

### Abstract:

It is perceived widely by the produce trade (supermarkets and growers) that cherries are one of the most popular summer fruits in the United Kingdom (UK), yet very little market research has been undertaken to explore how the popular appeal of cherries might be exploited by innovative marketing and in-store merchandising. To understand consumers' purchasing and consumption behaviour with respect to cherries and the extent to which these vary between shoppers in the UK, a quantitative survey was carried out in four geographical areas in July 2000. A total of 480 shoppers were interviewed from three different supermarket chains. The results provide clear evidence that opportunities exist for market development and segmentation, by store, meal occasion and demographics (age, income, household composition). Overall, the 'ideal' cherry, in the eyes of the UK consumer, should be large, dark, and sweet, with a glossy appearance, but sufficient variation exists in terms of when cherries are purchased, for whom they are purchased, the primary motivation for purchase and the way in which they are consumed, to offer genuine opportunities for a more innovative approach to the marketing and merchandising of the UK cherry crop.