

Alberta Average Berry & Vegetable Prices – 2011 / 2012

A number of farms contributed their pricing information, with a wide range in size, diversity and operational focus. As well, data from surveys at AB farmers' markets in the summer of 2011, as well as prices reported on producer websites were included into the pricing data.

Most prices are reported per pound (for fruit and most vegetables), however many farms charge on a volume basis (often 4L pail) or on a per unit basis (for a number of vegetable crops – e.g. per head, per bag, per bunch). 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.

In cases of vegetable pricing, producers reporting a price per pound for a product were compared with producers reporting similarly, whereas producers reporting in a price per unit were compared with other similar reported data.

Where possible, the u-pick and the pre-pick (pre-picked on-farm sales, farmer's market sales, etc.) prices are reported. Not all of the data that was contributed could be reported, as there was insufficient data to create a quality range &/or average. While the prices reported represent a range, there may be significant variation within the range. Producers should consider their individual, specific costs of production, as well as their customers and markets when setting their prices.

Many producers offer a volume discount (sometimes with several different prices for different volumes) or include a price adjustment for customers bringing pails/containers or charge a fee for pails. The average price discount or charge for a 4L pail was \$1.

Strawberries

Marketing Generalities	Strawberries were usually sold on a U-pick basis, however many producers are selling pre-picked berries at the farmers' markets or on-farm. Volume of container was typically 4L pail/basket.			
	U-pick		Pre-Pick	
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)
	\$1.50 - \$4.50	\$2.86	\$3.00 - \$9.60	\$4.90
Comments	Most producers were closer to \$4.00 per pound for Pre-pick. 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

Marketing Generalities	Raspberries were most often U-picked, with some pre-picked (farm gate / farmer's market) sales. A number of farms did not pre-pick raspberries			
	U-pick		Pre-Pick	
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)
	\$1.60 - \$5.50	\$2.91	\$3.00 - \$10.40 (mostly fresh)	\$5.87
Comments	Prices varied with container size, often being sold in pint or half-pint containers, which significantly elevates the price per pound (and returns).			

Saskatoon Berries

Marketing Generalities	Saskatoon berries were often sold U-picked, however many farms offer pre-picked fruit. Pre-pick prices most often were \$1+ more than u-pick prices, depending on the operation and how they were packaged. It was not reported whether pre-picked sales were fresh or frozen, although it can be assumed that immediate sales were fresh, with later sales certainly frozen.			
	U-pick		Pre-Pick	
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)
	\$1.60 - \$3.00	\$2.29	\$1.50 - \$5.20	\$3.76
Comments	U-pick prices were typically over \$2/pound and most producers were around \$3.60 or more for pre-picked berries			

Black Currants				
Marketing Generalities	Most prices reported from U-pick, with some pre-pick.			
	U-pick		Pre-Pick	
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)
	\$1.60 - \$3.00	\$2.32	Too few reported	\$4.40
Comments	Other coloured currants and gooseberries similar pricing, but limited volumes			
Other Fruit				
More "alternative" fruit are coming onto the market, includes Haskap (Blue Honeysuckle / "Honeyberries") and sour cherries. Other fruit includes chokecherries, rhubarb, etc.				
Haskap / Blue Honeysuckle	Sold U-pick or occasionally pre-picked, with a limited quantity available. Pricing is still very exploratory at this point and few producers reported prices. Prices are around \$3/pound (U-pick), up to \$6/pound pre-picked.			
Sour Cherries	Producers are somewhat exploratory in setting prices, with average reported prices around \$3 - 3.50/pound (U-pick), with pre-pick prices higher and more variable. When supply volumes are higher, prices tend to be approximately \$1 - \$0.50 lower. When mechanization is in place, prices are typically lower. Frozen and pitted cherries tend to be \$1.00 higher than u-pick. Prices vary by region, supply, and market.			
Chokecherries	Prices weren't reported but are typically similar to those of Saskatoon berries.			
Rhubarb	Prices were reported in limited numbers, but average prices (for 2010/2011 and 2011/2012 fall around \$1.50/pound).			
	U-pick		Pre-Pick	
Peas	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)
	\$1.50 - \$2.30	\$1.89	\$2.00 - \$6.00	\$3.75
Comments	The size of package of produce sold was not reported.			
	U-pick		Pre-Pick	
Cabbage	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)
	-	-	\$2.00 - \$3.00	\$2.70
Comments	No U-picking reported. Most reported around \$3.00 per head. Some bulk sales per pound (under \$0.40/pound)			
	U-pick		Pre-Pick	
Corn	Range (price per dozen)	Average (price per dozen)	Range (price per dozen)	Average (price per dozen)
	-	-	Too few reported	\$8.50
Comments	Most often sold per half dozen. No u-picking reported.			
	U-pick		Pre-Pick	
Pickling Cucumbers	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)
	Too few reported	-	\$2.00 - \$3.00	\$2.30
Comments	Most reported around \$2.00 per pound.			
	U-pick		Pre-Pick	
Potatoes	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)
	\$1.10 - \$1.50	\$1.33	\$1.00 - \$5.00	\$2.22
Comments	Wide range in prices, particularly in pre-picked product. Largely dependent on package quantity (e.g. bulk, 5, 10, 20+ pound packages) or on other factors (e.g. new/baby vs. older, harvest period, tuber size, etc.).			
	U-pick		Pre-Pick	
Beans	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)
	\$1.50 - \$2.30	\$1.83	\$2.00 - \$6.00	\$4.11
Comments	Similar to peas, the size of package sold was not reported.			

Onions	U-pick		Pre-Pick	
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)
	\$1.50 - \$3.00	\$2.17	\$1.50 - \$3.00	\$1.96
Comments	Most reporting producers were either selling u-pick or pre-pick (not both). Different group of producers than those selling bunched onions.			
Onions – bunched	U-pick		Pre-Pick	
	Range (price per bunch)	Average (price per bunch)	Range (price per bunch)	Average (price per bunch)
	Too few reporting	-	\$1.50 - \$4.00	\$2.29
Comments	Majority of bunched onions sold pre-picked. Bunch size may vary. Different group of producers than those selling onions per pound.			
Green Onions	U-pick		Pre-Pick	
	Range (price per bunch)	Average (price per bunch)	Range (price per bunch)	Average (price per bunch)
	Too few reported	-	\$1.00 - \$2.00	\$1.33
Comments	Bunch size was not specified.			
Beets	U-pick		Pre-Pick	
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)
	\$1.30 - \$1.90	\$1.63	\$1.50 - \$4.50	\$2.24
Comments	More sold pre-pick; package size varies			
Beets – bunched	U-pick		Pre-Pick	
	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)
	None reported	-	\$1.50 – 6.00	\$3.70
Comments	Most pre-picked product in the \$3-4 range			
Carrots	U-pick		Pre-Pick	
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)
	\$1.50 - \$2.50	\$1.83	\$1.50 - \$5.00	\$3.15
Comments	More sold pre-picked than U-pick. Price per pound varies with package size and with harvest season (early vs. late). Some pre-pick is sold as bunch.			
Parsnips	U-pick		Pre-Pick	
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)
	Too few reported	\$2.50	\$1.60 - \$2.00	\$1.87
Comments	Mostly pre-picked.			
Romaine Lettuce	U-pick		Pre-Pick	
	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)
	-	-	\$1.50 - \$4.00	\$2.93
Comments	Unit = head or bag; Even mix of sales by head or by bag. Majority of prices in \$3-4 range.			
Lettuce	U-pick		Pre-Pick	
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)
	Too few reported	-	\$4.00 - \$8.00	\$6.00
Comments	Fewer sales by pound than by unit (bagged or head)			
Lettuce – Bagged	U-pick		Pre-Pick	
	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)
	-	-	\$1.00 - \$4.00	\$2.75
Comments	Most sold per bag, with some producers selling per head or bunched. Most priced around \$3.00			

Spinach	U-pick		Pre-Pick	
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)
	-	-	Too few reported	\$7.00
Comments	More commonly sold bagged. No u-picking reported.			
Spinach – bagged	U-pick		Pre-Pick	
	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)
	-	-	\$0.50 – \$4.00	\$2.85
Comments	Most priced over \$3 per bag. Bag size not specified. All pre-picked, no u-picking reported.			
Snap Peas	U-pick		Pre-Pick	
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)
	-	-	\$2.75 - \$6.00	\$4.71
Comments	Most prices set closer to \$5.00			
Radish	U-pick		Pre-Pick	
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)
	-	-	\$2.50 - \$3.00	\$2.50
Comments	More commonly reported as sold pre-picked, bagged or bunched. No u-pick reported.			
Radish – bunched/bagged	U-pick		Pre-Pick	
	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)
	-	-	\$1.50 - \$3.00	\$2.40
Comments	Equal division of bagged or bunched. No u-pick reported.			
Swiss Chard	U-pick		Pre-Pick	
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)
	Too few reported	Too few reported	Too few reported	\$2.67
Comments				
Swiss Chard - bagged	U-pick		Pre-Pick	
	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)
	-	-	\$0.50 – \$5.00	\$2.83
Comments	Bag size was not reported.			
Squash / Zucchini	U-pick		Pre-Pick	
	Range (price per pound or unit)	Average (price per pound or unit)	Range (price per pound or unit)	Average (price per pound or unit)
	Too few reported	Too few reported	Too few reported	\$2.00/lb or \$0.75 each
Comments	Variable in how product was priced. Some priced per pound, but also priced per unit. Some u-pick, but more pre-picked.			

For the 2012 growing season, most producers were not considering price increases for the various crops, although some producers were considering minor increases depending on how fuel prices change, or were considering changing prices for some of the larger volume offerings. Reasons for price increases were usually due to increased input costs. Similar to previous years, price increases (or lack of increase) were scattered across the province and varied considerably. Some producers consider the time required by customers to pick a pail of more challenging fruit (e.g. raspberries) in their pricing calculations. There was evidence of local “partnering”, where producers recognize that they do not offer all services, but refer to other producers in the area who do offer it. Some producers shift prices throughout the growing season, as influenced by supply, demand and/or rarity of a particular product, particularly in reference to early harvests.

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. Pre-picked product sold at the Farmers’ markets was typically sold in containers by volume. Sales of small volume containers resulted in a much higher price per pound (when compared to larger volumes). Most producers charge for pails / containers or provide a discount to customers that bring their own containers.