

PRICE TAG/COST TAG

What costs aren't included in the price of your food?

Strawberry



Price Tag

Consumers pay \$1.89-\$6.99 per pint of fresh berries, depending on the season. Frozen strawberries cost about \$3 for 20 ounces. What costs are associated with them?

Cost Tag

Food Miles
In or out of season, strawberries are shipped to your locale from Florida, California and Mexico. In 2008, California accounted for 69% of US strawberry production.¹ But you can enjoy locally grown berries in season and learn to make your own strawberry jam, or freeze whole strawberries.



Environmental and Health Costs

Strawberry farms use a variety of methods to control pests, including fumigating the soil. Most midwestern growers do not use this practice. The EPA does not permit methyl bromide, one major fumigant, for use with strawberries in the Upper Midwest and it is not allowed on organic strawberry farms. This fumigant was officially phased out by the EPA in 2005 because it depletes stratospheric ozone.² In addition, methyl



bromide has been linked to prostate cancer in pesticide applicators.³ However, as of 2008 it was still used on nearly half of the California strawberry crop due to an exemption.⁴

Strawberry growers in the Midwest typically leave their plants in the ground for two to three years rather than replanting every year. This promotes soil health as the soil structure is not disrupted by annual plantings.

Although more research is needed, one study found that organic strawberry production led to better fruit quality and healthier, more resilient soils compared to conventional production.⁵

You can help by supporting farm stands, U-pick operations and farmers that minimize or eliminate pesticides. Ask the produce manager at your grocery store to label strawberry origins and production practices.

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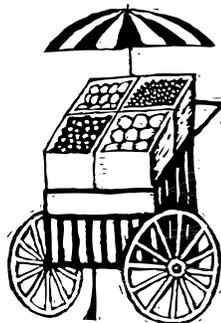
¹USDA ERS. (2009). *U.S. strawberry harvested acreage, yield per acre, and production, 13 States, 1970-2008, February*. Washington, DC: USDA ERS. Retrieved Jan 21, 2010 (usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/MannUsda/viewDocumentInfo.do?documentID=1381).



Environmental and Health Costs

²Butler, J. (2000). "Methyl bromide: An introduction to its use, its impacts, and its future." *IGACTivities Newsletter of the International Global Atmospheric Chemistry Project*, 19:8-9. Cambridge, MA: MIT. Retrieved Aug 26, 2010 (www.igac.noaa.gov/newsletter/19/January2000.pdf).

³Alavanja, M.C., C. Samanic and M. Dosemeci, et.al. (2003). "Use of Agricultural Pesticides and Prostate Cancer Risk in the Agricultural Health Study Cohort." *American Journal of Epidemiology*, 157(9). Retrieved Aug 26, 2010 (aje.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/reprint/157/9/800.pdf)



⁴US EPA. (2008). *Methyl bromide critical use renomination for preplant soil use (open field or protected environment)*. Retrieved Aug 24, 2010 (www.epa.gov/Ozone/mbr/cun2010/CUN%202010%20Strawberry.pdf).

⁵Reganold, J.P, P.K. Andrews and J.R. Reeve, et. al. (2010). "Fruit and Soil Quality of Organic and Conventional Strawberry Agroecosystems." *PLoS ONE*. 5(9): e12346, September. Retrieved Sept 2, 2010 (www.plosone.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0012346).

Strawberry Cost Tag References

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