

# Reasons for the Seasons

## Produce Tips for Placer County Consumers

Local Season-  
May thru  
July



# CHERRIES

**Cherries** are among the best foods for a snack. The riper the cherry, the larger the size, the deeper the color, the sweeter the fruit.

### Nutrition Benefits

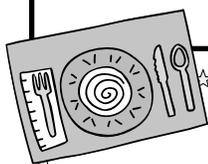
Cherries are:

- ◆ No fat, cholesterol, or sodium
- ◆ Good source of fiber
- ◆ High source of vitamin C

**Note:** Sour cherries are lower in calories and higher in vitamin C and beta carotene than sweet cherries.

### Serving Tip

- ◆ Pack them in lunches for a treat.
- ◆ Add cherries to a mixed fruit salad or gelatin.
- ◆ Stir pitted cherries into yogurt.
- ◆ Scatter them over ice milk or frozen yogurt.
- ◆ Combine in a blender for a breakfast shake.
- ◆ Replace strawberries with halved cherries in a low-fat shortcake.



## Tips for Good Nutritional Habits

- Introduce the five food groups (Grains, Vegetables, Fruits, Milk, and Meat and Beans) which make up *MyPyramid*. Encourage children to eat a variety each day.
- Allow children to explore their senses, while learning about food. Let them touch, smell, see, and taste different types of foods.
- Talk about how we need to eat healthy foods for our bodies to grow big and strong. Review which foods are healthy (fruits and vegetables) and which are not so good for us (candy and chips).
- Educate children on the importance of being physically active, along with eating well. Tell them it is good for their heart to exercise.

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### CHERRIES



#### Locally Grown Varieties

*Bing, Black Tartarian, Early Burlat, Jubilee, Lambert, Montmorency, Royal Ann, Rainier, Stella, and Van*

#### Shopping Tips

- ✓ Sweet cherries should be large, glossy, plump, hard, and dark-colored. Sour cherries should be plump, firm, and a bright scarlet color.
- ✓ Avoid cherries that are overly soft or flabby and ones that are sticky from leakage.
- ✓ The stems should be fresh and green. Dark stems are a sign of old age or poor storage conditions. Avoid ones that do not have stems.
- ✓ Sweet cherries should crackle when you bite into them.



#### Handling and Storage

- ◆ Loosely pack unwashed cherries in plastic bags or place them in a shallow plate in a single layer and cover with plastic wrap.
- ◆ Store them in a refrigerator.
- ◆ Fresh cherries will last up to a week, but check them often and remove any that have gone bad.
- ◆ A number of spoiled cherries will start the others on the road to decay.

#### Preparation

When serving fresh cherries, rinse them under cold water and drain. They are most attractive with their stems attached. Some people prefer cherries chilled, while others find them sweetest at room temperature.

- ◆ **Pitting:** To pit cherries for cooking, halve them with a paring knife and pry out the pit with the tip of the knife.
- ◆ **To make a sauce:** If cooked for just a few minutes, sweet cherries retain their firm texture and their flavor mellows. Try poaching them—this gentle cooking method preserves them. Stem and pit the cherries, then drop them into a small amount of simmering water and cook until the fruit is slightly softened and heated through; about 1 to 3 minutes. Sweeten to taste and thicken the liquid with arrowroot or cornstarch, if desired.
- ◆ **Freezing:** You can extend the cherry season by freezing them. Rinse and drain the cherries thoroughly, then spread them out in a single layer on a cookie sheet and freeze. Once frozen, transfer the cherries to a freezer bag. They will keep for up to a year in your freezer.

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### **CHERRY NUT BREAD**

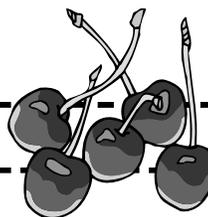
(6 SERVINGS)

#### **INGREDIENTS:**

- |                        |                           |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 cup cherries, pitted | 1 egg                     |
| 3/4 cup sugar          | 1 cup milk                |
| 3 cups biscuit mix     | 3/4 cup walnuts or pecans |

#### **DIRECTIONS:**

1. Preheat oven to 350°.
2. Cut cherries in quarters.
3. Mix all ingredients together.
4. Bake in a greased bread pan for 1 hour.



### **CHERRY SALSA**

(4 SERVINGS)

#### **INGREDIENTS:**

- |  |                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1/4 cup dried cherries, coarsely chopped |                                      |
| 1- 1/3 cups tart cherries, frozen        | 1 clove garlic, peeled and chopped   |
| 1/4 cup red onion, finely chopped        | 1 tablespoon fresh cilantro, chopped |
| 1 tablespoon jalapeños, diced            | 1 teaspoon cornstarch                |

#### **DIRECTIONS:**

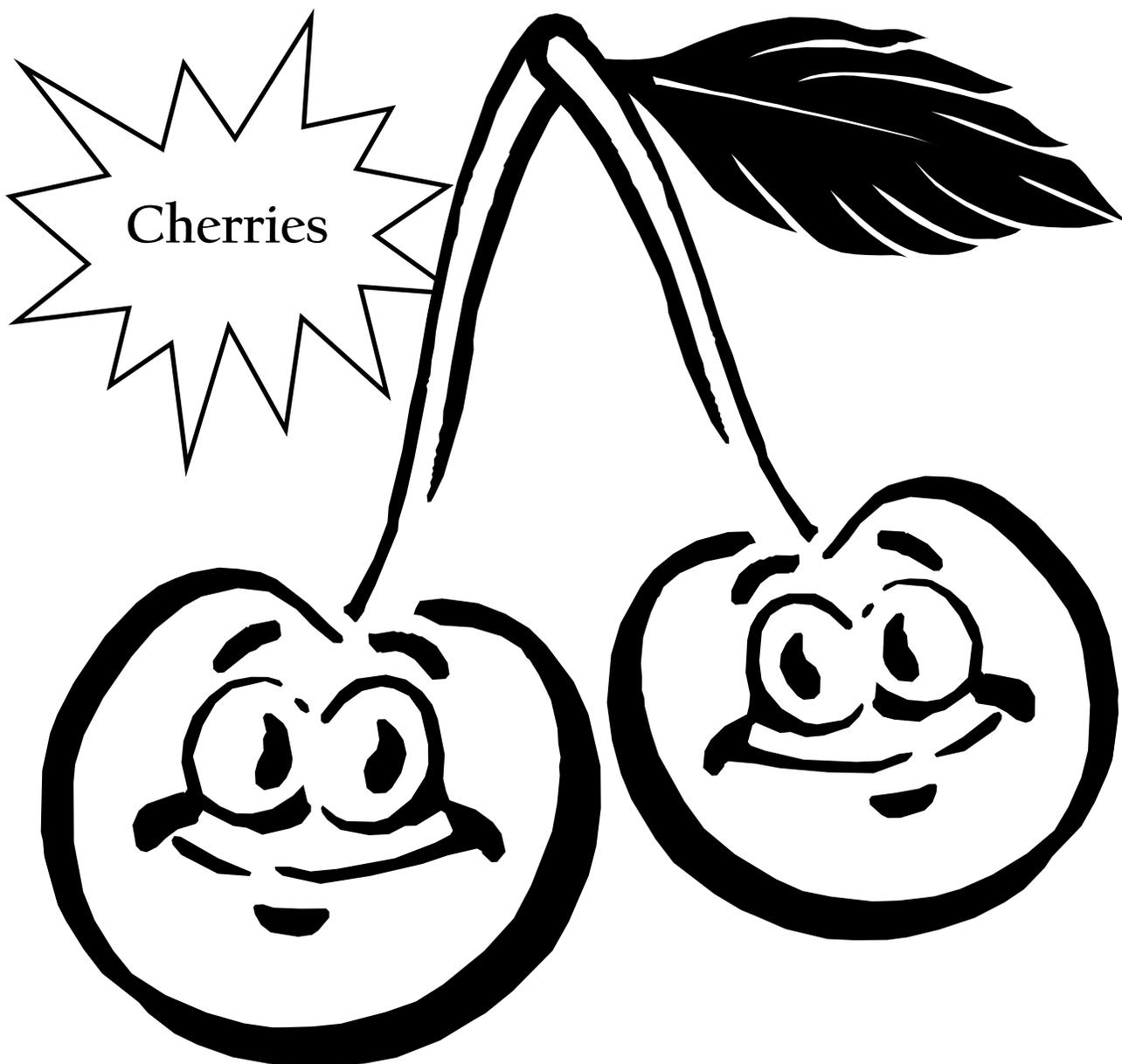
1. Coarsely chop cherries. Let cherries thaw and drain, reserving 1 tablespoon cherry juice.
2. When cherries are thawed, combine drained cherries dried cherries, onion, jalapenos, garlic, and cilantro in a medium saucepan; mix well.
3. Combine reserved cherry juice and cornstarch in a small bowl; mix until smooth.
4. Stir into cherry mixture.
5. Cook, stirring constantly, over medium-high heat until mixture is thickened.
6. Let cool.
7. Serve with tortilla chips.

*\*\*This recipe can also be served over cooked chicken or pork.*



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## Coloring Activity Page for Kids



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2011

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