

From the Orchard

News from the Oregon Sweet Cherry Commission

Fall/Winter 2016

2016 NW Cherry Season by the Numbers

B.J. Thurlby

President, NW Cherry Growers

2016 Northwest Cherry Season at a Glance

The 2016 season saw many "firsts". We started earlier than ever before, with an "official" start date of May 20th, though a few shipments trickled out even earlier from some orchards. We shipped 12.3 million boxes in June, which is a new record for that month. The overall row size of the fruit will go down as the largest sized cherries we have ever picked, with over 84% of the packed fruit going out as 10.5 row or larger. This year 9, 8 and even 7 row fruit was common across the industry. Combined, our initial numbers indicate that the Northwest shipped just over 20.9 million 20 lb. equivalent boxes through 87 days of shipping! The industry shipped 20 million boxes in just 63 days – with the other 24 days being small amounts of daily fruit leading in and out of the season. The 2016 Rainier or Yellow cherry harvest came in at

Continued on pages 2 through 5.

2017 Northwest Cherry Research Review

Dana Branson

OSCC Administrator

The 2016 Northwest Cherry Research Review was held at the Wenatchee Center in Wenatchee, Washington on November 9 and 10, 2016.

Researchers gave short presentations regarding the findings for each project funded in 2016 on the final and continuing projects. Proposals were also given on 10 new projects for consideration. After the presentations Oregon and Washington commission and research committee members vote on first the priority of the research topic and then on the project itself. Then those votes are combined into one list of rankings to help each group decide on funding. The number of representatives from each state is close to

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Oregon Crop History

	Estimate	Actual	Actual
<u>Type</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2014</u>
Fresh	41,155	21,781	40,276
Brine	9,000	8,460	10,871
Canned	1,092	793	1,404
Frozen	<u>2,433</u>	<u>1,775</u>	<u>4,297</u>
TOTAL	53,680	32,809	56,848

Quantities in tons. 2016 not finalized.

1.54 million 15 lb. equivalent boxes which makes this year's Rainier crop the smallest since 2010, though this season saw 428,000 boxes shipped by the time the first box came off the trees in 2010. In looking at the crop estimate compiled by the Northwest Cherry Growers ... the closest estimate was the round 1 estimate that predicted a crop of 20.7 million boxes, which was released on May 2nd, 2016. The estimates dropped slightly as the crop came closer and the focus became the "short" Bing crop.

This was **not** a perfect growing year for our growers ... yet the fruit that finally ended up in the box was of excellent quality. From a weather standpoint, we saw 3 consecutive days of 100 degree plus heat in June (June 5, 6 and 7) that hit us in early Bing harvest and caused some panic in the industry.

Likewise, we saw 21 separate days of rainfall in June and July ... including events in Benton, Chelan, Douglas, Franklin, Grant, Klickitat, Okanogan and Yakima counties and Wasco and Hood River Counties in Oregon. Like a series of paper cuts ... these rain events eventually took their toll on our fruit and the industry. I have heard from one dedicated grower that he ran helicopters over his ranches on 24 separate occasions. Correspondingly, many late growers have reported packouts in the 60% range in the back half of the season. The good news is that the market stayed strong in July and with the help of industry optical sizing/sorting technology we were able to pack sweet cherries that delivered on our promise of "the diamond of fruit" to consumers around the globe.

This crop came on early and fast. In retrospect, we could have used more ads in the first week of June. During the season I noted that last year in the same window as an industry we supplied ad pricing for over 15,000 domestic retail stores that were on ad ... fruit moved through system as cherries

garnered some key shelf space in the early June window. In contrast, this year in the first week of June, cherries were not even in the top 10 fruit items in ad space allocated; cherries were on ad in only 3642 stores domestically and many of those ads were at \$4.99 to \$5.99 per pound. I have had numerous growers ask me why the market price dropped in early June?

The easy answer is that as volume hit the tipping point on incoming receipts of fruit ... it was time get on with **promotions** that would effectively move the crop ... for those that want a more complicated answer; as an industry we were very focused on the fact that front end of the Bing and Rainier crop was short and many growers had only 1 or 2 tons per acre. The industry tried to hold a higher price so the early Bing growers could afford to pick. Based on WSTFA data ... the industry effectively did this for the first 20 or so days of the season (**at the expense of more circular ads**). However, the confluence of two critical issues pushed the industry into a required "ad pricing mode".

1) June 5, 6, and 7 saw heat over 100 degrees F across the growing districts. Many saw this as a sign that the record heat weather pattern we saw in 2015 was now occurring in 2016 and that the crop would likely compress going forward.

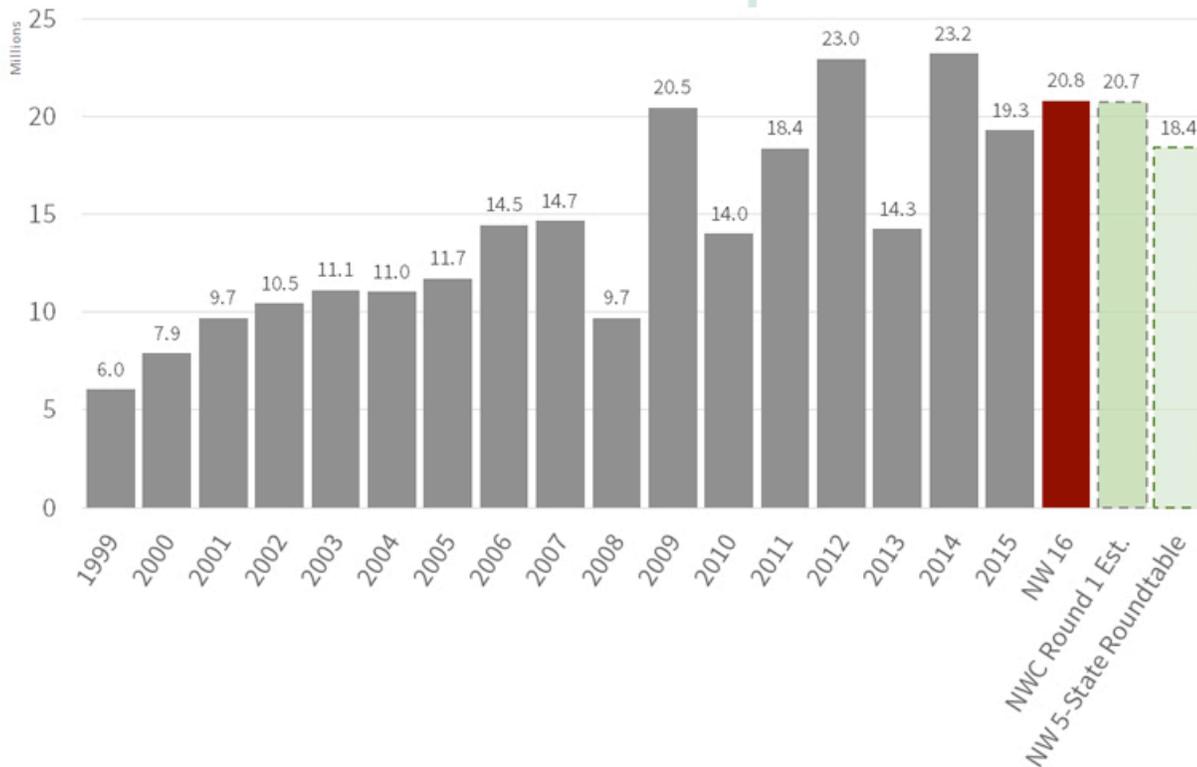
2) While we lamented the fact that the Bing crop was down ... we were quietly picking the largest Chelan crop in history. We needed ads to move the volume of Chelans coming off the trees. Below is a chart showing Chelan volume in 20 lb. equivalent boxes over the past 4 years. With the record crop of Chelans we saw an 84% increase in Chelan volume year over year.

I believe the 2016 crop will be measured as a success. From the standpoint of the Northwest Cherry Growers we saw strong compliance on promotion activity both domestically and internationally. Consumer media surrounding recipes, seasonality and health benefits was outstanding and most importantly ... so were our cherries.

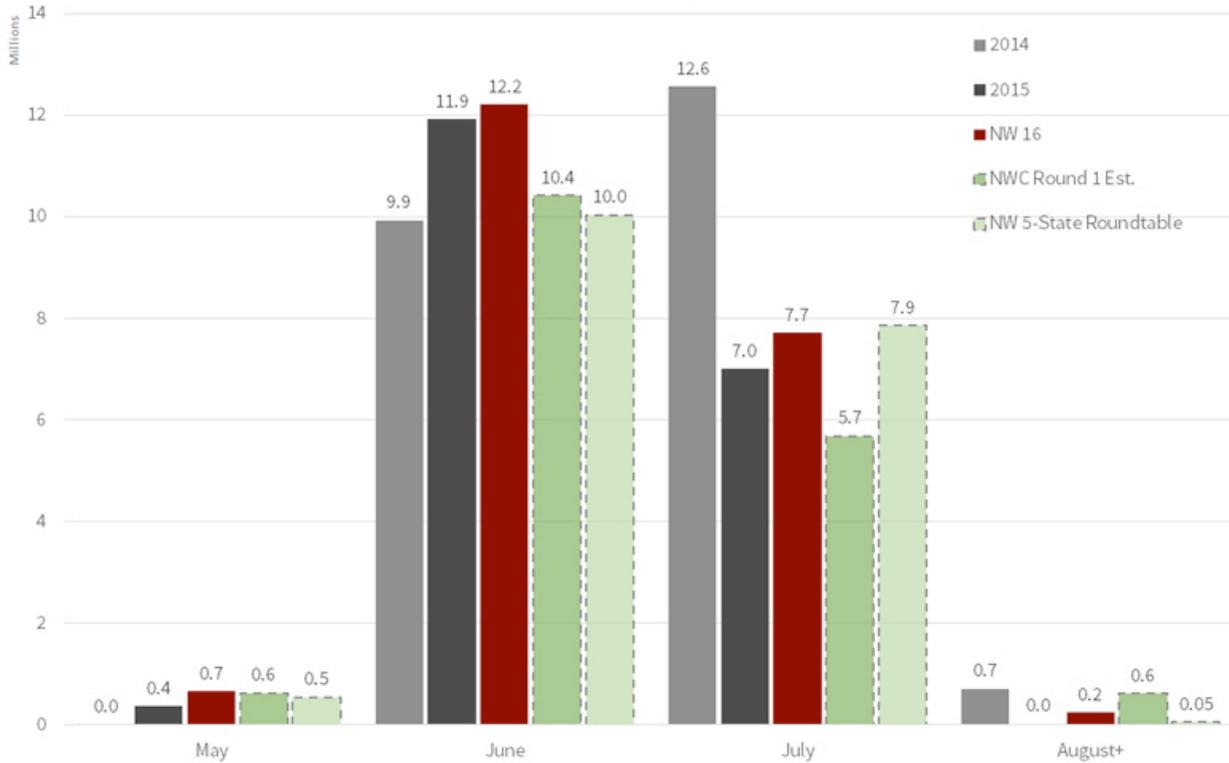
2016 Northwest Cherry Season by the Numbers:

- May fresh shipments were 665,179 boxes ... a Northwest record.
- The industry shipped for 87 days in 2016. Historically, we have had shipping days of 77 days in 2015 as compared to 84 days in 2014, 81 days in 2013 and 92 days in 2012.
- The industry shipped just over 12.3 million 20 lb. boxes in June (all time record).
- The industry averaged 408,427 boxes per day in June of 2016.
- The industry averaged 240,190 boxes per day for the duration of the 87 day season.
- The industry shipped over 400,000 boxes per day for 25 days in 2016.
- The industry shipped over 500,000 boxes per day for 7 days in 2016.
- Largest shipment day was June 27th – 646,427 boxes (the 2nd largest shipping day ever).
- Second largest shipment day was June 28th – 625,598
- July saw only 7.8 million boxes shipped in 2016 – compared to 13.3 million in 2012.
- August saw shipments of a mere 220,000 20 lb. equivalent boxes.
- The Rainier cherry pack was 1.5 million 15 lb. equivalent boxes vs. 1.7 million 15 lb. equivalent boxes in 2015. Rainier demand and quality were outstanding in 2016.
- The crop shipped delivered 67% domestic and 33% export.
- California finished shipping on June 8th (the same day as in 2015) and shipped 5.2 million 18 lb. equivalent boxes:
 - Down from 5.9 million in 2015
 - Up from 2.6 million in 2014
 - Down from 7.8 million in 2013

NWC Total Shipments



NWC Monthly Volume



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If you know of anyone who wants to receive this newsletter, meeting notices or ODA Administrative Rules, or if you have an address change please contact us at the one of the addresses above. This publication will be made available in alternate formats upon request. This newsletter, previous issues and meeting minutes are available on the OSCC website. www.osweetcherry.org.

Commission meetings are generally held bi-monthly in August, October, December, February, April and June. The date for the next meeting is set at the conclusion of each meeting to coordinate individual schedules.

MEETING CALENDAR

**REGULAR OSCC MEETING
 THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2017**

CHECK OSWEETCHERRY.ORG
 MEETING LOCATION HAS NOT BEEN
 SECURED AT THIS TIME
 10:00 A.M.

OSU EXTENSION CHERRY PRUNING TOUR

SCHEDULED FOR
 TUESDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2016
 SEE PAGE 6

OSU EXTENSION CHERRY DAY

SCHEDULED FOR
 THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2017
 AGENDA BEING DEVELOPED

CHECK OSU EXTENSION WEBSITE
 FOR WASCO COUNTY

equal. Many times each state will vote to fund a researcher from their respective state 100% because the work is specific to their needs. That was reflected in the rankings this year. But on those projects that apply to the industry both states were in sync. The most prominent this year are a non-toxic RNAi based insecticide to control SWD, work at Michigan State University on sweet cherry rootstocks and streamlining the sweet cherry breeding program.

As in the past copies of the more in depth reports are available online if you're interested by going to <http://treefruitresearch.com/searchable-database>. On the screen there's an area that says click here to start your search. *The next screen lists the fruits to search by on the left-hand side of the screen. When you click on Cherry a drop down menu to select Horticulture, Entomology or Pathology appears.* When you make that choice another drop down menu appears with a further categorization of topics. When you click on your choice the reports pertaining to that topic are shown in a list and you can bring up the report you want to read.

Copies of continuing reports and the currently proposed new projects are available electronically from the OSCC office.

The total amount of funding requested for both new and continuing projects adds up to \$1,073,342. The OSCC met November 29 to consider which projects they will fund. They will coordinate with Washington regarding shared projects and reach a final decision as soon as possible.

Commissioners

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Willamette Valley Representative

Producer - Vacant

Wasco County Representative

Producer – Vacant

Applications for both of these positions are expected to be submitted and approved by the February meeting.

OSU Wasco County Extension Service

2016 CHERRY PRUNING TOUR

7:30 AM (English) & 1:30 PM (Spanish) - Coffee and Donuts provided by Wilbur-Ellis

Stop 1 – Gary Wade and Marlis Rufener Orchard, 2650 Three Mile Rd, The Dalles

East or West bound on I-84: Take Exit 85. Cross over the freeway and turn right on Hwy 30. At the roundabout take the 2nd exit to Brewery Grade Road. Take a slight left on 9th St and immediately turn right onto Dry Hollow Road. At the Dry Hollow Rd./3 Mile Rd. junction bear left onto 3 Mile County Road. After 1.5 miles the destination is on your left.

Chelan/Mazzard – Mature Steep Leader pruning.
Tree renovation and renewal pruning.

Regina/Gisela 12 – Central Leader pruning. Trees planted in 2011.

Kordia/Gisela 12 – Steep Leader. Renewal pruning after 2014 freeze.
Response to severe pruning and what is the next step in renovating this block.

Bing/K6 and K5 – Establishment of a young KGB block.
What are the first steps in establishment? Transitioning to mature pruning. Maintaining uniformity while encouraging precocity.

Stop 2 – John Byers Orchard, Skyline Dr, The Dalles

Head north for 1.5 miles on 3 Mile Rd. Take a sharp left onto Dry Hollow Rd. After 0.8 miles turn right onto Olney Rd. In 1 mile the destination is on your right.

Chelan/Mazzard. Mature KGN pruning including whole tree renewal as an option for the KGB and UFO systems.

Tuesday, December 13

Free and open to the public

Oregon Sweet Cherry Commission
2667 Reed Road
Hood River, OR 97031
CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED