

Cooler temperatures coming to the Yakima Valley in Washington state over the coming days are expected to slow down cherry production, according to Weathermelon.



The company, which consolidates weather information for the produce industry, said the cold weather would arrive this weekend and bottom out on Monday, when the minimum temperature will drop to 49°F and highs will only reach the upper 70s.

The average temp for June and July is a high of 89° and a minimum of 63°, it said.

"These cooler temps will remain through Wednesday Jul 4 and may slow down the cherry harvest which has been on fire this season so far," it said.

The Washington growing regions are pumping out heavy volume, averaging close to 250 loads per day over the last 10 days.

"The region has shipped over 3,600 loads this season so far vs. 2,400 loads at this same date last year. The cooler weather coming to the Yakima Valley next week might slow down production a bit," Weathermelon said.

A representative of North American fruit trader Oppy recently told *Fresh Fruit Portal* that there was **a lot of excitement** for the Northwest cherry season, with the crop generally being of larger sizing, higher pressure and higher Brix levels than in previous years.

David Nelley, vice president of categories and global exports, said the domestic season had got off to a muted start due to a significant drop in California supplies, but since then in Washington and Oregon things have gone "really quite well."

Weathermelon also said "extreme heat" was coming to the desert south-west next weekend

starting Thursday. Highs will jump from 107-108°F which they are currently experiencing, up to 114-116°F for the weekend, it said.

"These high temps will be felt from regions of Maricopa County around Phoenix, AZ down through Yuma over to Imperial Valley, CA and up to the Coachella Valley," it said.

"Minimum temps will also jump up considerably from the mid-70s currently up to the mid-80s by the end of next week. Keep an eye on the quality of melons from these regions during this time."

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