2 tsp garlic salt
- 1/4 tsp ground black pepper
- 2 oz fresh mozzarella cheese
- 1 tbsp thinly sliced fresh basil

Instructions

1. Toast one side of baguette slices at 350°F 5 minutes.
2. Turn slices, brush with olive oil and bake 5 minutes longer.
3. Combine cherries, cilantro, pepper, green onions, lime juice, lime peel, salt, pepper and remaining olive oil; mix well.
4. Top each slice of baguette with a thin slice of fresh mozzarella cheese, a heaping tablespoon of cherry mixture and sliced basil.
5. Serve warm or cold.



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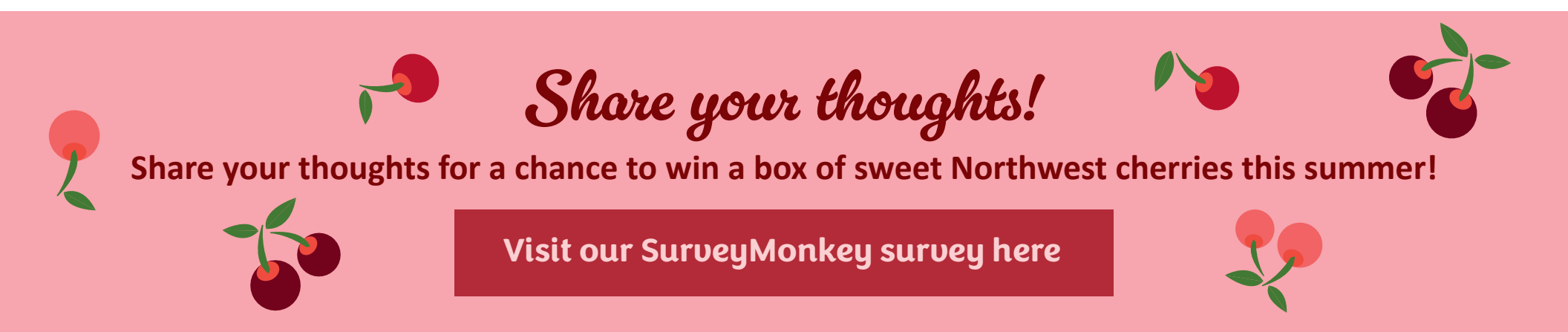
Go for the gold (standard)! 3 Sweet Cherry Health Benefits

Whether you’re a world-class athlete pursuing peak performance or an average Joe just trying to enhance your well-being, sweet cherries offer a host of health benefits that anyone can take advantage of. Packed with antioxidants, vitamins and minerals, nutrient-dense sweet cherries are always a winning choice.

As you fill your shopping cart this summer, here are three podium-worthy reasons to reach for sweet cherries every time:

- **Fight inflammation** — naturally! Nutritionists always say to eat the rainbow, as colorful foods tend to be bursting with health benefits, and sweet cherries are no exception. Sweet Northwest cherries are one of few fruits with a deep, dark color from the skin to the pit. This is important because the dark red color is where you find the anthocyanins – naturally occurring antioxidants. Studies have shown that these anthocyanins help to shut down enzymes that cause tissue inflammation (in a similar way to ibuprofen and naproxen) as well as positively impacting chronic inflammatory diseases such as arthritis, cancer, hypertension and cardiovascular disease.
- **Improve your summertime sleep.** Longer days and changes to your usual routine can disrupt your sleep during the summer months. Luckily, summer also means fresh sweet cherries, and experts say that eating fresh cherries about an hour before bedtime may help stabilize and regulate sleep patterns. Sweet cherries are a natural source of melatonin, along with serotonin and tryptophan — all three of which have been shown to contribute to improved quality of sleep. As a bonus, cherries are a low-glycemic fruit, so while they’re naturally luscious and sweet, you don’t have to worry about a sugar spike before bed.
- **Get that summertime glow!** Whether you’re going for French girl chic or a Met Gala glow, sweet cherries can give your skin a boost, thanks to loads of vitamin C and A. Plus, the generous levels of antioxidants help protect your skin from premature aging due to free-radical damage and environmental stressors. There’s no tastier route to healthier skin and a stronger immune system than eating fresh sweet cherries.

To find out more about the health benefits of sweet cherries, [visit sweetcherryhealth.com](#)



Share your thoughts!

Share your thoughts for a chance to win a box of sweet Northwest cherries this summer!

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