

Alberta Average Berry Prices – 2010 / 2011

A large number of farms were contacted, with a wide range in size, diversity and operational focus. Prices are reported per pound, however many farms charge on a volume basis (often 4L pail). For the purposes of comparison, the price per pound was calculated assuming 5 pounds per pail for all fruit; however, the actual weight of fruit per volume can vary. The price per pound varied according to the container size, with some producers offering a range of container sizes for some pre-picked fruit. In this case, an average price was generated to use in comparisons with other farms. Some producers offer a volume discount or include a price adjustment for pails/containers. While the prices reported represent a range, there is significant variation within the range. Producers should consider their costs of production, as well as their customers and markets when setting their prices.

Strawberries

Strawberries were usually sold on a U-pick basis, often with pre-picked berries at the farmers' markets or on-farm. Volume of container was typically 4L pail/basket.

U-pick = Range from \$2.20 - \$4.25/pound, with an average of \$3.10.

Pre-pick = Range from \$3.00 - \$6.60/pound, with an average of \$4.60. Most producers are close to \$4.00 per pound. Prices varied with the size of the container that they are sold in, with most producers offering various sizes. There did not tend to be much difference in price between pre-picked product that was sold on-farm and Farmers' market product.

Raspberries

Raspberries were most often U-picked, with some pre-picked (farm gate) sales. Many farms did not pre-pick raspberries (or charged more for the higher labour).

U-pick = Range from \$1.60 - \$5.25/pound, with an average of \$3.20.

Pre-picked = Wide range from \$3.00 - \$7.80/pound (mostly fresh, some frozen). Average price = \$5.20. Prices varied with container size, often being sold in pint or half-pint containers.

Saskatoon Berries

Saskatoon berries were most often U-picked, with pre-picking.

U-pick = Range from \$1.60 - \$3.00/pound, with an average of \$2.50.

Pre-pick = Range from \$2.50 - \$5.00/pound, with an average of \$3.60.

Black Currants

Reports from U-pick and pre-pick.

U-pick = \$1.60 - \$3.00/pound, with an average of \$2.40.

Pre-pick = Range from \$2.00 - \$4.00/pound, with an average of \$3.05.

Other Fruit

More "alternative" fruit are coming onto the market, includes Haskap (Blue Honeysuckle / "Honeyberries") and sour cherries. Other fruit includes chokecherries, apples, rhubarb, etc.

Haskap is sold U-pick or pre-picked, with a limited quantity available. Pricing is somewhat exploratory at this point. Price ranges from \$2.50 - \$4.0/pound (U-pick), up to \$6/pound pre-picked.

Sour cherries are also somewhat exploratory prices, with an average price of \$2.00/pound (U-pick) (range \$1.60 - \$2.40) and \$2.50/pound (pre-pick) (range \$2.00 - \$3.00).

Chokecherries were sold U-pick at an average price of \$2.40/pound (range \$1.80 - \$3.00).

For the 2011 growing season, some producers were considering moderate price increases for various fruit crops, which are reflected in the price averages. Similar to previous years, price increases (or lack of increase) were scattered across the province and varied considerably. Reasons for price increases were usually due to increased input costs. Reasons for not increasing prices included inability of customer base / market to deal with a price changes (due to fixed incomes, etc), new crop coming on or trying to bring customers back after crop failure.

Producers continue to vary in how they charge for fruit, with many charging per pound, but a fair number charging a flat rate for a fixed container (volume) size. This was more typically for pre-picked product, often sold at the Farmers' markets. Sales of small volume containers resulted in a much higher price per pound (when compared to larger volumes). Some producers were considering charges for pails/containers, entrance or other services.