



SUMMER FRUIT 101

Soft Fruit Handling, Merchandising, & Selling

STONE FRUIT HANDLING GUIDELINES

1. Always store fruit above 50 degrees

Storing under 50 degrees means hard fruit. Your customers will want softer fruit.

2. Never store excess product in the produce cooler.

Store in the backroom or prep area. Temperature abuse means mealy fruit.

3. Display on unrefrigerated dry tables.

Always display at room temperature. Let your fruit continue to ripen.

4. Offer ripening bags whenever possible.

Ripe fruit at home means more frequent trips to replenish their supplies.

SUMMER FRUIT MERCHANDISING



- **Delicately hand stack product.**

These fragile fruits must be handled with care.

- **Make sure all varieties are signed appropriately to insure proper ID.**

Yellow peaches are not the only fruit in this section. Expose your customers to all varieties.

- **The cherries can be displayed in either poly bags or stand up pouches.**

Cherries can get stacked 2 layers deep. **Go big or go home!**

- **Use baskets for the smaller varieties. These fruits can get lost in a display.**

The baskets will help them stand out and get the attention they deserve.



CROSS MERCHANDISE

STONE FRUIT SELLING

- In 2022 the total peach production in the United States was estimated at about 625 thousand tons. That same year California was shown as the largest producer at the state level with around 475 thousand tons harvested. This represents about two thirds of the total national product.
- Just like peaches, the soft fruit category with all its variety represents a significant percentage of our total produce department sales during the summer months. Quality, freshness, and sanitation are the keys to maximizing sales and profits on this popular but challenging category.

- **Focus on fresh!** Nothing effect flavor like freshness.
- **Turn them quick.** Don't hang on to old fruit. First loss, Best loss!
- **Rotate.** This is a no brainer. Right?
- **Minimize handling.** Handle product one time from box to display.
- **Keep your on-hand inventory fresh.** Take full advantage of your fresh deliveries and get fresh product every load.
- **Keep your displays clean and free of debris.**
- **Red side up!** Customers associate red with ripe. Take a few seconds and turn over some fruit. *Don't laugh! It works!*

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