

CHERRY CELEBRATION ARRIVES JULY 19-20 ALONG THE HOOD RIVER FRUIT LOOP

Plump and juicy fresh cherries are everyone's favorite! Tour the Hood River County Fruit Loop during the Cherry Celebration, July 19-20, for the best cherries and cherry products....

It's cherry season in Oregon's beautiful Hood River Valley. Luscious, fresh cherries are everyone's favorite! Farms and attractions all along the valley's famous Fruit Loop are welcoming the arrival of the summer's first tree fruit with the Hood River County Fruit Loop Cherry Celebration, Saturday and Sunday, July 19-20.

Winding 35 miles through the picturesque orchards, farms and communities of the scenic Hood River Valley, the Fruit Loop is home to farms, country stores, wineries, and other attractions offering the freshest and best that the valley with a world-wide reputation for the quality of its fruit and other agricultural products has to offer. Many varieties of fresh-picked cherries will be available all along the Fruit Loop during the Cherry Celebration. There'll also be other wonderful cherry treats, including cherry wine, jam, cookies, pies and more. Taste delicious fruit and products, and choose your favorites to take home.

There's plenty more to enjoy along the Fruit Loop. Visit comfortable tasting rooms for award-winning wines. Stop by an alpaca farm to meet the year's adorable babies. Take an orchard tour. Pick lavender, or choose early summer fresh produce and berries. Enjoy barbecue, delightful desserts, cookies, pies, and many more treats.

In addition to the orchard-fresh fruit and great products, some Fruit Loop farms are serving up special activities or attractions for the Cherry Celebration.

Visit the Draper Girls Country Farm for "Crazy for U-Pick Cherry Days." Picking cherries is great family fun, and there'll be many kinds of ready-picked cherries, too. Sample fresh non-pasteurized cherry cider, and choose from a large selection of honey, jellies and jams. Fresh vegetables will be available, along with natural lamb and goat, dried legumes, berries, gifts and antiques, and Grandma's famous cinnamon-sugar dried apples. Visit with farm animals, too.

Take part in Cherry Karma's "Cherry Jubilee," celebrating the height of the cherry season at Cherry Karma's Purple Pit Stop. Sample freshly picked Rainiers, Bings, Vans, Stellas, Lapins and Lamberts, and choose your favorites. Homemade cherry pies, cherry brownies, and frozen cherries will be available only during this special weekend. Tour the family-run orchard, or relax on the patio with a delicious cherry smoothie.

The best selection of cherries in the valley is promised at Rasmussen Farms, and they also ship cherries. Find lots of cherry recipes and cherry products, cherry dessert, and summer vegetables.

Fresh baked cherry pies, cobblers, crisps, cherry ice cream and milkshakes; fresh and frozen U-bake pies; more than 50 varieties of jams, syrups, and pepper jellies, tasty fresh fruit and berries...all will be found at Apple Valley Country Store's "Cherry Celebration and Country BBQ." Then there is the BBQ—cherry wood smoked BBQ ribs, pulled pork and chicken--served with cider baked beans and pear coleslaw. Live music, too!

Take a walk in the orchard at Pearl's Place, then select from the many varieties of ripe, glacier-fed cherries, including dark sweets, Rainiers, and pie cherries. Take home plenty of these healthy gems grown and packed by Pearl's.

Visit Hood River Vineyards and Winery and taste delicious Rainier Cherry, Black Cherry, and Peach Ports. There are many other fine wines to choose from, as well. Enjoy their picnic area and wonderful scenery. Families are welcome!

Want tasty blueberries to go with all those cherries? Visit "Grandma's Blueberry and Teriyaki Weekend" at Grandma Mary's Fruit and Produce. They are showcasing several varieties of fresh picked blueberries, as well as specialty dried blueberries, toppings, and jam. Savor Buddha Belly's Teriyaki BBQ featuring delicious sweet and spicy teriyaki sauces.

The weekend is the perfect time to stop by Wilinda Blueberry Patch for U-pick or ready-picked blueberries, which are never sprayed. They also have lovely hand-made Ugandan baskets on sale to benefit fistula repair.

Like lavender? The 10th annual “Lavender DAZE Festival” takes place at Hood River Lavender Farms with six bands, more than 35 art vendors, BBQ, wood-fired pizza, wine, U-pick organic lavender, and more. Make your own lavender wands. There’s beautiful scenery, and all kinds of activities, too, including fun games for kids. Bring a blanket or beach chair, relax and enjoy. Free admission. No pets, please.

At the Plymouth Yarns Trunk Show at Foothills Yarn and Fiber, see hand-knitted garments made of alpaca and other yarns from Plymouth Yarns. Lightweight, soft as cashmere, warmer than wool, alpaca yarn is perfect for creating lovely knitted and crocheted garments. Visit the farm’s alpacas and their newest babies, too!

Complete a day spent enjoying the valley and the Fruit Loop with a visit to Mt. Hood Winery. Sample old favorites and new summer releases. They’ll be serving tasty cherry treats to go with wine during the Cherry Celebration!

Revel in all the many cherry varieties and products available along the Fruit Loop during the Cherry Celebration, as well as in the scenery and fun activities. Find early-summer produce and flowers. Pack a picnic, or enjoy meals available at some Fruit Loop locations, and create a family memory by eating at one of the Loop’s free picnic areas.

Admission to Fruit Loop farms and attractions is free, and most are open from at least 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. (Some have longer hours; **wineries open at 11 a.m.**). There is free parking, too.

For information about the Hood River Cherry Celebration, a complete listing of Fruit Loop farms and attractions, and an easy-to-follow map, visit the Fruit Loop website at www.hoodriverfruitloop.com. Print copies are available at Fruit Loop farms, at the Hood River County Visitors Center (Hood River exit 64 off Interstate 84), and at other selected area locations. Have additional questions? Call the Fruit Loop information number at 541-386-7697. The Fruit Loop is on Facebook and Pinterest, too.