

Alberta Direct Market Average Berry & Vegetable Prices – 2012 / 2013

A number of farms contributed their pricing information, with a wide range in size, diversity and operational focus. As well, prices reported on producer websites were added into the pricing dataset.

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. In converting prices to a “per pound” basis, it was assumed that 1 pint is equal to 0.625 pounds. 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.

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. Some producers also make price adjustments for early or late crops, depending on the crop.

Not all of the data contributed could be reported, as there was insufficient data to create a quality range &/or average. The number of data points comprising a dataset is included (e.g. n=x). If three or more data points were available, both a range and an average were reported. 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. **Use the prices as a guide only**, and do not make adjustments to price, simply because you are lower than the average. In a number of areas, prices appear to be reaching the limit of what the market will bear, for the time being.

Strawberries						
Marketing Generalities	Strawberries were usually often 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 (n=16)		Pre-Pick (On-farm or unspecified) (n=17)		Pre-Pick (Farmers’ Market) (n=7)	
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)
	\$2.00 - \$3.00	\$2.73	\$3.40 - \$9.60	\$4.47	\$4.50 - \$7.00	\$5.47
Comments	Most producers were closer to \$4.00 per pound for Pre-pick and up to \$5 at FM. 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 (n=16)			Pre-Pick (n=12)		
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)		
	\$2.00 - \$4.00	\$3.16	\$3.00 - \$10.40 (mostly fresh; most FM)	\$5.60		
Comments	Prices varied with container size, often being sold in pint or smaller volume containers (e.g. 3L), 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 (n=13)			Pre-Pick (n=25)		
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)		
	\$2.00 - \$3.00	\$2.53	\$2.50 - \$9.60	\$3.95		
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 pre-pick, with some u-pick.			
	U-pick (n=3)		Pre-Pick (n=3)	
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)
	\$2.00 - \$3.40	\$2.63	\$3.20 - \$5.00	\$3.93
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 too few producers reported prices to report.			
Sour Cherries	Producers are somewhat exploratory in setting prices, U-pick averages around \$2.60/lb (few data points – n=3). Pre-pick prices ranged from \$2.00 - \$9.60/lb, with an average of \$4.36 (n=7). Prices vary by region, supply, and market.			
Chokecherries	Prices weren't reported in any quantity, but are typically similar to those of Saskatoon berries.			
Rhubarb	Prices were reported in limited numbers, but rhubarb tended to be sold as pre-picked, with prices ranging from \$1.00 - \$2.30/lb, and an average price of \$1.63/lb (n=4).			

Vegetable Prices

Beans	U-pick		Pre-Pick (n=10)	
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)
	Too few reported	-	\$1.80 - \$6.00	\$4.18
Comments	In general, prices were reported per pound, with some different package sizes offered. Few U-picks reported.			
Beets	U-pick		Pre-Pick (n=12)	
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)
	Too few reported	-	\$0.60 - \$3.25	\$1.67
Comments	Some with greens, some pre-picked not specifying destination market. Often a discount for larger quantities. Lower prices represent bulk / larger volume discount.			
Beets (bunch)	U-pick		Pre-Pick (n=5)	
	Range (price per bunch)	Average (price per bunch)	Range (price per bunch)	Average (price per bunch)
	-	-	\$1.50 - \$4.00	\$2.70
Comments	Bunch size often unspecified, but those reporting stated bunches of 6-8.			
Broccoli	U-pick		Pre-Pick (n=3)	
	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)	Range (price per bunch/head)	Average (price per bunch/head)
	Too few reported	-	\$2.00 - \$4.00	\$3.00
Comments	Bunch/head size was unspecified.			
Cabbage	U-pick		Pre-Pick (n=8)	
	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)	Range (price per head)	Average (price per head)
	-	-	\$2.00 - \$5.00	\$3.06
Comments	Head sizes were unspecified. Prices varied depending on type of cabbage (often relating to head size).			

Carrots	U-pick (n=3)		Pre-Pick (n=14)	
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)
	\$1.40 - \$1.50	\$1.47	\$1.40 - \$4.00	\$2.80
Comments	Some price variation depending on time of year, product size (higher price for smaller) and package volume.			
Cauliflower	U-pick		Pre-Pick (n=4)	
	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)	Range (price per head)	Average (price per head)
	-	-	\$2.00 - \$5.00	\$3.13
Comments	Head size was unspecified.			
Celery	U-pick		Pre-Pick (n=3)	
	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)
	Too few reported	-	\$1.50 - \$3.00	\$2.33
Comments	Prices reported as per bunch or stalk.			
Corn, sweet	U-pick		Pre-Pick (n=8)	
	Range (price per dozen)	Average (price per dozen)	Range (price per dozen)	Average (price per dozen)
	Too few reported	-	\$5.00 - \$12.00	\$9.00
Comments	Some sales per cob (resulting in higher cost per dozen), but most per dozen. Most priced closer to \$10/doz.			
Cucumbers, Pickling	U-pick		Pre-Pick (n=7)	
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)
	Too few reported	-	\$1.25 - \$3.00	\$1.96
Comments	Most reported around \$1.50 - \$2.00/lb.			
Cucumbers, Slicing	U-pick		Pre-Pick (n=3)	
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)
	Too few reported	-	\$0.80 - \$2.00	\$1.27
Comments	Limited data reported.			
Herbs	U-pick		Pre-Pick (n=5)	
	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)	Range (price per bunch/packet)	Average (price per bunch/packet)
	-	-	\$1.50 - \$3.00	\$2.00
Comments	Bunch/packet size not specified. Wide range of herbs sold.			
Lettuce	U-pick		Pre-Pick (n=5)	
	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)	Range (price per head)	Average (price per head)
	Too few reported	-	\$1.00 - \$4.00	\$2.08
Comments	Head size and type unspecified.			
Lettuce (bagged)	U-pick		Pre-Pick (n=3)	
	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)	Range (price per bunch)	Average (price per bunch)
	-	-	\$1.00 - \$2.50	\$1.67
Comments	Bunch size unspecified.			
Lettuce, Romaine	U-pick		Pre-Pick (n=5)	
	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)	Range (price per head/bunch)	Average (price per head/bunch)
	Too few reported	-	\$1.50 - \$4.00	\$2.40
Comments	Head/bunch size unspecified.			

Onions	U-pick		Pre-Pick (n=3)	
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)
	Too few reported	-	\$1.50 - \$2.25	\$1.92
Comments				
Onions, Green (bunched)	U-pick		Pre-Pick (n=3)	
	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)	Range (price per)	Average (price per bunch)
	Too few reported	-	\$1.00 - \$3.00	\$1.75
Comments Bunch size unspecified.				
Onions, Sweet/Spanish	U-pick		Pre-Pick (n=5)	
	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)	Range (price per unit - each)	Average (price per unit - each)
	-	-	\$0.25 - \$2.00	\$0.95
Comments Price per unit varies with quantity. Prices also vary with on-farm or FM prices.				
Parsnips	U-pick		Pre-Pick (n=4)	
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)
	-	-	\$2.00 - \$3.25	\$2.63
Comments No u-pick reported.				
Peas	U-pick (n=4)		Pre-Pick (n=9)	
	Range (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)
	\$1.50 - \$4.00	\$2.75 - \$6.00	\$2.75 - \$6.00	\$4.36
Comments Most pre-picked over \$4/lb, but prices varied.				
Peas, Snap	U-pick (n=3)		Pre-Pick (n=6)	
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)
	\$1.50 - \$3.35	\$2.20	\$2.75 - \$8.00	\$4.58
Comments Pre-picked prices at FM higher than on-farm, but pre-picked prices varied, with most over \$4+				
Potatoes, mature	U-pick (n=3)		Pre-Pick (n=12)	
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)
	\$1.00 - \$2.50	\$1.92	\$0.30 - \$1.50	\$0.86
Comments Prices vary within season but also depending on volume (lower price for higher volumes).				
Potatoes, Baby/New	U-pick		Pre-Pick (n=14)	
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)
	Too few reported	-	\$1.50 - \$6.00	\$2.60
Comments Prices tend to change (drop) as season progresses. Some volume discounts. FM higher than on-farm.				
Pumpkins	U-pick		Pre-Pick (n=3)	
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)
	Too few reported	-	\$0.30 - \$1.50	\$0.77
Comments Some sales per unit, with prices for different sizes.				
Radish – bunched/bagged	U-pick		Pre-Pick (n=4)	
	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)	Range (price per bunch)	Average (price per bunch)
	Too few reported	-	\$1.50 - \$3.00	\$2.31
Comments Some producers sell per pound, but most per bunch.				

Rutabaga	U-pick		Pre-Pick (n=3)	
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)
Comments	Too few reported	-	\$0.50 - \$1.00	\$0.83
Some sold individually, but most per pound.				
Spinach	U-pick (n=3)		Pre-Pick	
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)
Comments	\$2.70 - \$3.50	\$2.97	Too few reported	-
Pre-pick prices significantly higher, typically due to smaller volume packages.				
Squash	U-pick		Pre-Pick (n=7)	
	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)	Range (price per unit - each)	Average (price per unit - each)
Comments	Too few reported	-	\$1.00 - \$10.00	\$3.61
Price ranges represent both variation in operations, but also different prices for different sizes and types. Some sold per pound, but most often per unit.				
Swiss Chard (bunched)	U-pick		Pre-Pick (n=5)	
	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)	Range (price per bunch)	Average (price per bunch)
Comments	-	-	\$0.50 - \$4.00	\$2.20
Bunch size unspecified.				
Zucchini	U-pick		Pre-Pick (n=6)	
	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)	Range (price per unit - each)	Average (price per unit - each)
Comments	Too few reported	-	\$0.50 - \$3.00	\$1.71
Some price differences for larger or smaller products.				

2013 Growing Season

For the 2013 growing season, the vast majority of producers were **not** considering price increases for the various crops, although some producers were considering minor increases or decreases depending on factors such as input costs, etc. All price changes were very minor. Similar to previous years, price increases (or lack of increase) were scattered across the province and varied considerably. 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. Price per unit was more common in the vegetables, and u-pick was less common than pre-pick in the data reported. Pre-picked fruit product sold at the Farmers' markets was typically sold in containers by volume. Sales of small volume containers or packaging resulted in a much higher price per pound (when compared to larger volumes). Per unit pricing of vegetables was likely due to simplicity of marketing and packaging, rather than having to deal with wide ranges of weights.

Most producers charge for pails / containers or provide a discount to customers that bring their own containers. A number of u-pick pricing was dependant on the number of pails picked/purchased and vegetable sale prices were usually dependant on the quantity purchased.

It is evident that great care and attention must be given to input costs, cost of labour, transportation and to what prices the market will bear, related to other producers, retail pricing, etc.