



Cherries

NUTRITION:

Cherries are high in vitamin A and like most fruits are low in calories. Fifteen large cherries has 70 calories.

HOW TO SELECT:

The darker the color the better the flavor: Bings—dark maroon to black, Lamberts—dark red, Royal Anne and Rainier—light color with crimson blush.

Cherries picked in early morning hours have the longest shelf life. Choose cherries that are medium to large in size, firm in texture, and that have a snap in the skin with each bite. Overripe cherries are dull and have a dried stem.

Bings and Lamberts are interchangeable in flavor and recipes. Royal Annes have an excellent flavor but poor shipping quality.

STORAGE:

Refrigerate cherries as soon as possible. Store in a plastic bag or container. Wash and remove the stems just before eating.

DRYING:

Preparation:

- Wash, remove stems.
- Slice in half and remove pit, or pit and dry whole.

Pretreatment (choose one): None or sulfite.

Drying Procedure:

- Dry in single layers on trays.
- Dry at 140 degrees F for 24-36 hours.
- Dry until leathery and slightly sticky.

FREEZING:

Sour Cherries: Select bright red tree-ripened fruit. Stem and wash. Remove pits, if desired. Pack in syrup OR pack in sugar OR pack without sugar. Freeze in moisture and vapor proof containers.

Sweet Cherries: Select tree-ripened red varieties. Stem and wash. Remove pits if desired. Pack in syrup OR pack without sugar. Freeze in moisture and vapor proof containers.

CANNING:

WATER BATH CAN

Cherries, Sweet or Pie: Wash cherries. Remove pits, if desired.

Hot Pack: Add 1/2 cup sugar per quart cherries. If unpitted, add small amount water to prevent sticking. Bring to boil in covered saucepan. Pack hot cherries and extracted juice leaving 1/2 inch headspace. Process pints for 15 minutes and quarts for 20 minutes in boiling water bath.

**JAMS/JELLIES/
PRESERVES:**

Raw Pack: Pack cherries. Shake jar to obtain full pack. Cover cherries with boiling syrup leaving 1/2 inch headspace. A light syrup for a 7-quart load contains 9 cups water and 2 1/4 cups sugar. Process pints and quarts for 25 minutes in boiling water bath.

Fruit Juice: Wash, remove pits or seeds, and crush fruit. Heat to simmering; stir to prevent sticking. Strain through cloth bag. Add 1 cup sugar to 1 gallon juice, if desired. Reheat to simmering (185-210 degrees F.). Pour hot juice into sterile jars. Process in a boiling water bath: 5 minutes for pints and quarts.

CHERRY JAM with powdered pectin

4 cups ground or finely chopped pitted cherries (about 3 pounds or 2 quart boxes sour cherries)	1 package powdered pectin 5 cups sugar
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To Prepare Fruit. Sort and wash fully ripe cherries; remove stems and pits. Grind cherries or chip fine.

To Make Jam. Measure prepared cherries into a kettle. Add pectin and stir well. Place on high heat and, stirring constantly, bring quickly to a full boil with bubbles over the entire surface. Add sugar, continue stirring, and heat again to a full bubbling boil. Boil hard for 1 minute, stirring constantly. Remove from heat; skim. Fill sterile jars leaving 1/4 inch headspace and seal containers. Process 5 minutes in boiling water bath. Makes 6 half-pint jars.

CHERRY JELLY with powdered pectin

3-1/2 cups cherry juice (about 3 pounds or 2 quart boxes sour cherries and 1/2 cup water)	1 package powdered pectin 4-1/2 cups sugar
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To Prepare Juice. Select fully ripe cherries. Sort, wash, and remove stems. Do not pit. Crush cherries, add water, cover, bring to boil on high heat. Reduce heat and simmer for 10 minutes. Extract juice.

To Make Jelly. Measure juice into a kettle. Add pectin and stir well. Place on high heat and, stirring constantly, bring quickly to a full rolling boil that cannot be stirred down. Add sugar, continue stirring, and heat again to a full rolling boil. Boil hard for 1 minute. Remove from heat; skim off foam quickly. Pour jelly immediately into hot sterile jars leaving 1/4 inch headspace. Process for 5 minutes in a boiling water bath. Makes about 6 eight-ounce glasses.

For more information call WSU Skagit County Extension:

360-428-4270

Or visit:

<http://skagit.wsu.edu/FAM/MFP.htm>

**HANDOUT DEVELOPED BY: WSU Master Food Preservers
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