



**Fresh, Organic Blueberries from Rainier Fruit:
A Delicious and Nutritious Superfood for Summer**
*Now's the time to shop local markets for these tasty little treats
that pack a powerful nutritional punch*

SELAH, WA (August 4, 2014) — One more reason to sing the praises of summertime: it's blueberry season! Now is the time fruit lovers find ample supplies of fresh, juicy blueberries in produce aisles. And along with blueberries' distinctive tangy-yet-sweet flavor, these small fruits deliver generous nutritional benefits that are second to none.

Blueberries have been called “one of the world's healthiest foods” for their high quantities of antioxidants, fiber and vitamin C. In fact, blueberries rank the highest among fruits for antioxidants (highly valued disease-fighting substances), and just one cup of blueberries provides 5 grams of fiber (nearly 15 percent of the recommended daily dose of fiber for adults) and lots of vitamin C—as much as one-quarter of the recommended daily intake.

Blueberries are also low in calories—as little as 80 calories in a cup. They get their rich bluish-purple color from their high content of anthocyanins, plant pigments that act as antioxidants and may offer anti-inflammatory, anti-viral and anti-cancer benefits. Blueberries have a pleasingly sweet flavor, yet they have a low glycemic index—meaning that they release energy for an extended time. You'll feel fuller longer and won't experience a “crash” you might get from high-glycemic foods. Glycemic levels of foods are rated from 55 or less (low) to above 70 (high). Blueberries weigh in at the super-low glycemic level of 53.

Blueberries have also been shown to boost brain function. Nutrients in blueberries include selenium, potassium, copper, zinc, manganese, anthocyanin, and vitamins A, C, E and B complex, a potent mixture of goodness that's especially beneficial for the brain.

Blueberries from Rainier Fruit—Among the World's Best

North America is the leading producer of blueberries, accounting for up to 90 percent of the world's supply, and some of the choicest of all come from Rainier Fruit Company in Washington State. Rainier Fruit grows organic blueberries on its Central Washington family acreage, and its varieties have gained a worldwide reputation for their premium size, firmness and flavor. The soil and climate of the Central Washington area produce blueberries that are different from those grown in other parts of the country. The area's warm days and cool nights, combined with well-draining volcanic soil and careful management of the soil environment, work together to create fruit of exceptional quality and delicious flavor.

Supplies peaked in July for Rainier Fruit and volume will steadily decline over the next 8-10 weeks. Therefore, time to grab some of these Little Blue Dynamos®* while you can still find Washington grown blueberries in stores.

Sweet and Easy in the Summertime ... and Freeze Some for the Rest of the Year

Requiring no peeling, pitting, coring or cutting, blueberries are one of the easiest fruits to prepare and serve. For best results, berries should be refrigerated, but not washed until needed. Once chilled, they will maintain their quality from 10 days to two weeks. When freezing blueberries, place berries one layer deep on sheet pans (remember that dry berries freeze better than wet ones). Freeze, then place the berries in freezer containers or bags for storage. If properly frozen, blueberries will stay delicious for about six to eight months—although some chefs claim that properly frozen blueberries will last up to a year. Both frozen and fresh berries should be rinsed and drained just before serving.

*Little Blue Dynamo® was developed by the U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council. More information is available at <http://www.blueberrycouncil.org/>.

About Rainier Fruit Company

Rainier Fruit Company is one of the largest growers of fresh apples, pears, cherries and blueberries in the United States. The company dates back to 1888 when the founders moved to Washington from Virginia's Shenandoah Valley and started growing apples on a small parcel in Selah. Today, under the careful stewardship of highly trained horticulturists, the company continues to artfully select premier orchard sites and choose the most environmentally sustainable practices in the industry to maintain the highest-quality standards. Rainier Fruit Company's orchards benefit from Central Washington's rich, volcanic soil, snow-fed irrigation supply and long growing season to produce juicy, flavorful fruit demanded by consumers around the world. For more information, visit www.rainierfruit.com.

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