



River Valley Fruit introduces new PLU number for its exclusive Audra Rose cherry variety.

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Grandview, WA (May 24, 2023) - River Valley Fruit, a leading apple, cherry and pear grower, packer and shipper is thrilled to announce the introduction of the Audra Rose cherry bag, complemented by its newly assigned PLU number, 3550. This development marks a significant milestone for the Audra Rose cherry, a unique and highly sought-after variety.

Audra Rose cherries were first discovered in 2005 by Audra Leitz in her family's orchard. Initially, Richard Leitz and Matthus Leitz, Audra's father and brother, packed and delivered the cherries themselves. Over time, the demand grew, prompting the family to graft more trees and establish the Audra Rose brand in 2020. Until recently, the cherries were only available in a 1lb clamshell pack.

Due to increasing demand and growing volumes, River Valley Fruit responded to retailer requests and developed a 1.25lb pouch bag for the Audra Rose cherries. To distinguish this exceptional variety, the company pursued a PLU, which was successfully awarded as 3550 in April.

Carrie Koerner, sales manager at River Valley Fruit, explained, “During the 2022 season, demand exceeded supply, and packaging all the Audra Rose cherries in clamshells became impractical. Retailers were inquiring about a bag option, and having a dedicated PLU for the Audra Rose cherries was crucial in setting them apart from other varieties.”

The Audra Rose cherry bag, packaged in a 12/1.25lb box, offers a convenient and cost-effective alternative for retailers. Available exclusively through River Valley Fruit, and grown exclusively by Leitz Farms the cherries will be available from mid to late June until mid-July.

Anticipating their most productive year to date, River Valley Fruit is expecting about a 50% increase in the amount of Audra Rose cherries they will pack and ship. These cherries are renowned for their super sweet flavor and unique appearance, with a dark mahogany/yellow skin resembling a late-season Rainier cherry and a red/yellow starburst-colored flesh during the peak of the season.

The Audra Rose cherry’s PLU announcement received acclaim from industry experts, including Joe Watson of the International Fresh Produce Association, who congratulated the company and emphasized the value and promotional opportunities associated with the assigned PLU. “Congratulations, having an assigned PLU will provide your retail customers with options on how to promote and protect the value of this outstanding product. Best wishes for a great season.”

River Valley Fruit operates its cherry packing facility in Grandview, WA, and owns orchards and warehouses in Grandview, Sunnyside, and Benton City, WA. The company is woman-owned and the sales team consists entirely of women, including Carrie Koerner as sales manager and Kassi Orozco as assistant sales manager.

ABOUT RIVER VALLEY FRUIT

River Valley Fruit grows acres of apples, pears, and cherries across various locations in Washington State. Their state-of-the-art packing facilities include two cherry packing lines and an apple line (also certified organic) in Grandview, WA, as well as a pear packing facility and organic packing line (for apples, pears, and stone fruit) in Sunnyside, WA.

For more information about River Valley Fruit and the Audra Rose cherry bag, please visit www.rivervalleyfruit.net

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