

Alberta Direct Market Average Berry & Vegetable Prices – 2015 / 2016

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, if they did not represent duplication.

Most prices are reported per pound (for fruit and most vegetables), however many fruit farms charge on a volume basis (often 4L pail or smaller containers for certain fruit e.g. raspberries) 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. Data was not compared between reported weight and volume datasets. Where possible, the u-pick and the pre-pick (pre-picked on-farm sales and/or p-p 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 some 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. The higher the N-value, the stronger the data set. While the prices reported represent a range, there may be significant variation within the range. As a result, the median value was also included (for the fruit crops only), which represents the middle value of the dataset. 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.

For the 2016 season, some producers were considering a small price increase in some fruit crops, however it appeared that many were maintaining their price, due to the economy and some other unknowns. A number of producers are offering a range of prices and offerings, such as different volumes, fresh/frozen, washed/unwashed, delivered/pick up, etc., depending on the product. Price adjustments for 2017 were suggested as likely by some producers, depending on changes occurring in 2016.

Fruit Prices

Strawberries

Marketing Generalities

Strawberries were often sold on a U-pick basis, however many more producers are selling pre-picked berries at the farmers' markets or on-farm. Volume of container was typically 4L pail/basket; however more, smaller container options are appearing (mainly for pre-picked product).

U-pick (n=10)

Pre-Pick (On-farm or unspecified) (n=15)

Pre-Pick (Farmers' Market) (n=4)

Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Median (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Median (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Median (price per pound)
\$2.2 - \$7.0	\$3.64	\$3.0	\$3.0 - \$9.6	\$4.0	\$4.0	\$4.8 - \$8.0	\$5.7	\$5.0

Comments

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 a huge 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=12)

Pre-Pick (n=5)

Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Median (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Median (price per pound)
\$2.2 - \$5.56	\$3.53	\$3.4	\$3.6 - \$11.5	\$6.02	\$4.0

Comments

Prices varied with container size, often being sold in pint or smaller volume containers, which significantly elevates the price per pound (and returns). The labour of picking raspberries for sale can be significant

Saskatoon Berries						
Marketing Generalities	Saskatoon berries were often sold U-picked, however many farms offer pre-picked fruit. Pre-pick prices most often were 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. Prices varied with different volumes of product sold. Value added product was not included, but would feature prominently in most operations.					
	U-pick (n=16)			Pre-Pick (n=18)		
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Median (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Median (price per pound)
	\$2.0 - \$5.0	\$2.96	\$3.0	\$3.6 - \$11.5	\$4.71	\$4.1
Comments	-					
Black Currants						
Marketing Generalities	Type of harvest (hand vs mechanical) not reported in most cases. Value-adding would be common					
	U-pick (n=3)			Pre-Pick		
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Median (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Median (price per pound)
	\$2.2 - \$5.0	\$3.4	\$3.0	Too few reported	-	-
Comments	-					
Sour Cherries						
Marketing Generalities	Limited prices reported					
	U-pick (n=4)			Pre-Pick (n=4)		
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Median (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Median (price per pound)
	\$2.2 - \$5.0	\$3.4	\$3.2	\$2.25 - 5.0	\$3.53	\$3.43
Comments	Equal number of u-pick versus pre-pick reported; In past years, some variation in price due to pitted versus not pitted.					
Haskap (Blue honeysuckle)						
Marketing Generalities	Limited prices reported. All were for u-pick					
	U-pick (n=4)					
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)		Median (price per pound)		
	\$3.0 - \$5.0	\$4.33		\$5.0		
Comments	-					
Other Fruit						
More "alternative" fruit are coming onto the market, but still limited numbers reported. Other fruit includes chokecherries, rhubarb, etc.						
Rhubarb	Prices were reported in limited numbers, but rhubarb tends to be sold as pre-picked, with prices ranging from \$2.0 - \$2.98/lb, and an average price of \$2.33/lb (n=3) and a median of \$2.0/lb. Some rhubarb is sold by piece, with variable prices.					
Chokecherries	Prices weren't reported in any quantity, but are typically similar to those of Saskatoon berries.					
Other fruit (e.g. gooseberries, apples, crabapples, etc.)	Wide range of prices reported. There were too few numbers to report for any one crop. Prices are typically per pound, most often u-pick. Things like apples and crabapples are typically sold in larger volumes.					

Vegetable Prices

Beans	U-pick (n=5)		Pre-Pick (n=8)		Pre-Pick (Farmers' Markets) (n=4)	
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)
	\$2.0 - \$5.5	\$3.39	\$2.75 - \$6.0	\$4.04	\$3.33 - \$6.0	\$4.52
Comments	-					
Beets	U-pick (n=7)			Pre-Pick (n=11)		
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)		Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	
	\$0.6 - \$2.8	\$1.87		\$0.7 - \$4.0	\$2.25	
Comments	Often a slight discount for larger quantities. Lower prices often represent bulk / larger volume discount.					
Beets, bunched	Pre-pick (n=5)			Pre-Pick (Farmers' Market) (n=14)		
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)		Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	
	\$2.49 - \$4.0	\$3.15		\$2.0 - \$5.0	\$3.68	
Comments	Insufficient u-pick prices reported for averaging					
Broccoli	U-pick			Pre-Pick (n=9)		
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per Pound)		Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	
	-	-		\$1.63 - \$4.0	\$3.03	
Comments	Some farms sell by unit, with variable pricing					
Cabbage	U-pick			Pre-Pick (n=9)		
	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)		Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)	
	Too few reported	-		\$2.0 - \$4.0	\$2.89	
Comments	-					
Carrots	U-pick (n=7)		Pre-Pick (n=11)		Pre-Pick (Farmers' Markets) (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)
	\$1.4 - \$2.8	\$2.01	\$1.4 - \$4.0	\$2.56	\$1.65 - \$4.0	\$2.56
Comments	Some price variation depending on time of year, product size (higher price for smaller) and package volume.					
Carrots (bunched)	U-pick			Pre-Pick (Farmers' Market) (n=13)		
	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)		Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)	
	-	-		\$2.0 - \$6.0	\$4.46	
Comments	-					
Cauliflower	U-pick			Pre-Pick (n=6)		
	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)		Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)	
	-	-		\$1.5 - \$3.0	\$2.67	
Comments	-					
Corn, sweet	U-pick (n=3)			Pre-Pick (n=4)		
	Range (price per dozen)	Average (price per dozen)		Range (price per dozen)	Average (price per dozen)	
	\$9.0 - \$12.0	\$10.33		\$8.0 - \$12.0	\$10.50	
Comments	Some sales per cob (resulting in higher cost per dozen), but most per dozen.					

Cucumbers, Pickling	U-pick		Pre-Pick (n=6)	
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)
	Too few reported	-	\$1.5 - \$3.0	\$2.43
Comments	-			
Cucumbers, Slicing	U-pick		Pre-Pick (Farmers' Markets) (n=3)	
	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)	Range (price per unit)	Range (price per unit)
	Too few reported	-	\$0.75 - \$2.0	\$1.42
Comments	-			
Garlic (bulb/head)	U-pick		Pre-Pick (n=10)	
	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)
	Too few reported	-	\$1.0 - \$4.0	\$2.9
Comments	Size of head/bulb will vary. Some sales in bunches or braids.			
Gourds, Ornamental (each)	U-pick		Pre-Pick (n=5)	
	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)
	Too few reported	-	\$1.67 - \$3.5	\$2.4
Comments	-			
Greens, mixed (per pound)	U-pick		Pre-Pick (n=4)	
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)
	Too few reported	-	\$6.0 - \$16.0	\$10.50
Comments	Sold in small packages (e.g. ¼ pound bags) in most cases.			
Kale (per pound)	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	-	\$6.0 - \$7.54	\$6.61
Comments	-			
Kale (per unit – bag, bunch, etc.)	U-pick		Pre-Pick (Farmers' Markets) (n=7)	
	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)
	Too few reported	-	\$2.0 - \$4.0	\$3.28
Comments	-			
Kohlrabi	U-pick		Pre-Pick (n=5)	
	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)
	Too few reported	-	\$1.5 - \$2.5	\$1.95
Comments	-			
Lettuce, head	U-pick		Pre-Pick (n=6)	
	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)
	Too few reported	-	\$2.5 - \$3.5	\$2.88
Comments	-			
Lettuce (bagged)	U-pick		Pre-Pick (n=13)	
	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)
	Too few reported	-	\$1.67 - \$3.5	\$2.78
Comments	Limited u-pick prices reported; Bag sizes vary			

Lettuce, Romaine (head)	U-pick			Pre-Pick (n=6)				
	Range (price per unit)		Average (price per unit)		Range (price per unit)		Average (price per unit)	
	Too few reported		-		\$3.0 - \$4.0		\$3.25	
Comments	Head size varied							
Onions, Bulb	U-pick (n=3)			Pre-Pick (n=6)				
	Range (price per pound)		Average (price per pound)		Range (price per pound)		Average (price per pound)	
	\$1.58 - \$1.75		\$1.66		\$0.7 - \$2.5		\$1.61	
Comments	Type/colour not typically specified. Some packaging for slight volume discount							
Onions, bulb (bunched)	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		-		\$1.68 - \$3.0		\$2.23	
Comments	-							
Onions, Green	U-pick			Pre-Pick (n=9)				
	Range (price per unit)		Average (price per unit)		Range (price per unit)		Average (price per unit)	
	Too few reported		-		\$1.68 - \$4.5		\$2.6	
Comments	How they were sold as a unit varied. Some individually, most bunched.							
Onions, Sweet Spanish	Pre-Pick (Farmers' Market) (n=3)			Pre-Pick (Farmers' Market) (n=3)				
	Range (price per pound)		Average (price per pound)		Range (price per unit)		Average (price per unit)	
	\$0.8 - \$1.66		\$1.24		\$1.0 - \$2.5		\$1.83	
Comments	Insufficient u-pick prices reported for per pound or per unit.							
Peas	U-pick (n=5)		Pre-Pick (n=5)		Pre-Pick (Farmers' Markets) (n=8)			
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)		
	\$1.0 - \$4.0	\$2.5	\$3.5 - \$5.0	\$4.34	\$2.5 - \$7.0	\$4.88		
Comments	-							
Potatoes, mature	U-pick (n=3)		Pre-Pick (n=9)		Pre-Pick (Farmers' Mkt) (n=8)			
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)		
	\$0.80 - \$1.4	\$1.2	\$0.50 - \$1.75	\$1.33	\$0.6 - \$3.0	\$2.13		
Comments	Prices vary within season but also depending on volume (lower price for higher volumes)							
Potatoes, baby/new	U-pick		Pre-Pick (n=5)		Pre-Pick (Farmers' Mkt) (n=4)			
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)		
	-	-	\$2.0 - \$3.75	\$2.7	\$2.5 - \$3.75	\$3.19		
Comments	-							
Pumpkins	U-pick (n=5)			Pre-Pick (n=3)				
	Range (price per unit)		Average (price per unit)		Range (price per unit)		Average (price per unit)	
	\$1.0 - \$25.0		\$6.4		\$1.0 - \$3.0		\$2.0	
Comments	Price varies widely with size.							

Radish, bagged/bunched	U-pick		Pre-Pick (n=8)	
	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)
	Too few reported	-	\$2.0 - \$4.0	\$2.81
Comments	-			
Rutabaga	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	-	\$0.5 - \$1.0	\$0.73
Comments	-			
Spinach	U-pick (n=3)		Pre-Pick (n=6)	
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)
	\$4.0 - \$7.0	\$5.65	\$7.12 - \$13.0	\$9.42
Comments	Sold in a range of package sizes, bunches, etc.			
Squash, Winter (per unit)	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	-	\$2.5 - \$5.0	\$3.5
Comments	Types not specified			
Swiss Chard	U-pick (n=3)		Pre-Pick (n=5)	
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)
	\$4.0 - \$6.3	\$4.83	\$3.0 - \$7.53	\$5.11
Comments	Package volumes varied			
Swiss Chard (bagged)	U-pick		Pre-Pick (n=9)	
	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)
	Too few reported	-	\$2.0 - \$3.5	\$2.88
Comments	Package volumes varied			
Turnip	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	-	\$0.5 - \$1.0	\$0.73
Comments	-			
Zucchini (per pound)	U-pick		Pre-Pick (n=5)	
	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)	Range (price per pound)	Average (price per pound)
	Too few reported	-	\$0.75 - \$2.5	\$1.67
Comments	-			
Zucchini (per unit)	U-pick		Pre-Pick (n=8)	
	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)	Range (price per unit)	Average (price per unit)
	Too few reported	-	\$0.5 - \$3.0	\$1.7
Comments	Size of unit varies			

2016 Growing Season – Prices Changes / Adjustments

For the 2016 growing season, the majority of producers appeared to be holding prices somewhat for the various crops they grow, with slight increases being typically due to factors such as increased input costs, etc. All price changes were very minor (typically around \$0.25 per pound). 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, typically small volume containers (e.g. pint). Price per pound was more common in the vegetables; however it depended very much on the type of vegetable. U-pick was less common than pre-pick in the data reported again this year. 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. Some producers charge for a delivery service if that is something that they provide. On-line orders/sales option is appearing on a number of producer websites, however the details of this were not delved into.

The number of Community Shared Agriculture (CSA) operations continue to increase, with many direct market operations offering this as an option in addition to their other direct market delivery channels (e.g. u-pick, FM). In many cases, this is the only option that is provided. The cost of the various products compared to other market channels is difficult to compare and CSA share prices vary greatly, both in terms of price and the number of weeks that are available.

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.

A factsheet worth looking at: [Pricing Horticulture Products](#)