

U.S. Northwest cherries enjoyed much stronger pricing this year than during the previous season, [USDA](#) data shows.

Prices for 15-pound cartons of 10-row cherries from Yakima and Wenatchee started off at similar levels to 2018. But from there the two years showed an increasingly significant gap.

In week 25 last year, shipping point prices for 'various red sweet varieties' were mostly US\$37.00 - \$42.90, compared to US\$36.00 - \$48.90 this year.

But by week 28 in mid-July, last season they had dropped to US\$26.00 - \$38.90, whereas this year they at US\$32.00 - \$38.95.

After that, the difference between the two years became more pronounced. Week 30 prices in late July were US\$26.00 - \$39.20 in 2018, in contrast to US\$33.00 - \$38.95 this year.

By week 32, there was a US\$10 difference; US\$26.00 - \$32.90 last year compared to US\$36.00 - \$42.95

The stronger pricing came amid a lower crop than last year. An [industry source told FreshFruitPortal.com](#) in early August the Northwest would likely produce 22 million 20-pound equivalent boxes, compared to 25.4m boxes.

And according to the USDA, total cherry movement in the U.S. market through late August is 7% lower year-on-year. It registered 624 million pounds in 2018 compared to 580 million pounds this year.

In addition, Northwest Cherry Growers' president B.J. Thurlby said the fruit achieved high quality thanks to favorable weather.

"We've had really good growing conditions this year. In the past three or four summers, we tended to get a lot of heat late in the summer and it's really stayed mild here," he said in early August. The quality of the fruit has "just been really really outstanding", he added.

"Its delivery, quality has been as good as I can remember in recent years."